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Voices of Indian Freedom Movement



J. C. JOHARI

**VOICES OF INDIAN
FREEDOM MOVEMENT**

VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

(VOICE OF MUSLIM ISOLATIONISM AND COMMUNALISM)

Muslim League on Separate Electorates and Nehru Report

VOLUME X

Part Three

(Book 1)

Edited and Annotated by

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PREFACE

Right from its very inception in 1906, the Muslim League unflinchingly adhered to the course set by the great founder and other leading lights of the Aligarh Movement. According to Nawab Viquar-ul-Mulk it was dictated by the need for having a separate political organisation of the Muslims. But in the view of others like High Highness the Agha Khan and Hakim Ajmal Khan, it was done to awaken the co-religionists so as to create unity among them and thereby remove their state of political apathy. Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy exhorted the Muslims to take to the path of self-reliance and reconstruction so as to achieve the ideal of unity and strengthen the feelings of loyalty first towards the British masters and then towards the country. With the creation of the League, Muslim nationalism took an organised form.

The inaugural and welcome addresses delivered by the prominent figures on the occasion of annual sessions of the League testify to the fact that the leaders of this organisation ardently sought reconciliation and cooperation with the British rule at all levels so as to consolidate their position vis-a-vis the Indian National Congress and, at the same time, to play fast and loose with the Congress in the name of achieving national unity and securing constitutional reforms whenever situation so demanded. The British rulers responded to the League in so far as their imperial interests were served as by granting separate electorates to the Muslims under the Act of 1909 and by cheating them on the cause of the Khilafat. However, as the League changed its stand after the bitter failure of the Khilafat Movement and extended full cooperation to the 'all-white commission' in 1928-29 and more particularly during Quit India Movement (1942-44), the British rulers tactfully patronised them and left the country in 1947 after obliging their pampered client with the gift of a separate and sovereign

state of Pakistan.

As such I have put the matter in two parts. While Part I contains inaugural and welcome addresses delivered at the sessions of the Muslim League and some important resolutions and documents related to the political developments of that period, Part II has important readings representing the British point of view. I hope that my scheme would receive the appreciation of my readers who would find here much for the purpose of their advanced study or research in this important field of modern Indian history and politics. I have drawn material from numerous sources, Indian and foreign, according to my scheme and I offer my sincere gratitude to all of them. I am thankful to a large number of my friends for the help they extended to me in the completion of this project. In particular, I am thankful to my Publishers who appreciated this project and took pains to bring out the volumes in a record time.

- J.C. Johari

INTRODUCTION

A critical evaluation of the role of Muslim League in the freedom struggle of India leaves this unmistakable impression that right from its start in 1906, it played a subtle, not a straightforward, strategy for the achievement of its goals which ranged from its firm and full loyalty to the British Raj so as to consolidate and strengthen its position in the country *vis-a-vis* the Indian National Congress to the creation of a separate and sovereign Muslim homeland as the final price of that allegiance at a time when the foreign rulers had made up their mind to wind up their imperial enterprise that, once being an asset in the form of 'brightest jewel of the crown of the Monarch', had turned into a massive liability for them after the second World War. Those who deliberately avoided joining the national mainstream strengthened the 'mandate of exclusion'. The painful result of all this was the defeat of a sane, constructive and secular nationalism at the hands of rank communalism assuming the garb of 'Muslim nationalism' as proudly termed by its protagonists.

The rise of Muslim nationalism had its first manifestation in the gospel of isolationism preached by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan that exhorted the coreligionists to keep aloof from the Indian National Congress and in stead express all loyalty to the British rule.¹ At the inaugural session of the Muslim League held at Dacca in December, 1906, Nawab Viquar-ul-mulk said : "I must confess, gentlemen, that we shall not be

1. A noted scholar of this subject frankly observes : "Ever since the debacle of 1857, the cornerstone of Syed Ahmed's policy was reconciliation and cooperation with the British at all levels. The idea of revolution was unpalatable to him as he was afraid that it would carry India back by a century." Shan Muhammed : *The Aligarh Movement : Basic Documents, 1864-1898* (Meerut : Meena-kshi Pub., 1978), p. xv.

Inaugural and Welcome Addresses

<i>Sessions</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Venues</i>	<i>Addresses delivered by</i>
Inaugural	30 December, 1906	Dacca	Nawab Viquar-ul-Mulk
Third	29-30 January, 1910	Delhi	Hakim Mohammed Ajmal Khan His Highness The Agha Khan
Fourth	28-30 December, 1910	Nagpur	Khan Bahadur H.M. Malak
Fifth	3-4 March, 1912	Calcutta	Moulvi Badruddin Hyder Khan
Seventh	30-31 December, 1913	Agra	Syed Alay Nabi
Eighth	30 December, 1915- 1 January, 1916	Bombay	Abdul Husain Adanjee Peerbhoy
Ninth	30-31 December, 1916	Lucknow	Nabi Ullah
Tenth	30 December, 1917	Calcutta	Abdul Latif Ahmed
Special	31 August-1 Sept. 1918	Bombay	Fazalbhoj Currimbhoy
Seventeenth	30-31 December 1925	Aligarh	Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah
Eighteenth	29-31 December, 1926	Delhi	Pirzada Muhammed Husain
(Jinnah Group)			
Nineteenth	30 December, 1927- 1 January, 1928	Calcutta	Mujibur Rahman

Twentieth	26-30 December, 1928	Calcutta	Moulvi Abdul Karim
Twenty-second	26-27 December, 1931	Delhi	Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah
Twenty-third	25-26 November, 1933	Delhi	Haji Rashid Ahmed
(Hidayat Group)			
Twenty-fourth	11-12 April, 1936	Bombay	Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim
Twenty-fifth	15-18 October, 1937	Lucknow	Raja Saheb Mahmud Khan of Mahmudabad
Special	17-18 April, 1938	Calcutta	Fazlul Haq
Twenty-sixth	26-29 December, 1938	Patna	Syed Abdul Aziz
Twenty-seventh	22-24 March, 1940	Lahore	Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz Khan
Twenty-eighth	12-15 April, 1941	Madras	Abdul Hamid Khan
			Sir Muhammed Yusuf
Thirtieth	24-26 April, 1943	Delhi	Husain Malik
Thirty-first	24-26 December, 1943	Karachi	G. M. Syed

loyal for any unselfish reasons : but that it is through regard for our own lives and property, our own honour and religion, that we are impelled to be faithful to the Government; and consequently the best security for our good faith is the undoubted fact that our own prosperity is bound up with and depends upon our loyalty to British rule in India.”² The founder chairman of the League (Nawab Salimullah Khan of Dacca) on this occasion said that “if the earlier efforts of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan be taken into account, our present activity is but a natural development of the work begun nearly half a century ago.” Likewise, in his inaugural address delivered at the Delhi session of the League in 1910, the Agha Khan said : “Our first and foremost duty is to prove our active loyalty towards our Sovereign and his heirs and successors by our endeavours to strengthen the foundation of British rule in India and its permanence by consolidating the sentiments of loyalty which permeate the land, by taking a legitimate pride in the glorious Empire in which we are partners, by uniting the great sister communities through the bonds of sympathy, affection and a community of interests.”

The Muslim League, therefore, started its career “with the aim of (i) infusing a sense of loyalty in the hearts of the coreligionists for British rule and thereby removing any misunderstanding that might creep in the community regarding any measure of the Government, and (ii) safeguarding the political rights and welfare of the Indian Muslims and presenting their demands and needs in a respectful manner before the British government.” Surprisingly the Koranic injunctions were interpreted for such a purpose. In his welcome address delivered at the Delhi session of the League in January, 1910, Hakim

2. On this occasion, the Nawab made it clear that the gathering was like an attempt to fulfil the mission of the founder of the Aligarh Movement. As he said : “Gentlemen, that which has drawn us here today is not a need which has only now been felt by us. When the National Congress was founded in India, the need had even then been felt, and the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, to whose foresight and statesmanship Muslims should always be grateful, had made great endeavours to impress upon the Muslims the belief that their safety and prosperity lay in their keeping aloof from the Congress.”

Ajmal Khan said: "Loyalty to his rulers is ingrained in the Muslim's nature and is inculcated by his religion. The *Quran* expressly lays down that the Muslims and the Christians are nearer each other than the followers of any other two faiths. We also realise that the presence of the British in India is the best guarantee for the preservation of peace and order in the country and for the equitable protection of Muslim interests. In steadfastly serving the cause of our own community, we ought never to embarrass the hands of Government."

Sir Syed established the M.A.O. College at Aligarh with a certain purpose and after its death its trustees like Nawab Viquar-ul-Mulk and Nawab Mohsin-ul Mulk faithfully continued the tradition.³ Principal Archbold of this College could play a role in fixing an interview of the Muslim delegation with Viceroy Minto at Simla on 1 August, 1906 in which a Memorandum, *inter alia*, demanding separate electorates for the Muslims under any new scheme of constitutional reforms was presented. The whole case was powerfully advocated on the basis of what Sir Syed had said in the meetings of the Viceroy's Council some thirty years back. The Viceroy could catch the point as it could be easily fitted into the implementation of the strategy of 'divide and rule'. It found its incorporation into the Act of 1909 and for this the leaders of the League expressed their whole-hearted gratitude to the alien rulers. The League took it as a matter of prize and did not agree to relinquish it at any cost.

The Congress had to make a compromise with its basic ideology on this point when it accepted the Lucknow Pact (1916) with the fond hope of bringing about a change in the attitude of the League in course of time. But the League leaders were astute politicians and they could play their game at a time when they were faced with the pressure of a danger

3. It was made quite clear that the object of the proposed Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh "shall be primarily the education of the Muhammedans, and so far as might be consistent therewith, of the Hindus and other persons." *Selected Documents of the Aligarh Archives*, edited by Yusuf Husain (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1967), p. 315.

to Central and West Asian Muslim countries during the first World War that eventually led to the outbreak of Khilafat agitation. The disintegration of the Ottoman Empire could not be prevented and the office of the Sultan of Turkey (Caliph) could not be saved. The Khilafat Movement failed bitterly. The leaders of the League parted their company with the Congress and once again adopted the path of 'loyalty' to the British rule. They took an unrelenting position on the issues of separate electorates for the Muslims and, more than that, now came forward with the demand for one-third representation of the Muslims in the Central and Provincial legislatures and ministries, but they stoutly opposed any move of the same nature for reservation of seats in the legislatures of the Punjab and Bengal for the non-Muslims. As a result the efforts of the Nehru Committee ultimately went in vain. The Nehru Report "saw the practical side of the Indian agitation and was projected to serve as a fitting reply to the racial arrogance of Lord Birkenhead, but what happened in the sequel was a national humiliation doubly intensified."⁴

The idea of Iqbal that the future of Indian Muslims would be safe if a separate state were carved out covering the Muslim-majority areas of the north-western parts of India could be appreciated by the leaders of the League after a short break. What Iqbal mooted in 1930 could have a place of its own in the scheme of Chaudhry Rahmat Ali (1933) and although Jinnah rejected it in 1934 by calling it 'children's chimera', he could recognise its implications after the inglorious defeat of his party in the elections of 1937. The League failed to get majority in any British Indian province and its leaders discovered the device of saving their face by inventing the bogey of 'Congress fascism'. In his welcome address delivered at the Calcutta session in April 1938, Fazlul Haq gave the call that 'Muslims must stand and fight alone'. Since the British rulers allowed the formation of Congress ministries in 7 out of 11 Provinces under the provisions of the Act of 1935, the leaders

4 Lal Bahadur : *Struggle for Pakistan* p. 155

of the League minced no words in rebuking the British as well.⁵ The way was cleared and the frustrated but ambitious leaders of the League adopted the resolution of a separate and sovereign state of the Muslims in India at the Lahore session in 1940.

Henceforth, the League became the custodian of the cause of the Muslim *millat* (nation) *vis-a-vis*, what it termed, the nation of the Hindus. The two-nation theory of Jinnah presented at the Lahore League became the sustaining element. A jubilant leader of this organisation like G. M. Syed (who had moved the Pakistan Resolution at the Lahore League) in his address delivered at the Karachi session in December, 1943 said: "Until now, the Muslim League has been endeavouring to unite the *millat* on the theory of an independent sovereign state of the Sindhu nation. By the grace of God, Muslims are now united on that issue. Now the nation has reached the stages when steps for action have become necessary. This will be the beginning of the new phase in the political history of the *millat*." By all means, it was a different strategy and since the League was pampering on the clandestine patronage

5. As Fazlul Haq said on this occasion: "Let us once and for all abandon all hope of protection through the so-called safeguards in the constitution. We must shape our own destiny unaided by any outside authority, and in spite of our political opponents, British authority in India has indeed ceased to function and the sceptre is slipping fast from British hands. True that British still hold sway in Delhi and Simla, but that sway increasingly lacks reality, and is becoming more and more like that of the successors of Aurangzeb. After all, the British came to India as traders, and as traders they are now anxious to remain—they would sooner part with power than with trade. They believe that their commercial interests will be best served through an alliance. Their guarantees to the minorities and particularly to the Muslims of India, have proved to be shallow through and through. The sooner we cease to rely on them the better. We must fight the battle of Islam alone and with all our resources, with our backs to the wall. If Panipat and Thaneswar must repeat themselves, let the Muslims prepare to give as glorious an account of themselves as did their forbears."

of the British rulers, its intransigence went on unchecked and undiminished.

If the Congress in 1929 declared that it would accept nothing short of complete independence for the country, the League in 1940 made it clear that it would accept nothing short of a separate and sovereign state of the Muslims. It became quite evident that any constitutional plan which sought to torpedo the Pakistan demand and Muslim India would be relentlessly resisted by the League and, as such, any political party that stood for the establishment of a democratic state of united India could have no agreement with it. A powerful protagonist of this line like Prof. Z. A. Suleri argued that there were three main reasons behind the formulation of the demand for Pakistan—(1) Muslims having been rulers before British advent were at least entitled to rule Muslim-majority areas; (2) Hindu and Muslim philosophers being antagonistic, it was not possible for them to live together; and (3) Muslim impact with Western thoughts having been complete, the Muslims were convinced that their social and economic problems could be solved only by an approach to Islam.⁶

With such a commitment it was natural for the League to reject the proposals of Cripps relating to the making of a new constitution by a constituent assembly for India after the termination of the Great War. And yet as a shrewd strategist the League carefully adhered to the way of supporting the British in the moment of its great difficulty created by the Great War and a greater one by the Quit India Movement of the Congress. It could thus exploit the opportunity of obliging the foreign rulers and thereby strengthen its case to an extent that a dream of Muslim homeland became a reality after five years.⁷

—J.C. Johari

6. Z.A. Suleri : *The Road to Peace and Pakistan* (Lahore : Sheikh Mohamed Ashraf, 1945), p. 64.

7. See Stanley Wolpert: "The Indian National Congress in National Perspective" in Richard Sisson and Stanley Wolpert (ed. s) : *Congress and Indian Nationalism* (London : Oxford Univ. Press, 1986), p. 37.

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PART I

INAUGURAL AND WELCOME ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT THE MUSLIM LEAGUE SESSIONS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

The Musalmans here are protected by Christians, and there is no Jihad in a country where protection is afforded, as the absence of protection and liberty between Musalmans and Infidels is essential in a religious war, and that condition does not exist here. Besides, it is necessary that there should be a probability of victory to Musalman and glory to the Indians. If there be no such probability, the Jihad is unlawful.

MAULAVI ALI MUHAMMAD, of Lucknow;
MAULAVI ABDUL HAI, of Lucknow;
MAULAVI FAZLULLAH, of Lucknow;
MAULAVI MUHAMMAD NAIM, of Lucknow;
MAULAVI RAHAMATULLAH, of Lucknow;
MAULAVI KUTAB-UD-DIN, of Delhi;
MAULAVI LUTFULLAH, of Rampur;
and others.

Dated 17 July, 1870

1

NEED FOR A POLITICAL ORGANISATION OF THE MUSLIMS

I*

I have no words with which to thank you for the honour you have done me in electing me as your Chairman to-day. The place could have well been filled by many others in the community who are present here, but now that you have commanded me to fill it, I can only obey your wishes and discharge the duties of a Chairman of such an assembly to the best of my powers. I have, however, to thank the Hon'ble Nawab Salim-ul-lah Bahadur of Dacca specially, for the title which he has unconsciously given to me. I have my doubts about being Viqar-ul-Mulk or 'the pride of the country', but I can assure you I am, as I have always been, 'Mushtaq-ul-Mulk' or 'the lover of my country'. The us old men creeping every day nearer and nearer to our graves, what is left to do, but to be Mushtaq-ul-Mulk and Mushtaq-ul-Qaum, lovers of our country and lovers of our race¹. I feel that the unwitting recognition of my love of my people, for which I have to thank my Hon'ble friend the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca, is my greatest claim to fill the chair you are now offering me. May I long deserve this title.

I believe you all know what you have come to discuss.

*Inaugural address delivered by the Chairman, Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk at the Dacca session held in December, 1906

1. The term 'race, is here and hereafter used in the sense of 'qaum' or 'millat', not in the racial or ethnic sense. Elsewhere the Arabic term is also translated as 'people', 'nation' or 'community'.

As this deliberation on political questions will be a free one, I trust no person who is a Government servant will take part in it, as the tie which binds him to the Government precludes the possibility of our regarding him free in the sense in which non-official members of any community can be. Moreover, the discussion of such grave problems requires maturity and experience on the part of us all, so that young men who are still in school and college cannot be expected to offer to us a fair share of either. At the present stage of their lives they should learn and not teach. They should therefore not be encouraged to leave the hard task of mastering things for the more pleasant one perhaps, of dictating to others. When they have graduated and stepped into the arena of the world, we shall welcome their participation, but not yet. So, if there is any gentleman present here who is a Government servant, he should withdraw, and if he is a student in a college or school, I shall request him not to come forward to participate actually in this discussion.

Gentlemen, that which has drawn us here to-day is not a need which has only now been felt by us. When the National Congress was founded in India, the need had even then been felt, and the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, to whose foresight and statesmanship Musalmans should always be grateful, had made great endeavours to impress upon Musalmans the belief that their safety and prosperity lay in their keeping aloof from the Congress. This view has been proved to be so far right though Sir Syed Ahmed Khan is no more among us, the Mohammedans are still firm in that belief, and as time passes they will feel more and more that, in order to protect and advance their political rights and interests, it will be necessary for them to form their own separate organization. Five years ago, in October 1901, some Musalmans from various provinces had assembled at Lucknow, and, after careful consideration of the matter, they had come to the conclusion that the time for the formation of such an organization had come, and consequently the work of organizing such a body in the United Provinces was going on when new events followed close upon each other in Bengal; and impressed by the

direct and indirect influence of the National Congress, and finding that the Government intended to increase the representative element in its Legislative Councils, Musalmans, as a community, sent a Deputation to the Viceroy to Simla last October, and represented their needs, and the disadvantages under which their community had been labouring, before His Excellency. All these proceedings, together with the Viceroy's reply to the Deputation, have already been fully reported in the press and made familiar to the country. I need not allude to them in detail now. On that occasion, those representatives of the community who had assembled as members of the deputation had, after a careful consideration of the ways and means by which the political rights and interests of their co-religionists could be permanently safeguarded, decided that in December next, delegates from different provinces should be asked to assemble at Dacca and discuss this momentous question. In the meantime, the Nawab Bahadur of Dacca had framed a scheme for the same purpose and circulated it for our consideration. To-day we have assembled here to settle finally the lines of action in a question the settlement of which has so long been postponed.

Before I proceed with the work we have in hand to-day, I feel it necessary to say that, no matter what the general principles of British administration may be, and no matter what rights may be vouchsafed by the generosity and love of justice of the British nation to its Indian subjects, we who have not yet forgotten the tradition of our own recent rule in India and elsewhere, and are more intimately acquainted than other communities of India with the proper relations which should subsist between the Government and its subjects, should accept it as a rule of our conduct that the plant of the political rights of a subject race thrives best in the soil of loyalty, and consequently the Musalmans should prove themselves loyal to their Government before they can ask for a recognition of any of their rights. The Musalmans are only a fifth in number as compared with the total population of the country, and it is manifest that if at any remote period the British Government ceases to exist in India, then the rule

of India would pass into the hands of that community which is nearly four times as large as ourselves.

Now, gentlemen, let each of you consider what will be your condition if such a situation is created in India. Then, our life, our property, our honour, and our faith will all be in great danger. When even now that a powerful British administration is protecting its subjects, we the Musalmans have to face most serious difficulties in safeguarding our interests from the grasping hands of our neighbours, instances of which are not rare in any province or district, then woe betide the time when we become the subjects of our neighbours, and answer to them for the sins, real and imaginary, of Aurangzeb, who lived and died two centuries ago, and other Musalman conquerors and rulers who went before him. And to prevent the realization of such aspirations on the part of our neighbours, the Musalmans cannot find better and surer means than to congregate under the banner of Great Britain, and to devote their lives and property in its protection. I must confess, gentlemen, that we shall not be loyal to this Government for any unselfish reasons: but that it is through regard for our own lives and property, our own honour and religion, that we are impelled to be faithful to the Government; and consequently the best security for our good faith is the undoubted fact that our own prosperity is bound up with, and depends upon our loyalty to British rule in India. I shall be the last person, gentlemen, to suspect our neighbours of civil intentions, but I do not hesitate in declaring that unless the leaders of the Congress make sincere efforts as speedily as possible, to quell the hostility against the Government and the British race, which is fast increasing in a large body of their followers, the necessary consequence of all that is being openly done and said to-day will be that sedition would be rampant, and the Musalmans of India would be called upon to perform the necessary duty of combating this rebellious spirit, side by side with the British Government, more effectively than by the mere use of words.

It is however our duty towards our neighbours that as far

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as our influence may reach and our persuasion may work, we must prevent our friends and neighbours from going on the wrong path, and as their neighbours it is always one of our first duties to deal with them with fairness and courtesy and, without prejudice to our legitimate rights and interests, to carry on with them an intimate social intercourse, maintain our sympathy, and strictly avoid all forms of hostility towards them. I would go even a step further, and impress upon you, gentlemen, that there is no quarrel between us and the National Congress and Congress people, nor do we oppose or disagree with every one of their acts and views. Indeed we are thankful to them for the efforts which they have made in causes common to us both, and procured certain advantages in which they and we have equally shared, and it is quite possible that we may regard in the future a part of their programme is perfectly justified. All the differences that now exist between us and them, or shall exist at a future date, must fall under one or other of three heads. Either they will relate to those demands of theirs which, if granted, would endanger the continuance of British rule in India; or they will relate to those efforts of theirs which are directed against our own legitimate interests; or they will fall under the head of that want of moderation and respect which are due from the subjects to their sovereign. And this leads me to say that we must bear in mind that moderation and respectfulness shall have to be the essential characteristics of any political organization which the Musalmans assembled here to-day would form.

I cannot help recalling the pleasure which I experienced when, in reply to the Address of the Musalmans' deputation to the Viceroy, of which I had the honour to be a member, His Excellency said that Musalmans of Eastern Bengal had behaved with remarkable moderation and courtesy under the most trying circumstances, and I have to congratulate the Hon'ble Nawab Salim-ul-lah Bahadur of Dacca and the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Syed Nawab Ali Chowdhury on a result so eminently successful, which was brought about by their own efforts and the great influence they wield in Eastern Bengal : and we can all rely that this influence will be used in

the future, as it has been in the past, on the side of moderation, law, justice and courtesy.

II*

The Chairman then called upon the Nawab Salimullah Khan of Dacca to move the first resolution. While moving it, he said :

You who have assembled here in a remote corner of the country, not very easy of access, after having travelled many hundreds of miles from every part of India, drawn by some great impulse, do not need to be told by me in any detail that there exists a special necessity at this moment for an increased political activity on the part of us all. Whosoever is in touch with the affairs of this country and our community must feel the thrill of new life which has, as if by magic, galvanized our community. India seems to be on the eve of a new era of public life, and the Mohammedans who suffered so far from a kind of suspended animation, feel to-day the revivifying effect of a general awakening.

To a casual observer it may appear that we have only just made a start in public life; and those who do not bear us much goodwill have sometimes paid us the compliment of regarding us as mere automations, and attributed this show of new

* Resolved that this meeting, composed of Musalmans from all parts of India, assembled at Dacca, decide that a Political Association be formed, styled All-India Muslim League, for the furtherance of the following objects :

- (a) To promote, among the Musalmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government, and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of Government with regard to any of its measures
- (b) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India, and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.
- (c) To prevent the rise, among the Musalmans of India, of any feeling of hostility towards other communities, without prejudice to the other aforementioned objects of the League.

activity to the wire-pulling of others. But those who have studied our affairs more closely will not regard the new movement as a first start, so much as a turning of a corner of the course. It was only last evening that we wound up the work of the 20th session of our Educational Conference, and if the earlier efforts of the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan be taken into account, our present activity is but a natural development of the work begun nearly half a century ago. As regards the suggestion that this new phase of our public activity is due to external causes, I must admit a confession is due from the Mohammedans of India. It is certainly due in part to the trend of events over which we had little control; but this is no more than saying that if there is any one at all to blame, it is not we who are to blame for this general commotion among Mohammedans. Our new activity is only like the increased vigilance of the police in a district where disregard for the laws of property is fast spreading. Had the party now in power in England been familiar with the position and rights of the Mohammedans of India, and had those among our countrymen who have hitherto been taking a prominent part in the public life of this country been consistently just in asking for the allotment of their respective shares to the various communities of India, it is not improbable that the League which it is now proposed to form would not have been heard of for a long time, if at all; and that we would have gone on pursuing the traditional policy of our people and attending solely to our educational needs. But it is manifest that gross ignorance prevails in England regarding the real condition of India, and only those have a chance of being heard at that distance who cry the loudest in this country. Quiet and unobtrusive work is at a discount; and much as any other method than what has hitherto been associated with us may be disagreeable to our community, we are forced to adopt that which is most effective in the realization of our aims. Similarly, it is noticeable that the interests of the minority have often been disregarded by a pushing majority, if not deliberately, then through oversight, or as I think, through the natural desire of the majority to work for those interests which are nearest and dearest to it, namely, its own. It is quite possible

that our friends, the Hindus, may repudiate any suggestion of such disregard of our interests, but you, gentlemen, who have come to eastern Bengal, unprejudiced and unbiassed. nay in many cases even sceptical of the facts as represented by myself and others who aired a grievance, have been, I am assured, convinced in the most practical manner by your own observation that in one part of India at least the grievance is real and has not been overstated.

As I have said, this movement of the Musalmans of India is nothing new or strange. I was surprised to read, only a few days ago, that as early as in 1893, our revered leader, the late Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, had felt the need of a separate political organization for the Musalmans of India; while it is only too well-known that as early as in 1887, his great speech at Lucknow kept the Mohammedans back and stopped them from joining the so-called National Congress. It is only now that I, for one, have been forced, by the practical needs of our community during the crisis through which we in Eastern Bengal are passing, to believe in the urgent necessity of a separate political organization for the Mohammedans of India which the far-sighted Sir Syed Ahmed had felt more than a decade ago. There were then before us four alternatives: (1) to take no part in politics, and leave to the Government the task of safeguarding our interests; (2) to step into the arena, and take up an attitude of direct hostility to the Hindus; (3) to join the Hindus in the National Congress and do what they did; and (4) to form a separate organization of our own. The third alternative, namely, joining the Congress, was declared even in 1887 to be out of the question, and no one can say that we have wavered since then in our belief; and even our worst enemies cannot say that we have ever followed the second alternative of taking up an attitude of hostility towards any other community. Out of the other two alternatives, in 1887, we were certainly in favour of a policy of 'masterly inactivity' as regards politics; but the disadvantages of such a quiescence forced themselves upon our attention before long, and in 1893, we decided under the leadership of Syed Ahmed Khan to form a separate political organization, called the

'Defence Association'. But then, as before, our aim was defence not defiance; and, to guard still further against the dangers of political activity in a half-educated and war-like race, such safeguards were devised as almost paralysed the organization even for purposes of defence. To this, gentlemen, I should like to draw your attention, as, though we may now be compelled to remove some of the safeguards devised in 1893, I am anxious to impress upon your minds that the spirit of those safeguards, the spirit of caution, will still be as essential a part of our activity.

In 1893, we were naturally very anxious to impress upon the British Government that we were loyal subjects and law-abiding citizens, for it was considered that our rulers had some doubts on the subject, which, however unnecessary, were perhaps not wholly unnatural at the time. Again, education had not toned down the passions of a war-like community, and turned the irascible temper of a newly fallen race into a sweet reasonableness. There was, in addition, the great danger of our giving up the difficult and constructive work of education in favour of the easy task of a destructive critic in politics. The need of self-help might then have been ignored on account of the less taxing effort of criticizing others. The endeavour to deserve might then have been paralysed by the intensity of the desire to obtain. The voice of the reformer might have been drowned in the babel of the demagogue.

To-day the aspect of affairs has greatly changed. The Government has been convinced of our steadfast loyalty under the most trying situations. In 1897, Lord Elgin bore testimony to the unflinching fidelity of the Mohammedan troops that opposed their own co-religionists on the battle-fields of Chitral and the borderland, and shed their own blood and the blood of their brothers for their king and country. This, gentlemen, was a situation which no other community has had a chance of being tried in. If, then, we have special claims on the Government, it is because the test of our loyalty has been specially searching and unique. From those who were considered so dangerous at one time as to be allowed no other

career than that of the ploughman in the fields, we have risen so much in the estimation of our rulers, that leading statesmen of England call us the forces of loyalty in India and one of the greatest assets of the Empire, some portion of which has been won with our own support, and the whole of which we are guarding to-day. It is no more necessary to waste whole regiments in the interior in order to guard against an imaginary danger of rebellion, and the Commander-in-Chief can set free with a light heart the major portion of our army for guarding the frontier of the Empire.

As regards education, although we have not achieved all that we desire, we do not at least belong to the category of barbaric hordes which it was at one time the fashion of some people to regard us. Our passions, though they are even now those of a war-like race that carved out Empires, wherever its flag unfurled and the sound of its kettle-drums was heard, are more under our control than we could assume them to be even 50 years ago. We can respect the restraints which law has devised for the peace of the land, though even now we shall not be making, like some other communities, a virtue of necessity. I am afraid the danger of our neglecting the best means of advancing our political rights and interests, namely by education, still exists; but we can safely leave the renowned leader of our community, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk Bahadur, and his colleagues and the old students of the Aligarh College, to combat that danger as they have hitherto been doing, and to work on with a will in order to found our future university, which will be an even more unique and splendid constructive work than the Aligarh College, which has no equal in India.

In short, gentlemen, we are to-day prepared to enter on a political career as a community which the spirit of the times impels us to do. A more active propaganda, a more candid statement of our needs and aspirations, and the giving of a more public and more representative character to our Political Association, are more necessary to-day than was the case in 1893. But nothing of the spirit of loyalty is lost thereby, and no amount of candour shall rob us of our traditional courtesy.

The resolution which I have the honour of moving to-day has been so framed that the object of our League is frankly the protection and advancement of our political rights and interests, but without prejudice to the traditional loyalty of Musalmans to the Government, and goodwill to our Hindu neighbours. Whenever it is necessary to do so, we shall represent our views to the Government, and respectfully submit our claims for due consideration. But whenever the intention of any measure of Government is misunderstood by our people, it shall equally be our duty to remove that misconception. Those interests which we have in common with other communities will be advanced by us in common with them, and those additional interests which are exclusively ours will be advanced exclusively by us, though we shall advance them both through our League. But just as we shall be respectful and moderate in the representation of our views to the Government, so shall we be just and fair to the other communities whose interests may clash with ours. This latter contingency may by some be regarded as a remote one, but at any rate it is possible, and it is on this account that the formation of a separate organization of the Musalmans is necessary. I cannot conceive that the ultimate interests of the various communities of India could ever conflict, but their immediate interests are, and shall often be at variance; and unless each community looks after itself, it can have no chance of achieving or retaining what is, by right, its own. This is only natural, and it is only on this account that our neighbours are asking for self-government. Can they, then, with any show of consistency, deny to us what they so vehemently claim for themselves?

In conclusion, gentlemen, I must say that only after a central League like the one proposed to be formed to day comes into existence, can the Government find a representative body to which to turn for ascertaining the views of the Musalmans of India, and to which the Musalmans themselves can turn for consistent and firm support, sensible and sincere advice, and a true interpretation of the wishes of the Government. The materials have, for long, been ready, but only now shall we be

able to rear from them the mighty and splendid fabric of a united people.*

* Hakim Ajmal Khan seconded this resolution. He said, "I have nothing to add to the able speech of the Nawab Bahadur. The resolution itself is so clear, and its motives so apparent, that I shall only be reiterating what has already been said. I would therefore merely say that I second the resolution, and leave it for open discussion." Zafar Ali made a speech in support of the resolution. Sahebzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, supported the resolution, but wished to amend clause (c) substituting for the words 'to prevent the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities,' the following words: 'to remove the cause of friction between the Musalmans of India and other communities.' Sheikh Abdullah seconded the amendment.

Mohamed Ali explained that the words of the amendment only pointed out a method of "preventing the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities," and the amendment was therefore wholly covered by the language of the original resolution. On this the amendment was withdrawn. The original resolution was put to vote, and passed unanimously.

2

A PLEA AGAINST POLITICAL APATHY

1*

In the name and on behalf of the Reception Committee of the All-India Muslim League, I beg to accord a hearty and warm welcome to you all, our esteemed guests, who have come here from various parts of the country to join in our deliberations regarding the condition of the Indian Musalmans and to take part in the proceedings of the Delhi Session of the Muslim League—a session which, by recognizing the existence of the League separately from the Mohammedan Educational Conference, marks an important advance in awakening the political consciousness of the Muslim community. This Session of the League, therefore, possesses a weight which is all its own and is practically the first Muslim gathering with a purely political object, at which are met the representatives of the community from all parts of India to chalk out a safe and straight path for the desired goal.

Important and distinguished as the present assembly is, no better place could have been selected for it than Delhi, Imperial Delhi, the mention of whose name carries the mind back to a glorious past, whose fascinating life-story has ever captivated the imagination of students of history and whose uniquely position led British Viceroys to hold the two memorable *durbars* of modern days on its historic soil. And it was in the fitness of things that a body which took its birth in the city of Jahangir (Jahangirabad or Dacca) should have comple-

* Welcome address delivered by Hakim Mohammed Aimal Khan at the Delhi session held in January, 1910.

ted the stage of its infancy in the city of Shahjahan (Shahjahanabad or Delhi). We are thankful to the organizers of the League for their accepting our invitation and are doubly thankful to you, gentlemen, for the encouraging and enthusiastic response you have made to our humble call

The period that has elapsed since the last annual meeting of the League held at Amritsar has been crowded with notable events. Indeed, the country is still passing through times at once stirring and epoch-marking. The introduction of the Reform Scheme opens a fresh chapter in the history of British rule in Hindustan, and we are now standing on the threshold of a new era in the Indian polity. Great and invaluable concessions have been granted to the people, and British statesmanship, ever characterized by generosity and beneficence, is exerting itself to lead the peoples of this Eastern land, step by step, along the path of political progress on Western lines. Real and effective participation of the representatives of the people in the actual work of daily administration is being ensured, and the highest executive and deliberative assemblies of the Empire have been thrown open to the sons of the soil. The Hon'ble Mr. Sinha's nomination to the Viceroy's Executive Council and the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali's elevation to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council stand as conspicuous landmarks in last year's history of the British Empire. I may take this opportunity of congratulating my fellow-countrymen on the appointments, and of giving utterance to the satisfaction with which both events have been hailed in India; though prolonged delay in the nomination of a Musalman successor to Nawab Imadul-Mulk on the India Council is naturally causing the Mohammedans considerable anxiety. Confident though they are that in future appointments the Secretary of State will not ignore the principle which guided his first selections of Indians for the India Council, the principle of having a Musalman also on the Council to represent the Muslim point of view along with that of the non-Muslim community—confident though they are of this, the present suspense is a source of widespread concern.

In spite, however, of the bestowal of new privileges on the people, the difficulties of government have not altogether disappeared and the atmosphere continues to be surcharged with grave anxiety. The despicable crime of Sir Curzon Wylie's murder, the more recent assassination of Mr. Jackson, the vile attempt on the Viceroy at Ahmedabad, the near-home bomb discovery at Ambala, and the latest atrocity of Mr. Shamsul Alam's murder within the precincts of the Calcutta High Court are a few dark deeds out of a number which, though planned by anarchical propaganda, undoubtedly owe their inspiration to the pestilential teaching of the sedition mongers. Unfortunately for the peace of the country, the forces of disorder and disruption are still at work and the administration has had to strengthen its position, by adopting repressive measures. If, on the one hand, we deplore a resort to strong steps, we cannot, on the other, shut our eyes to the paramount duty of the State to uphold law and preserve order, which is the first essential of all progress. When the spirit of sedition and lawlessness is abroad, when the cult of the bomb is preached and practised, when assassinations have been attempted and committed, and when wildly suicidal schemes of *Swaraj* are hatched, is it wise or even possible for any government that cares for its own safety and of its subject-races to remain an unconcerned spectator of the game of violence sought to be played by the anarchist and the revolutionist? The responsibility for the enforcement of repressive measures must therefore rest with those whose insanity has forced their adoption on the State, and it should be the imperative duty of peaceful citizens to co-operate with the officers of Government in putting out the fire of sedition and anarchy.

Just as we have our duties towards the rulers, so have we other and no less binding duties towards our neighbours. It is obligatory on us not to injure the susceptibilities of peaceful neighbour communities, nor should we dislike a whole community for the unfriendliness of a few of its members. As imprudent individuals have striven to embitter Hindu-Muslim relations and as attempts are made to shove the blame for this on the Musalmans, it will not be out of place if I were to

Draw attention to some relevant facts and try to examine how far the charge is well-founded.

The first notable revolution in the political life of India, after the year 1857, began with the foundation of the Indian Association at Calcutta in 1876, which subsequently developed into the so-called Indian National Congress. The late Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, however, foresaw serious danger for his co-religionists in their joining the movement, and exhorted them to keep aloof from it. Mohammedans had lagged behind in the race for education and were also numerically much weaker than the Hindus. Moreover, some of the founders and workers of the Congress were not cordially disposed towards the Government. By hearkening to the advice of the Sage of Aligarh, the Muslims as a body left the Congress severely alone, with the consequence that, instead of frittering away their modicum of energy and placing their destinies in dubious hands, they devoted themselves wholeheartedly to their greatest need, the reclamation of the ground they had lost in the field of education. To achieve the last object, they laid the foundation of the Mohammedan Educational Conference in 1888. This was the first national effort of the Musalmans which, though innocent in itself, excited the resentment of their neighbours in a manner that was no less unreasonable than it was unexpected. But every one can now see for himself that if Mohammedans had then permitted themselves to be entangled in political squabbles, the consequences would have been disastrous to their best interests.

However, to argue from Sir Syed's attitude towards the Congress that desired the Indian Musalmans to avoid politics for all time to come is a mistake. He was himself helpful in founding a 'Defence Association', though his untimely death left the movement without a guiding hand. In the meantime, while the number of educated Mohammedans had increased, events were marching with great rapidity in India. A policy of indifference towards the political life of the country could no longer be justified, and the members of the Muslim Depu-

tation which waited upon the Viceroy in 1906—itsself the result of a general political awakening among the Musalmans—resolved to start a political organization of the community, which before long assumed definite shape in the foundation of the Muslim League at Dacca. But this was the signal for volleys of attacks from the Congress camp on the Mohammedans and their national policy. Those, however, who take exception to the existence of bodies established for safeguarding communal interests, forget that in advancing the cause of one section of the population you advance, indirectly, the cause of the whole, and that a network of Hindu associations and sabhas is already striving for the promotion of sectional interests. So long as such sectional institutions, whether of the Hindus or of the Mohammedans, do not jeopardize the larger interests of the country or community, we should welcome them, instead of criticizing their activities. The fact is all the same evident that the differences which I have enumerated above, and a few other minor points of divergence, have gone far to create a feeling of estrangement between the Hindus and the Musalmans. It is to be confessed with regret that party papers have materially contributed towards keeping alive these differences, the Arya Samajic periodicals being unquestionably among the greatest offenders in this respect. The time, I am positive, has come when Hindu and Mohammedan gentlemen of light and leading should put their heads together, and by agreeing that each community may legitimately seek to protect and promote its special interests without encroaching on the lawful rights of the other, learn to tolerate one another's existence. I am sure I can speak for my co-religionists throughout the Indian continent in declaring emphatically that Mohammedans regard as their brethren all loyal and law-abiding Hindus, whose exertions to advance the welfare of India, if they do not aim to remove the protection of the Union Jack, they are prepared to support and supplement in a broadminded spirit of judicious catholicism.

Reverting to the Reform Scheme and the definite recognition therein of the position of the Musalmans, as an integral but distinct part of the Indian population, I must give

expression to our feelings of deep satisfaction at the Government having, in the main, carried out the pledges which had been held out to us, though our fate hung in balance and swayed between hope and fear for a considerable time. I have no doubt, gentlemen, that you will give your closest attention to the question of Mohammedan representation on representative bodies like municipal and district boards, universities and Legislative Councils. With the passing of the Indian Councils Act, the potentialities of these institutions have increased enormously, and the question of our proper representation on them has thus assumed grave importance, while the adoption of the recommendations of the Decentralisation Commission will further enhance the value and status of all local bodies. In view, therefore, of the new state of things that has established itself in the country, and the changes that are yet in contemplation, there can be no two opinions as to the supreme importance of the question. We thankfully realize the benevolence of the rulers in what has been done for us as a community; but I cannot conceal from you the reality of the disappointment which has been felt in Muslim Punjab at the denial to us of the right of separate representation on the Provincial Council, in spite of the fact that the need for it was perhaps more insistent here than elsewhere. Though forming the majority of the population of the Punjab, the Musalmans find themselves, curiously enough, in the minority in every one of the five electorates on which the right of choosing representatives for the Council has been conferred—a disparity due, I believe to some extent at least, to the exclusion of district boards from the electoral groups and, chiefly, to insufficient Muslim representation on municipal boards. It is the earnest prayer of the Muslim community in this part of the country that Government be pleased to bear this point in mind on the occasion of the next elections, and that steps be taken to remove an obvious anomaly.

Let me, in this connection, caution you against premature elation at our recent successes in the Punjab elections, successes which are purely accidental and due to various circumstances—the usual phenomena of Mohammedan solidarity and

Hindu differences being two of these. Similarly, it is necessary to raise the voice of protest against the impression prevalent in certain quarters that Mohammedans have secured excessive representation on the Imperial Council. The notion is due to the mistake of including in the list of Muslim representatives the names of those Mohammedans who have been sent up to the Council by mixed electorates as the joint representatives of all classes and creeds. These are, of course, members of the Mohammedan community, but they are not and cannot be regarded as representing it solely. If, however, our Hindu fellow-countrymen resent this, they ought not, in all fairness to the Musalmans, blame the latter for the present results, which could be easily avoided by introducing completely separate communal representation on all representative bodies from top to bottom, as primarily asked for the Musalmans.

To illustrate that thoughtful men among the non Muslim races of India, too, which have not been carried away by the party cry of mixed electorates, are not opposed to separate elections, I may remind you of the well-known opinion pronounced on the subject by that stalwart Congressman, Sir Pherozshah Mehta, whose promised explanation for his recent abdication of the Congress Chair we are—I may observe by the way—still awaiting with great eagerness. Almost identical views were strongly expressed by the President of the last Punjab Hindu Conference. Another staunch Congressman, the Hon'ble Mr. Sinha, as President of the Bhagalpur Conference, said: "I am strongly in favour of provision being made for the separate representation of the Musalmans to an extent which will enable them to be adequately represented on the Legislative Councils, regard being had to their numerical proportion, their position in each province, and in the country at large."

I cannot leave this point without offering grateful thanks to those whose patriotic efforts, on the one hand, and also those whose sense of equity, on the other, have secured for us our share in the promulgated reforms. Towards Your

Highness our hearts are too full of gratitude to enable us to give adequate expression to our feelings, but I know I am echoing the sentiments of every one in this hall, and of the great Mohammedan community outside this hall, when I affirm that the Muslims, who are proud to own you as one of them, are fully sensible of what your Highness has done for their cause and realize that but for your timely intervention they would have been hopelessly handicapped in the new race on which India is starting. Your Highness's voluminous correspondence with the central office at Aligarh, your liberal financial assistance to the League, your public speeches and your pay-te interviews bear ample testimony to Your Highness's burning zeal for the cause of your co-religionists. In the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali your Highness found an entirely zealous and devoted co-worker, who brought his great talents, keen intelligence, and untiring energy to bear on the consideration of the Mohammedan problem in India at the present juncture. Though absent in body he is, we feel, present with us in spirit, and will shortly address us with words of clear, terse and significant wisdom and sagacity through a deputy. However tall in the "musalmans" be, a voice from within will pierce into my ears that so long as we have the priceless advantage of the leadership of a patriotic and self-sacrificing prince like Your Highness, and of the guidance of an enlightened noble like the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali, we have no cause to lose heart, and that we shall be able to pull ourselves through our right.

I should be guilty of an unpardonable dereliction of duty if I omitted to proclaim what I believe is at this moment uppermost in the minds of you all. We are deeply grateful to the two illustrious statesmen who are now at the helm of Indian affairs and to whose generous appreciation of the Muslim position in India we are indebted for the equitable recognition of our communal rights. In His Excellency Lord Minto we have truly found a benefactor, whose memory our future generations will bless. We are no less thankful to the Right Hon'ble Lord Morley who has grasped the Indian situation with rare precision and whose attitude towards His

Imperial Majesty the Emperor's Muslim subjects has throughout been characterized by justice and sympathy.

Gentlemen, having achieved some success, we cannot afford to go to sleep. Sirenaous work has yet to be done, if we are fully to attain to the object of uplifting the nation from the low level to which it has sunk. The prospect before us is not free from anxiety, and unless we take time by the forelock and forge new weapons to fight the battle of life with new method, our future will be even more gloomy than our present. Other races have stolen a march on us and are actively pushing on with rapid strides. The campaign of conversions to the Hindu faith started with such vigour, threatens to create fresh difficulties for us. Our share in the public service of the land is yet absolutely inadequate. In education we are still very backward. We have only lately entered political life, and the League requires to be strengthened and consolidated. At present there is little cohesion between the central organization and its provincial branches, and the number of district branches is also comparatively small. Though we have happily earned the goodwill of the rulers, relations between the Mohammedans and sister communities are capable of being improved. The condition of our fellow-countrymen in South Africa is woefully unsatisfactory. The *Law of Wakt-ulal Aulad*, as interpreted and administered by British courts, is bringing about the ruin and disintegration of many old Muslim families. These and kindred topics will doubtless engage your attention, and I trust your united labours will result in the elaboration of our national policy and in working out its details on lines that will conduce to the stability of the British Government in India, the welfare of the Musalmans and the promotion of Hindu-Mohammedan cordiality. Loyalty to his rulers is ingrained in the Muslim's nature and is inculcated by his religion. The Quran expressly lays down that the Musalman and the Christian are nearer each other than the followers of any other two faiths. We also realize that the presence of the British in India is the best guarantee for the preservation of peace and order in the country and for the equitable protection of Muslim interests. In steadfastly serving the cause of

our own community, we ought never to embarrass the hands of Government. Intemperance of language should be as sedulously avoided by us as immoderation in aspirations. I feel assured that the task which our League has set itself to perform will be accomplished with the patience, sobriety and farsightedness that behove a representative body of a responsible community.

With these words, gentlemen, I repeat the sincerest and warmest welcome to you on behalf of the Reception Committee and of the Muslim population of Delhi.

II*

Seven years ago I had the honour of presiding at the Mohammedan Educational Conference held in this Imperial city at the time of the historic Proclamation Durbar of His Majesty the King Emperor. During the interval many things have happened, and one of the most gratifying signs of the times is the partial awakening of the Musalmans of India. The recent march of events has been as rapid as it has been momentous; its course is indicated by the enactment in the Indian Empire of what Lord Morley called the 'signal transaction', with which benevolent and statesman-like policy his Lordship's name will be permanently associated—and by the formation of our League. At first the idea of the formation of the League was actually poohpoohed in some quarters, while in others it did not receive the attention it merited. But as subsequent events have shown, it has more than justified its existence, and I am proud to say that I was one of the originators of the movement. The necessity for the immediate formation of a Muslim League impressed me on the occasion of my visit to Aligarh in 1906, and I communicated the idea to my late and most lamented friend, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk, by whose death we have suffered a serious and irreparable loss. With characteristic foresight, he accep-

* Inaugural address delivered by the Agha Khan at the Delhi session held in January, 1910.

ted my suggestion, worked for its attainment, and brought about the Deputation which, waiting on H. E. Lord Minto in 1906, was the starting point of the recognition of the principle that the important Muslim minority in this country should have its fair and legitimate share in the administration of the country. We must not, however, forget that a sympathetic Viceroy whose memory is dear to Hindu and Muslim alike—the Hon'ble Lord Ripon—had in the early eighties laid down the principle of communal representation. For the maintenance of our due share in the political life in this country, and for the removal of an old standing exclusion, which formed a bone of contention between the Hindus and Mohammedans, the separate electorate for Musalmans was deemed to be an absolute necessity. Now that we have secured it, I hope it will result in a permanent political sympathy and a genuine working *entente cordiale* between the members of the two great sister communities.

Let me make it clear that we have not received an undue preference, as has been alleged in some quarters. In fact, we have not got all that we thought was promised or all that we had asked for; but in their final shape, the Reforms were publicly and gratefully acknowledged by us as a fair and reasonable compromise. Here, I must recognize the loyal support which your representatives in Eng'and, Syed Ameer Ali and myself, received from practically the whole of the Muslim community; and I must say that without this practically absolute unanimity, we should never have had the fair share of representation in the new Councils to which we are entitled. When the elements of constitutional government were being introduced into India, it was only natural and right and just that we should press for the reasonable recognition of the special interests and peculiar needs of a vast and important community like the Muslims. I am glad our just demand has been recognized. Now that the Reform Scheme has been finally settled and is actually in active operation, we must accept it as final in an appreciative spirit, worthy of our traditions, and try to make the best of it as loyal subjects of our beloved Sovereign the King Emperor and as citizens of India. May I venture also to say most emphatically that it

is to the interests of Indians—Hindus and Muslims, Christians and Parsis alike—to accept the Reforms in a spirit of cordial appreciation, and that it now lies with us to do our utmost as enlightened citizens to co-operate with Government and our representatives in the Councils in working them for the common welfare of the people, remembering that if we make a practical and beneficent use of this opportunity, we shall surely, in time to come, get a further advance towards constitutional government. In fact I may say that self-government has come to our very doors. On the other hand, if we waste our time in squabbles over the form of the Regulations, and in general hostility towards what should be regarded as a settled fact we shall lose the sympathy of our well-wishers in India and England, and the result will be that the growth of liberal institutions, and our slow progress on the long path towards ultimate parliamentary institutions in India, will be greatly retarded. We must all remember that if these Reforms fail, the alternative will not be a more liberal set of regulations but a return to the *status quo ante* that will check the realization of our aspirations.

Public opinion in England scrutinizes India carefully and is watching to see how we discharge the great trust committed to us. Are we Indians prepared to go forward on the road to reform or to recede and disappoint our friends? Do we desire further liberal concessions, or do we wish the curtailment of the rights now at last granted? There can be no doubt as to the reply. Is it not then the duty of all, Hindus as well as Mohammedans, to prove by our conduct and ability that we are capable of making practical improvements in the moral and material conditions of the people, which is after all the aim of wise governments? If we fail in the initial stage, what prospect is there of our obtaining the further liberalization of the rules and regulations at a later stage? A grave duty rests upon us in connection with the new Councils; they are not an end in themselves but are only the means to achieve an end, namely, the improvement of the moral, material and economic condition of our people by the diffusion of education and science, so as to develop the intelligence and humanity of our

peoples in the highest sense. If we prove by our knowledge of the conditions of the country, by our zeal and efficiency, that our co-operation is an indispensable factor in the improvement of the administration of the country, then I have no doubt that gradually our area of utility and opportunity and powers will expand. But if on the other hand, we view the Reform Scheme and the regulations under it in a spirit of obstructive particularism instead of using the wide powers placed in our hands for the conservation and development of those forces which are the dynamic factors in national progress all the world over, then as surely as night follows day, we shall divert the blast of fair wind which ought to drive us far on towards the realization of many of our cherished ambitions.

Hindu Muslim Co-operation

Now that we Muslims have striven for and obtained a reasonable recognition of our rights, should we not consider what our aims are, what interests we have in common with our Hindu brethren, and what are the peculiar communal interests which will demand the steady attention of our representatives? Our first and foremost duty is to prove our active loyalty towards our sovereign and his heirs and successors by our endeavours to strengthen the foundation of British rule in India and its permanence by consolidating the sentiments of loyalty which permeate the land, by taking a legitimate pride in the glorious Empire in which we are partners, by uniting the great sister communities through the bonds of sympathy, affection, and a community of interests. And may I plead again for no mere cold calculating loyalty, bound up with a materialistic sense of favours to come; but a warm passionate attachment to the Imperial House under which this country has made such gigantic strides, which has given us the most liberal *raj* the world has ever seen, and which along guarantees us the peaceful attainment of those grand national destinies that we believe to be in our hand—an attachment to His Majesty's throne and person, and through that to the historic institutions of which he is the head, which

shall burn in our hearts and colour all our actions. Our representatives in the Councils are first there as loyal Indian subjects of the Emperor, and then as the guardians of any special interests of the Muslims. Their function in the Council is of a threefold character. In the first place, they must co-operate, as representative Indian citizens, with other Indians in advancing the well-being of the country by working wholeheartedly for the spread of education, for the establishment of free and universal primary education, for the promotion of commerce and industry, for the improvement of agriculture by the establishment of co-operative credit and distribution societies, and for the development of all the natural resources of the country. Here indeed is a wide field of work for Hindus and Mohammedans acting together, in forwarding practical measures that must tend to the permanent welfare of the country. In the second place, our representatives must be ready to co-operate with the Hindus and all other sections of society in securing for them all those advantages that serve their peculiar conditions and help their social welfare, for although the two sister-communities have developed on different lines, each suffers from some peculiar weakness in addition to the misfortunes common to general economic and educational backwardness. And then our representatives must watch and promote social measures exclusively for the benefit of their Muslim co-religionists with the co-operation, we hope, of the Hindu members; for we, too, have needs that are not known to them and which we alone can fully understand. We have committed to us the sacred duty of helping forward, with our sympathy and advice and practical help, the interest not only of Indian Musalmans, but also of our co-religionists outside India, whose true and permanent welfare depends, in no small measure, upon the greatness of England and upon the maintenance of the British Empire foremost in the councils of the world (*sic*).

I have no hesitation in asserting that unless Hindus and Mohammedans co-operate with each other in the general development of the country as a whole and in all matters affecting their mutual interests, neither will develop to the full

its legitimate aspirations or give full scope to its possibilities. In order to develop their common economic and other interests, both should remember that one is the elder sister of the other, and that India is their common parent; religious differences should be naturally reduced to the minor position, as such differences have been in America and Western Europe. We must bear in mind that the healthy national unity which we seek to establish will not be promoted but retarded by forgetting the historical and social differences that have made Hindus and Mohammedans what they are to-day. We must determine what are the interests what they are to-day. We must determine what are the interests that we have in common with the Hindus, and co-operate for their advancement; then remember the measures necessary for the removal of our peculiar ills, and again help each other in removing them. What is the actual work of those who sit in the different Councils as our representatives, what is to become of the League, what is its legitimate sphere of work? My respected friend the Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali has to some extent defined the proposed division of work of the League, and I fully and cordially agree with him. I need therefore say no more about it than this, that nothing would be more disastrous to our interests than the impression that its work is to be confined to the narrow limits of political activity or the attainment of merely selfish ends. It must embrace catholic interests in their broadest sense. We must ascertain the real, pressing needs of India; and then devote our attention and energies to satisfying them.

The Importance of Education

We have then before us a comprehensive programme involving a vigorous, practical, sustained attack on the problems relating to education, agriculture, commerce and industry. I place free primary education for the masses in the front rank. Our aim must be to see that it is not only free and universal but also sufficiently practical to be of use to agriculturists and labourers. In arranging our courses of elementary education, we must keep in mind the fact that an

immense proportion of those attending the primary schools do not proceed beyond them, and that they should be so designed that the pupil will fully benefit from the primary schools without reaching the secondary. We must concentrate our energies on primary education in such a way that there shall be no redundancy or superfluity, so as to make it of real benefit to the recipients. The agricultural classes should in particular be given such training as will secure them the fruits of their industry. Our system of secondary education stands in need of a twofold development. We must extend and improve the facilities for imparting a sound grounding to those who are proceeding to the Arts Course, and then, on the other hand, we need urgently to develop a 'modern' side, which will be complete in itself, and will fully equip the student for a career in the rapidly increasing commercial activities of the country, or for the specialized scientific course, for which there is an ever-growing field. So far we have made little or no progress towards securing that diffused knowledge of science, which is absolutely essential if the country is to take its rightful place amongst the producer nations of the world. Until our teaching machinery is enormously improved, students in these special courses must obtain their instruction abroad, and there is no method better than the multiplication of Government and other scholarships. But we shall not rest content until there are provided in this country facilities for the instruction of its students up to the highest pitch demanded by the stress of modern industrial life. Then when we have our trained men, we have to assist them to develop the economic resources of the country. We must send our boys not only to England and the Continent but to America and Japan, so that they may learn the various processes in the lives of that great industrial commonwealth. Those who have acquired proficiency in commercial training should be helped by co-operative societies to open business not only in Europe and America but in Africa and Asia to find markets for indigenous Indian products. To foster local industries, to relieve agricultural indebtedness, and to ameliorate the lot of the peasantry and encourage artisans, it is

necessary to form extensive co-operative societies under the aegis of the Government.

Agricultural and Industrial Development

To obtain the regeneration of Indian arts and industries, either a temporary moderate system of protection, or some corresponding economic expedient should be adopted, so as to prevent the strangulation of these infant industries. We must have ever before our eyes the fact that the great mass of the Indian population is dependent upon agriculture. In Europe and North America, society has passed from the agricultural to the industrial stage of evolution, but here we are still in the primitive stage; our emergence from it will be slow and gradual, and Hindus and Mohammedans have ample scope for improving the lot of the toiling agriculturists, impoverished by the ravages of famine consequent upon drought and their social customs and thriftless habits. Here we have an immense agricultural class; our duty is to make that agriculture pay. By a rational system of elementary education we can keep the peasant from the coils of the usurer; by the extension of irrigation we can reduce his dependence upon an erratic rainfall. But the history of agriculture all the world over tells us that the salvation of the small cultivator lies in co-operation. Co-operation to secure cheap credit and wipe off the burden of hopeless debt that hangs round the necks of our ryots; co-operation to secure cheap and efficient distribution; co-operation in the introduction of agricultural implements and to profit by the lessons of our Research Institute and experimental farms—this is the only agency that can permanently benefit our backward agriculture. Then our industrial development must equally claim our united attention. No country in the world can be great or prosperous until its agricultural and industrial activities have been made mutually dependent on each other. It is commerce and trade that have made European countries prosperous and powerful; and if we aspire to our legitimate place in the British Empire, we must concentrate our mind on our economic development.

Support for Indians in South Africa

Another direction in which the two communities must immediately work together is on the burning question of the Indians in South Africa. Our fellow subjects, who are there maintaining an unequal struggle in a heroic manner that commands our admiration are wilfully subjected to persecution, insults and indignity and are branded with the undeserved stigma of an inferior race. We must all do all in our power to help our compatriots in South Africa. Hindus and Mohammedans have combined there in the common defence of the prestige of the whole Indian population; and the passive resistance they offer, amid untold privations and sufferings, with patience and martyrdom, must set an example to those here who are not ashamed to have a recourse to measures that have brought infinite shame and disgrace to India. If no better method can be found of bringing the Colonial Government to see the glaring injustice and cruelty of their acts to our brethren, we must ask the Government to stop all indented labour to South Africa as a mild step of retaliation. Yet another channel, and even more important for immediate purposes than anything else, in which Hindus and Mohammedans can co-operate with all their powers of mind and will, is the wiping out of the blot on the fair name of India by the extirpation of the anarchical cult. We must send earnest missionaries, form organizations and vigilance committees, and from pulpits and platforms, from mosques and temples, orders must emanate for the prevention of political crime, inflicting social disabilities on sedition-mongers and their disciples. In particular, students must be guarded from the tainted influence of the foolish and insane people who would ruin the country. All these are questions in which loyal and patriotic Hindus and loyal and patriotic Mohammedans can work hand in hand for a common goal with singleness of purpose and awakened conscience.

Muslim University

Now I will come to the questions of separate or exclusive Muslim interests, which, let me at once add, in no way clash

with the interests of the great sister community, but still affect us only. Pre-eminent amongst these practical questions is the foundation of a Muslim University at Aligarh. As I pointed out here seven years ago, our youth must be in a position to acquire, in addition to modern science, a knowledge of the glorious past of our religion. Without a sincere and deep but unobtrusive and charitable faith, without that childlike feeling of dependence on the Unseen Power of which the visible universe is but a sign, our youth can never develop their highest and noblest faculties, their spiritual and emotional qualities. Our university must be a residential university. Like those great seats of learning, Oxford and Cambridge, it will strive to form the character, as well as train the intellect, and satisfy the emotions through the medium of a loving and charitable faith, of discipline, of field sport, and that intangible atmosphere that environs all which is best in university life. It should be the home of great ideas and great ideals. But it should also be much more; our efforts ought to be bent to the task of making Aligarh a Muslim Oxford—an educational centre and intellectual capital to which all Muslims should turn for light and guidance. We should lay bare before the rising generations the treasures concealed in ancient Arabic lore with a view to developing the spiritual and emotional side of their nature, which in its true sense is now even more backward than our economic condition. In order to enable us to come in touch with what is best in the ancient Hindu civilization and better to enable us to understand the origin and structure of Hindu thought and religion in its widest sense, as well as to inculcate in us a feeling of respect and affection for our fellow-subjects, and to teach us to consider their customs and their prejudices, Sanskrit and other Oriental literature ought also to be given due prominence in the curricula. The object of the university is not to gratify mere sentiment or vanity; we believe it to be necessary for the true development of our principles and the ultimate spiritual unity of our faith. Commonsense and science alike teach us that we are not independent agents but links between the past and the future; and all that is healthy and glorious in the past should be preserved, taught and

understood, because it exercises a beneficial influence on the future. It is therefore necessary that all that is good should be conserved, to enable us to hold a spiritual communion with the beloved figures of the Prophet and his companions and with our splendid historic past. To avoid the catastrophe involved in the radical separation of ancient and modern ideals, the university is our great need. Moreover, it is our aim to develop discipline and reverence in our youth, and instil in their minds the principles of toleration, piety and charity, so that they can live in concord and harmony with other races. Our loyalty to the Throne must be absolute, and our relations with the Hindus and all other Indian communities who share that loyalty must frankly be most cordial. Otherwise our political activities will tend to the undoing of both, and ultimately prove detrimental even to the British Power. The true interests of the British Empire can never lie in a policy of 'divide and rule'. Such a policy, as British and Indian statesmen worthy of the name well know, can only weaken their ultimate power and make India a source of anxiety instead of a source of strength.

The Political Faith of Ordered Development

Whilst we hold fast to our own religious, social, and ethical ideals, whilst we hold equally fast to the separate organization and separate representation which are essential for their maintenance and to secure for community its due influence in the body politic, it must be the desire of our rulers, no less than of ourselves, to pursue these ideals, to work out our constructive programme, in harmonious co-operation with all other Indians who accept the cardinal principles of our political faith—the ordered development of this country under the Imperial Crown. Time, the opportunities for co-operation in stimulating the social and economic progress of the country, and the diffusion of education will also, I believe, remove the acerbities attaching to the religious difficulties and caste disabilities which sap the foundation of Indian society, so that they will become, in the distant future, the minor forces that they are now in Western Europe and

America. If we extend hearty and sincere co-operation in each other's transactions and interests and pursue higher ideals and act with moderation and judicious calm, then I have no apprehension for the future of India.

Wakf-alal-Aulad

Now I will say a few words in special support of the suggestions made by my distinguished friend Syed Ameer Ali, the President of the London Branch of this League—whose absence from our deliberations I deplore more than I can say—as to the system of Wakf-alal-Aulad. This is again our exclusive interest, but I hope the Hindus will co-operate with us in seeing that Muslim families are not broken to pieces. We must strive to bring about a satisfactory solution of this important question, as it is necessary that Muslim families should be protected against the impoverishing influence of constant and vexatious sub-divisions. I feel very strongly on the subject, with Syed Ameer Ali, and I think this is a question where our Muslim representatives can directly set to work, and thus benefit the community. I fully endorse the various practical suggestions made by Syed Ameer Ali, but I do not wish to tire you out by treading same ground, as most of you are already familiar with my full agreement with his views on the practical proposals placed before us in his usual forceful manner by the London President.

The Future

And now, gentlemen, let me say a final word with regard to the future. We have before us a convincing demonstration of the altruism and liberality of British statesmanship. In the midst of difficulties so great that at times they threatened to overcast the political horizon, undaunted by acts of anarchy in India and those conservative influences that must beset the path of the reformer in every country and in every age, Lord Minto and Lord Morley have turned a bright new page in Indian history. We do not know which to admire most—the courage and sympathy of the Viceroy, or the judgement, intellectual strength and sober liberalism of Lord Morley. But

we are confronted by the fruits of their work. We see the representatives of all classes of people in this country brought to the Councils of the Imperial and provincial governments in numbers never before approached. We see these Councils endowed with an authority, with opportunities for making the opinions of its members known and operative, to a degree far transcending any that existed in the past, associating us indeed with the daily administration of the country. The future lies more largely than ever with ourselves. By the measures in which we rise to these responsibilities shall we be judged, will the fortunes of the land to which we are passionately attached rise—or fall. Fully conscious of these opportunities, let me once again earnestly appeal to all to support law and order, remembering the immense blessings British rule has conferred upon this land. Never was the condition of Indians more happy than it is to-day. Never was peace of the country so serene and secure as under the Crown. Fifty years of British rule in India, since it passed to the direct control of the Crown from the East India Company, has changed the entire character and political aspect of the country. We have been secured against strife and disorder. The elevation of the people in the scale of civilization by means of Western training, the development of the country by encouraging foreign capital, the gradual disappearance of social and traditional barriers through the levelling influence of education, the security of life, property and peace, and the dispensation of justice with an even hand to rich and poor alike, the guarantee of freedom of thought and speech, and liberty of press, and above all religious toleration have all brought about a silent but steady change in the thoughts, aspirations and manners and behaviour of the people. We are at the beginning of a period of renaissance and reform in the social, economic and political life of the people, and by ethical teachings we may inspire our youth and their descendants, with a genuine love of their country and fellowmen. The moral and material and intellectual condition of the population presents a curious and on the whole a favourable contrast with the pre British period; and the words of the philosopher-statesman that rules India, the bureaucracy in India has proved to be “a

great and splendid machine for performing the most difficult task that ever was committed to the charge of any nation". Indian public spirit is cultivated on Western lines, the intellectual expansion is quickened in a marvellous degree. New hopes and new ambitions have been created as a natural sequence of this instruction, and to meet them British statesmen have wisely resolved to give Indians a far larger share in the administration of the country. No human agency can be perfect in this world and that applies to British rule as to all others; but even if the British Government had no other claim on our affections, these great political concessions alone would entitle them to our deep and sincere gratitude. But they have, as you and I know full well, changed the destiny of the country, set afoot progressive agencies, the end of which is not yet in sight, and brought the country into line with the civilized countries of Europe, proving in the words of the great English poet :

Peace has her victories,
No less renowned than war.

All this is due to the beneficial influence of *Pax Britannica*. Now may I ask whether we have paid our debt to the Empire, to our country and to our community? The community that carried culture to the Pyrenees and to Central Asia, the community that can still recall with emotional pride the greatness of Cordova and Damascus cannot be dead to its sense of duty. I appeal to you with all the force in my power, I entreat you with all the earnestness at my command, to imitate the spirit of those who made Toledo and Baghdad, to dream day and night, to work day in day out, for the noble object of elevating Muslim life so as to hold forth the highest ideals before the younger generation. The task before us is of stupendous magnitude, the path of progress is endless; but if we have at heart the true interests of Islam, no obstacle and no sacrifice will be too great to speed our onward march on the path of progress.

I fervently pray that for ever we shall have the Imperial
Academy of the Punjab in North America: <http://www.apnaorg.com>

dynasty and the Union Jack as the abiding centre of our real national unity, that our immediate aim shall be to make young generations virtuous and efficient and our posterity robust and healthy, so that it may fulfil its legitimate part in the Empire with honour to the race. Let our pole-star be active and unimpeachable loyalty to the Sovereign and the glory of India and of Islam.

APPRECIATION OF MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS*

As Chairman of the Reception Committee, it is my proud privilege to welcome you, our esteemed guests, to Nagpur, a city which in many ways presents a strong contrast to Delhi, where you assembled last. This city is not, I admit, a classic ground. It does not draw our pulses as Delhi does, so rich in historic associations and so lovely in her desolation; and yet Nagpur is by no means an unfit place for the meeting of the All-India Muslim League; for the life and motion and the many-sided activity, the signs of which are all around you, are typical of the new order of Eastern and Western ideas which, without killing our deep spiritual life—that precious heritage of every Musalman—have inspired us with a sense of social duty incompatible with a life of cloistered seclusion and pale asceticism, and it is the sense of social duty that has brought together from all parts of India a band of self-denying gentlemen representing the intelligence, the culture, the wealth and the public spirit of the country and of the community, fired with the noblest and purest purposes, resolved to do their duty by their country and their community and confident in their destiny. For good or for ill we stand face to face with a new world and must adapt ourselves to the environment. The problems which now meet us cannot be solved by piety and philosophy alone, and under the new conditions which have arisen, political and social action is essential to our progress as loyal and law-abiding citizens of

* Welcome address delivered by Khan Bahadur H.M. Malak at the Nagpur session held in December, 1910.

the British Empire. Nagpur, therefore, is, I repeat, not an unfit place for the discussion of the new problems which have arisen. Indeed, in some ways, this city, being situated in the centre of India and within easy reach of all the provinces, for which reason it ought to have been the capital of the British Empire in India, is a fitter place than Delhi.

The Committee of which I have the honour to be the Chairman consists of representatives of all sections of the community and of the Province. With short notice at our disposal, and amidst many difficulties not unknown to you, the Reception Committee have spared no pains to make arrangements which we hope will prove satisfactory to you. But we regret we have not been able to accord you a more fitting reception. We, however, feel certain that you will kindly take our will for the deed and overlook any shortcomings in the arrangements made for your comfort and convenience.

The highest dictates of patriotism require that our sympathy should go forth to the help of the backward and destitute, and that by sharing what has been given to us with our co-religionists in distress should conclusively establish our claim to speak for them and to demand their co-operation with us in the struggle for the regeneration of our community. Our claim to their regard and love should be based upon substantial services and not merely on lip-sympathy expressed in paper-resolutions. Our illustrious and distinguished leaders, keeping these points in view, decided to hold the Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League at Nagpur, for which the Musalmans of the Central Provinces and Berar are deeply grateful.

It is, however, impossible to say anything new upon current topics without repeating what has often been better said before. But as the call has to be complied with, without further preface, I shall take you through some important events of the year. Though not first in the order of time, the demise of one of the wisest Sovereigns of the world deserves first mention. The death of His Most Gracious Majesty the

King Emperor Edward VII, the world's peacemaker, saddened the hearts of the high and the low and darkened the horizon of the Empire. His Majesty successfully continued the policy of his august mother, who gave the Indians the splendid charter of their rights and liberties in 1858. It has been truly remarked by non-Muslim observers that the British Crown has no more loyal and devoted subjects than the Musalmans of India; to them the British Sovereign is not a foreign ruler but like their own Emperor, the continuance of whose beneficial sway is essential to the peace and prosperity of India. Their loyal attachment to the new King and his gracious Consort is no less profound than that entertained towards the late Monarch and Queen Alexandra. The sentiments of the League in respect to the Imperial bereavement and to the accession of King George V will be formulated by this Nagpur Session of the League. Therefore I need not dwell at length on this topic.

His Excellency Lord Minto, who has been our Viceroy for the last five years, has now left us. But His Lordship's place is among the great Viceroys whose names are remembered with gratitude and affection as benefactors and friends of the communities of India. We may say without the least exaggeration that the situation in India, after the regime of Lord Curzon, called for a statesman of great gifts of character and sagacity, and that Lord Minto has fully proved himself to be such a statesman. His services to India and the Empire can be fully estimated if we could imagine what would have happened if, in his place, we had had a Viceroy less endowed with the virtues of insight, sympathy and self-effacement. Such a contingency makes one's flesh creep even in the mere contemplation.

His Excellency touched the deepest chords of the hearts of the 70 millions of the most loyal and grateful Musalmans and brightened their vision of the future. We beg to assure him of our sincere gratitude for all that he has done, and our heartfelt prayer is that he may enjoy his rest with that happiness which work well-attempted and conscientiously done

brings to such personalities. We desire to offer our sincere and dutiful welcome to His Excellency Lord Hardinge, and beg permission to express the hope that his rule may fulfil the expectations which are given expression.

By associating Indians with the actual governing body of the Empire the Government of India has given proof of its loyal adherence to the Magna Charta of India, and restored, as by a touch, their confidence in the intentions and in the integrity of British rule. The legislative Councils of India had undergone expansions before, but there are certain features of their present enlargement which mark a distinct stage in Indian political evolution. The direct recognition of the communal interests of the important Muslim community, the right to move resolutions, to discuss the budget and to put supplementary questions, and the chief of these, the appointment of Indians to the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and of Provincial Governments, has touched the imagination of the people as a signal vindication of the great Charter Act of 1833 and the gracious proclamation of Queen Victoria of 1858, showing clearly that the promise of equal treatment given by the Sovereign and Parliament to the subjects of the Crown in this country is no mere empty phrase of idle boast. It is a solemn obligation undertaken by the rulers with a full sense of responsibility, and meant to be realized in actual practice in the fulness of time.

The Reforms and Separate Representation

The Reforms have thus laid the foundation of constitutional progress for this country and Lords Minto and Morley, whose names will be inseparably associated, have by their inauguration earned our undying gratitude. Lord Minto had the satisfaction of presiding over the new Council which his sympathy and earnestness enabled him to bring into existence. His Excellency for the first time in the annals of our administrators, had an Indian as his colleague in the Executive Council. The appointment of the Hon'ble Syed Ali Imam, a sound lawyer and a statesman after the resignation of Mr. Sinha, has created a precedence for representing the communal

interests on the Viceroy's Executive Council, which Lord Minto's successors will find it inexpedient to ignore. It is hoped that this precedent will find a permanent place in the Statute-Book. I here take the opportunity of warmly and sincerely congratulating the Hon'ble Syed Ali Imam. The appointment of a Mohammedan member in the Council of the Secretary of State for India, after the resignation of Syed Husain Bilgrami, C.S.I., has confirmed our conviction of the representation of the Mohammedan element on the Secretary of State's Council. I heartily congratulate the Hon'ble Mirza Abbas Ali Beg on his appointment to the India Council.

It may not be deemed presumptuous on the part of the Mohammedans to think that some amongst them might also be found eligible for holding a seat on the Executive Council of the Lieutenant-Governor. I am sure the community which has supplied a member for the Privy Council, Viceroy's Executive Council and Secretary of State's Council, can well afford to supply on demand a member for the Executive Council of the Lieutenant-Governor.

It will not be out of place to bring to the notice of the benign Government the reality of the disappointment which has been felt by the Musalmans of the Punjab at the denial to them of the right of separate representation on the Imperial Council. The Central Provinces and the Berar have an even more serious grievance—that they have no Legislative Council at all. And the legislation of Berar is all by order in Council. The teeming millions of these Provinces deserve the sympathy of those more fortunately situated; and we have no doubt that the Muslim League will adopt a resolution in favour of the establishment of a Legislative Council at Nagpur, and that it will also pass a resolution praying the Government to represent the Mohammedans of the Central Provinces and the Berar on the Imperial Councils. Our Chief Commissioner, the Hon'ble Mr. Craddock, has done much to ameliorate the condition of the fallen Musalmans of these Provinces, for which the community in general and the Musalmans of the Provinces in particular are deeply grateful to him and offer their most

respectful thanks. But Government, however well-meaning, cannot undertake any comprehensive scheme of national regeneration. This we must be prepared to do ourselves and for ourselves, not by isolated efforts, but by an earnest and effective combination of all the forces of the entire community.

Pre-conditions of National Unity

Now I touch a question which has attracted the attention of the leaders of the two great communities, Hindus and Musalmans. Is it possible to strengthen the solidarity of political unity among these two great communities? There is no doubt that the general tendency of evolution is in the direction of unity, and it is at the same time in the direction of gradually increasing specialization and differentiation. The two processes run side by side and may be observed not only in the wider evolution of communities and nations, but also in the smaller sphere of individual development. The question arises, therefore—how are we to synthesize and reconcile two such apparent oppositions? In what sense can unification and specialization form part of one homogeneous process? There is in undeveloped nations a kind of dull, inert unity, proportionate to their lack of development; as soon as a nation begins to grow, the tendency is towards specialization through education and other formative influences on the units which compose it. This at first leads to difference, but final unity can only emerge through continuance along this line. Out of increasing differentiation must grow that final unification which comes from perfecting, not from negating, national development. It must be a unity which grows out of a forward movement, not the unity of passive juxtaposition. Only as the individuals of a nation become more highly organized, does the consciousness of an underlying oneness, annulling the bounds of caste, creed and community, begin to emerge. Applying these remarks to India, we observe that they suggest this important truth—that the cause of unity must be differently served, according to the existing state of development of the race or community concerned. In some cases unity may be directly striven for through the transcending of

differences. But this is only the case when the community in question has already developed the required amount of specialization—in other words, has risen sufficiently high in the scale of civilization and culture. In others the differentiating process has yet to be gone through, and no unity can be hoped for until this has been completed. It is obvious from a superficial glance at India, as it is to-day, that the class which is calling most earnestly for unity is simply that class which has itself become most highly specialized, the educated class, which has reached a position in which the transcending of accidental differences can suggest itself as a matter of practical politics. But it must not be forgotten that the enormous majority of the inhabitants of India are still at the stage where the whole process of differentiation still remains to be begun. They have not yet commenced to climb the scale which can alone lead to that widening consciousness from which the idea of unity can be begotten. The true idea of unity springs from within; that which comes from opposition to a common antagonist is merely artificial and contains no element of permanent life—with the removal of the antagonistic factor it slips back again into disunion and mutual strife. The unity that possesses the genuine nation-building quality is of an altogether different order. It is an intellectual necessity, and only comes into consciousness when men have reached a point where their every excess of individualism begins to render the manifold problems of their common life insoluble except by a further advance, which can only be in the direction of a negation of differences. This point is being reached rapidly in the West where individualization has reached almost the highest pitch. But to the impartial observer, India—even the greater part of educated India—is still at some distance from it. The process of separation, of specialization of the individual has still to be gone through by the great majority of the people, before we can hope to have a genuinely unified Indian nation.

What we see around us to-day—the division of caste from caste, of race from race, of creed from creed—is, for the present, the natural expression of the evolutionary process.

It denotes the struggle for self-expression by the units of the race and has to be continued until at least a large proportion of the Indian people has passed through the process of separate and individual development. This, which alone can render them organic parts of a common and unified nation, is the work of education, of individual initiative and enterprise. Without these necessary preliminaries the true and inner unity cannot be actualized. There is, however, no harm in sinking petty differences of the two great communities for the progress of the country and the cause of good government, and it is the look-out of our distinguished and illustrious leaders to draw a line of demarcation, if possible, between the two great communities of India. We identify ourselves with all that aims at the general advancement of the true interests of the country. We have a rooted conviction that the true interests of the country lie in the maintenance of cordial relations among the Indian communities, and that the true political ideal is one that aims at peaceful progress of such a national character as subserves the protection and development of the interests of all denominations. At the same time, it is our firm conviction that, on our genuine co-operation with the British Government, depends our future progress and the development of a further social and political life. We are convinced that the plant of the political rights of a subject race thrives best in the soil of loyalty. In our relations with Government, therefore, we cannot afford to permit malice to cross our path, warp our judgment and create disaffection. We have given practical proof of our loyalty, and it is our bounden duty, before we ask for recognition of any of our rights, as honest citizens, to realize the responsibility and to give a solemn account of our utterances to ourselves. We should never let ourselves be tempted to express frivolous opinions on serious matters or make ourselves ridiculous by allowing mere love of notoriety usurp the solemn functions of patriotism and loyalty.

Separate Representation in Local Self-Government

Now referring to the question of the separate representa-

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tion of the Musalmans on municipal and district boards, I have only to say that short of it, our doom will be more or less sealed and all the privileges of the extension of local self-government will be a sealed book to the Musalmans. The question of our proper representation on municipal and district boards has assumed grave importance, and the adoption of the recommendations of the Decentralisation Commission will further enhance the value and status of all local bodies. I am strongly in favour of provision being made for the separate representation of Musalmans to an extent which will enable them to be adequately represented on these bodies, regard being had to their numerical proportion, their influence and their position in each district, province, and in the country at large.

Urdu—The Lingua Franca of India

The other point which engages the serious attention of the Muslim community is the question of Urdu versus Hindi and Punjabi. There cannot be a shadow of doubt that Urdu is the lingua franca of India. Often a Hindi rendering of an Urdu word is so transparently outlandish that it is intelligible only to those who knew the original Urdu. When the Mohammedans were the rulers of India, Urdu came to stay in India permanently and became the mother-tongue of the Indians. Even in the language of business and of culture, Urdu words are adopted because no Hindi equivalents have been supplied and made ready to hand. Community of language is universally admitted to be a powerful factor in securing the unity of a people, and Urdu, which is already spoken by the Indians and understood in all parts of this vast continent is pre-eminently fitted to serve this purpose. Urdu has done, incalculable good to Government. The tone of the Urdu Press, in the recent storm and stress, has been most loyal and respectful. The sphere of the influence of Urdu is extending gradually, in spite of the efforts, in certain quarters, to check the advance. Even in such distant parts of the Empire as Madras, Nepal, and the dark corners of Assam, people whose mother tongue is Tamil, Telugu, and Bengali are increasingly

adopting Urdu for all practical purposes, and are founding schools in which Urdu forms the medium of instruction. A language which possesses such inherent capacity and virtues deserves the solid support of the community and the country.

Indians in Transvaal

I now pass on to the urgent question of the Indians in Transvaal. No one would have forgotten the speech of Mr. Folak and the other stirring speeches at the Delhi Session of the All-India Muslim League, and the ready response evoked from delegates and visitors alike since the resolutions were adopted in the Viceroy's Council and the Government of India passed a Bill taking power to prohibit Indian emigration to the colonies should necessity arise therefor. A wave of feeling has passed over the country in connection with this matter, such men as His Lordship the Bishop of Madras, their Highnesses the Nizam of Hyderabad and the Maharaja of Mysore contributing to the fund in aid of the Indians deported from the Transvaal. There now seems to be some hope of a settlement of the issues between the Colonial Government and the Indian settlers; but no one can be sure of the ultimate end of the struggle, and the Muslim League has to give attention to it.

'Unrest' in India

I will now make a few general observations on the 'unrest' in India. It cannot be denied that there is discontent throughout the country, in varying degrees. This is mainly due to turbulent spirits, especially among the younger generation, who sick with disappointment and with shattered faith, have spurned co-operation of their leaders and openly advocate the establishment of an absolutely free and independent form of national government in India. A few adults have also been carried away by the grandeur of the ideal of absolute autonomy without consideration of the long, weary and essential steps that will have to be taken. As free and full a local self-government as can be had, is, I hold, as noble and inspiring an ideal as can be thought of, in the conditions of the country, to stimulate political activity and weld the inhabitants of India into a nation worthy of the traditions of the part and fitted to

play their part in the economy of the world.

I can-conceive of nothing more certain to retard, nay, to stay progress of the country altogether than what is being done by some who place absolute autonomy as the ideal to be striven for before young and undeveloped minds, whose capacity for mature judgment is not so sound as their imagination is powerful, and work upon their sentiments and lead them to form habits of thought and action subversive of the best interests of the country.

The Government of India has been compelled, owing to the growing discontent, to enact repressive laws to restore lawfulness and peace in the country. Now, as all experience shows secret crime invariably dogs the footsteps of coercion; that which has happened in every other country happened in India I rejoice to find that the year under review has less ghastly assassinations to account for than the previous years. The voices of the leaders of the two communities of India have been practically unanimous in condemning the anarchical crimes which have been committed in some parts of India. We deplore these crimes as being against the instincts and traditions of the Indians. We execrate the misguided youth who indulge in them, as they have brought on a gentle, law-abiding and humane people the reproach of being violent, wicked and cowardly. We sympathize with the efforts that are being made to root out the evil, and we rejoice to find that the evil tendencies are gradually and imperceptibly receiving a wholesome check. We condemn from the bottom of our hearts all seditious movements, and we condemn anarchism most, because it is opposed to the laws of God as well as of man. I am convinced that with the reforms in the administration the sedition will wear itself out. We must also remember that though the Government has been armed with some new weapons, they have been rarely used. In fairness to Government we should, however, remember that in the present state of the country a measure of this kind is necessary.

Turning from this sad picture, I am most happy to say that the general feeling of all classes of His Majesty's subjects

throughout India towards the British Government is one of deep gratitude for the many blessings conferred on India, the most important of which are security of life and property, liberal education, medical and famine relief, sanitation and facilities of communication. The movement of human progress is hard to follow. Often we seem to lose sight of it altogether. It is not like the march of a regiment along the highway, it is like the advance of a crowd, making for some point which only a few know how to find. Look at them from a height and you see that each individual in the crowd has a path of his own. One keeps straight on, another is describing a circle, which brings him back to his starting point in due time; another has turned into the wrong road and is calling the rest to follow him. Even those who hold the steadiest course are often turned back or aside by unexpected obstacles. It is difficult, therefore, to map out the path of progress either retrospectively or prospectively with perfect certainty. We should, however, remember with gratitude the debt we owe to Government. Our just Government in general and the Government of this Province in particular are ever ready to look into our grievances and to help us in all our legitimate aspirations. We have given unmistakable proof of our loyalty. We disdain all spurious loyalty. We do not wear our loyalty on our sleeves, for our loyalty is above all suspicion. To doubt our loyalty is to doubt our sanity.

Advice for Students

I have also a word of warning and counsel for the students, whom I hope my voice will reach. The best hopes for the future of the community are based on them. Their earnestness is an asset for us, which if turned to account, will materially add to the progress of the community. It is from their midst that the Province, in time to come, hopes to supply her share of zealous workers in the cause of good government. Our students, it has to be said to their credit, with a foresight and precision which are not the usual accomplishments of youth, have pointed out the path of duty to us and have kept them-

selves, during the recent storm and stress, within reasonable bounds. The principles of fair play and mutual accommodation and of respect for the rights of others have been their guide in their present career. Let each one of them carry into his fuller life the lessons that he has striven to learn now. The students must engrave it on the tablet of their heart that they are loyal first and anything else afterwards. They must not allow themselves to be weaned from that loyalty which is due from them all to the Crown. The maintenance of its dignity should be their first and primal consideration. The time is not far distant when their present cares will be exchanged for those of the sterner realities of life. They will then be face to face with social problems and political difficulties. My advice to them now is this that they must keep away from politics, and they must be guided by the sober guidance of their teachers and superiors of sound judgment.

Lessons of the History of Nations

I now desire, with your kind indulgence, to add a word on the lessons that seem to me to arise from the experience of different nations—lessons which are pertinent to our community at this juncture.

Turning to ancient Egypt, once the centre of the most advanced civilization of the time, we discover that vast resources, agricultural and mineral, are not alone sufficient to produce a cultured and permanent civilization.

Egypt in ancient times had abundant resources, but failing to note the value of human life, failing to conserve the interests of the millions of the working masses, she sank from the pinnacle of power and culture into political servitude and academic decay. The nation that despises its humblest and most backward class, that provides for them no opportunity to rise in the social scale and in self-esteem, is building its house upon the sands of time. The wealth of the nation is the quality of its manhood.

Greece fell from her eminence, not from any failure of philosophical or aesthetic or political insight, in these directions she has been the chief source of inspiration for the whole Western world. Pericles, Plato and Aristotle are still household names in the West. Athens faded away like a fragrant memory because she failed to look to the economic bases of her prosperity. Had she taken pains to utilize her splendid maritime location for the development of commerce and industry, had she confided her commercial affairs to her freeman instead of her slaves, had she applied the sagacity of her statesmen to the formation of a sound fiscal policy, the story of Athens might have had a different denouement. But she wasted her mineral resources, and expended large sums in the erection of great temples of art and learning. Far be it from me to suggest any criticism against a civilization which has been the fountainhead of all subsequent growth in the culture of the West. I would simply point out that without a permanent and stable economic policy, no civilization, however enlightened, can long endure. This is the message of ancient Greece to our community and country.

*Paramount Importance of Socio-Economic
Development*

Be careful of large expenditures, either individually or collectively, which are unproductive. Forget your caste prejudices in the common effort to uplift the fortunes of India. Be free men, economically, socially and intellectually, and no power under Heaven can keep you in the position in which you are now. No permanently sound and stable development can occur unless we take pains to educate the masses of our people to a sense of their paramount importance and dignity in the social structure. I conceive it to be the prime duty of the enlightened and well-to-do amongst us to rouse, to stimulate and to educate the backward members of the community. Let our people, as rapidly as possible, be educated in the principles of economics, and let special pains be taken for the development of an honest and intelligent class who will be content to organize and manage our industries without sapp-

ing their life by demanding exorbitant profits.

The genius for craftsmanship is among our people, as is evidenced by the ingenuity and skill of our artisan class; let the sons of Syeds, Moulvies and Alims learn to use tools in their boyhood; let every graduate who feels a call towards mechanical work, turn to that pursuit in life instead of hankering after salaried posts, and I am convinced the national genius will prove and assert itself in industries and inventions as well as in literature and thought. I need not dwell before such an audience as this upon the advantages of the capitalistic organization of industries, with its economy of production and its facility of distribution. In the scientific application of capital we must learn every thing from the nations of the West. I am firmly convinced that we need to devote large sums to the founding of chairs of economics in our national colleges, like Aligarh, and to the training of our young men in the subtle problems of finance.

Educational Needs and Development

Educational needs and educational methods have gone on changing with the passage of time. Once a man who could string together a few clever rhymes thereby found favour at Indian courts or with Indian noblemen. Persian and Arabic penmanship was another passport to emolument, and hundreds, sometimes thousands of rupees were paid for superior samples of the art. When the Mughals ruled India, both Hindus and Musalmans took great pains to acquire an elegant Persian style, and some even went so far as to learn Turkish. Those who sought to be reckoned learned went to the centres of Arabic learning and spent years in the acquisition of theology, grammar, logics, physics and metaphysics at our schools. Now, however, a complete change has come over the spirit of the dream. The art of the rhymster and the calligraphist has ceased to be remunerative. The physics of Aristotle and Avicenna is antiquated, the *Al-Magest* of Tusi is useless, the algebra of Khayyam has lost its value, the chemistry of Jabir is mere jugglery. The metaphysics of Averroes has ceased to

be studied and the Platonism of Farabi is of little account. If any scholar harks back to these studies, he does so out of mere learned curiosity or with reference to the study of the evolution of human thought. The truth of the matter is that we the Musalmans of this Province, in particular, have been asleep for centuries while others have been making increasing progress. We have been stationary while the earth has been moving beneath our feet. The seed of decay and degeneration was sown the day we made up our minds to rest, as it were, on our oars. Content with our achievements in the past, we ceased to thirst for fresh knowledge or engage in fresh research. It seems, however, that, rather late in the day, the Musalmans of this Province have commenced to realize what is wrong with them, and the meeting here to-day may be accepted as a living sign or symbol of this awakening. They have begun to see that it is perhaps a good thing for them not only to revive their own old learning and virtues, but even largely to share in the progress which their co-religionists of advanced provinces have been making during their long slumber. The position of the Musalmans of the Central Provinces and the Berar in the public service and in the local bodies, such as municipal and district boards is most humiliating. It is time for them to shake off their lethargic mood, to smooth all artificial angularities and to elevate themselves. They must appraise action more than talk and ever be ready to translate their words into deeds.

I cannot believe that the intellectual power of the Musalmans of this province is exhausted, nor can I believe that they are no longer capable of adding to the sum of human knowledge. If they lay hold of their work with both hands, and do it with all their might, shall they not succeed? Are they the one exception to the general law, and is failure alone engraved on the tablets of their destiny? Are they of all people in the world foredoomed to strive in vain? I do not believe it. I believe in the efficacy of earnest single-hearted endeavour, and I believe in the efficacy of endeavour without reference to fruition. Only courage, capacity and manhood are wanted to carry on the struggle; and provided they bring these

with them, they never need despair.

We, the Musalmans, have an intense and justifiable pride in the contribution of our sages of bygone days to the philosophic, the literary and the artistic wealth of the world. It should be our chief pride, our supreme duty, our highest glory to regain the virtues and the intellectual supremacy of our ancient days.

I should have also liked to say something on the separation of judicial and executive functions, Wakf, Wakf-alal-Aulad, primary education, the Mohammedan University, but I feel I cannot detain you much longer.

I cannot conclude without offering our most sincere and grateful thanks to our illustrious and distinguished leader His Highness the Aga Khan, G.C.I.E. Towards your Highness our hearts are too full of gratitude to enable us to give vent to our sentiments. Your Highness has infused a new life into the people and guided their energies into useful and patriotic channels. Firm in conviction and patient in action, your Highness has held aloft the banner of Muslim progress, amidst thickening clouds and overwhelming storm. We are justly proud of your Highness' highest statesmanship and pray to the Most High that many more years of healthy, vigorous and happy life be vouchsafed to you, so as to enable your Highness to continue the noble work of our national regeneration.

I shall be guilty of dereliction of duty if I omitted to proclaim what I believe is at this moment uppermost in the minds of the Musalmans of the Central Provinces and Berar. The Musalmans of the whole Province are deeply grateful to Moulvi Mohammad Aziz Mirza, Honorary Secretary, All-India Muslim League, for organizing a Provincial Muslim League in this Province. His profound knowledge of English and of our classics, his mature views, his enlightened patriotism—his character being a compromise between the old and the new—mark him out as a leader supremely capable of guiding the destiny of the Central League. His talk on Mus-

lim politics, written both in English and Urdu, proves to what an extent he has grasped the political situation of the country.

We are still more grateful to him for lending the services of his very able and trustworthy assistant, Mr Mohammad Yusuf Khan, who by working under the immediate guidance and instructions of Moulvi Aziz Mirza and by his own tact and experience, born of his long connection with the Muslim League and political movements, succeeded in establishing District Muslim Leagues in all the 22 districts of the Central Provinces and Berar. He proceeded from centre to centre, interviewed the leading men in the districts, ventilated the grievances, called meetings, popularized the views of the Muslim League, and left not a single district as an exception. Through his efforts this Province has a complete organization. During his stay of five months in this Province, he wrote many articles concerning the condition of the Musalmans and suggested many ways for ameliorating their fallen condition. In recognition of his valuable services, the members of the District Leagues presented him, as a memento, a complete silver tea-set and a gold ring. On behalf of the members of the Provincial and District Muslim Leagues, I take this opportunity to tender their sincere thanks of Moulvi Sahib and Mr. Mohammad Yusuf Khan once more.

Under the Constitution, the power of electing the President of the Session of the League is, you know, vested in the Council of the Central League, which has unanimously elected Syed Nabiullah, Bar-at Law, as President of the Nagpur Session. His high literary and legal attainments, connection with a patriotic family, and independence of character are all well known to you. I need hardly remind you that his efficiency as President depends more upon your unstinted and cordial support than upon his attainments and virtues.

It remains for me now only to thank you once more for the honour which is conferred upon me. Believe me, I am not using merely an idle phrase when I say that I am proud, very

proud, of the distinction. I am proud also of my good fortune in being privileged to welcome you to Nagpur. This year will be a memorable year in the history of the Province.

The members of the Reception Committee and my humble self most cordially thank you, our esteemed guests, for the trouble and inconvenience which you have had to undergo.

4

ON REAWAKENING OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY*

On this momentous occasion, I feel I cannot make a better commencement of my speech and open the deliberations of this august assembly in a more fitting manner than by following in the footsteps of our forefathers, who always reverently adhered to the time-honoured practice of inaugurating all important undertakings by involving the blessings of the Most High, "Whom slumber seizeth not and Whose throne overspreadeth the heaven and the earth", so that the conviction may grow in our hearts that we are guided and fortified by that divine strength and wisdom which alone is responsible for any great results that human energy is able to achieve in the realm of action or of thought. Our brightest hope and firmest trust is oft-times based on what proves in the event to be a flimsy superstructure of vague desires based on the rotten foundation of vain sanguinness. Let us, therefore, begin by praying that His divine inspiration may guide us in our deliberations and help us :

"In working out in heart and brain
The Problem of our being here."

My next duty—and a most pleasurable duty, I assure you—is to welcome the delegates to this assembly. The practice of welcoming our guests is a stereotyped formula of the speech of the President of the Reception Committee; but believe me,

*Welcome address delivered by Moulvi Badruddin Hyder Khan at the Calcutta session held in March, 1912.

the sentiment which dictates it is anything but stereotyped — it is a deep sense of gratitude for the encouraging and enthusiastic response which you have made to the call of the Reception Committee of which I have the proud privilege of being the President. It is very gratifying to me to see gentlemen representing the highest intelligence and culture and the noblest public spirit of the country assembled here from all parts of India at the sacrifice of personal interests, ignoring material considerations, moved by a noble spirit of patriotism and inspired with a hopeful and manly outlook on the future of our community. I thank you sincerely, gentlemen, for undergoing the inconvenience consequent on a tedious journey and for cheerfully making considerable self sacrifice to come and enlighten us by your wisdom, and help us with the moral force of your political support. Gentlemen, will it be saying too much if I make the assertion that we would have weighed as dust in the scale of the political balance in which the various organizations of India are weighed, had it not been for the noble exertions and indefatigable zeal of the various delegates, who have been at all times ready and willing to work out, without failing in their loyalty to the Crown, and on lines not in conflict with or in opposition to the policy and ruling principles of the Supreme Government, plans and schemes to futher the interest of the Mohammedan community and to secure for it rights and privileges to which it is lawfully entitled and to which it may justly aspire?

We are passing through that most critical period in a nation's history—a stage of transition; a great revolution is silently but surely working out its mighty destiny. Inevitable misfortune and utter collapse and annihilation would be the fate of those sects and races which would sit by indolently and neglect to take a lively interest in the march of events. It is a revolution worked out and effected not by sheer brute force and culpable violence, but by the wholesome and salutary influence of intelligence rightly directed to its objects, acting and thriving under the benign aegis and fostering care of the power to whom merciful Providence has consigned the sway of our destiny.

Gentlemen, we have passed through troublous times. The sky was overcast with dark and murky clouds, and the political atmosphere was surcharged with electricity. Anarchism was rife in the country. Life and property seemed to be insecure. Mischievous conspiracies were formed to weaken the Government. The cult of the bomb was preached and practised, and shots were fired for the destruction of innocent persons in the pursuit of illegal and often shadowy aims; and the pity of it was that the ostensible malefactors were mere boys into whose immature and sensitive minds had been infused, by designing persons, ideas, and hopes of a dangerous character. The firmness of the Government, its humane administration of the law and the general patriotism of the country tided us safely over all difficulties, carried us through the gloom, and landed us in light.

Whatever shred of disaffection still remained the recent visit of the King Emperor to this country has entirely dissipated, and working like a potent charm, it has produced unprecedented harmony and created intense affection for the Crown. We may be permitted to congratulate ourselves on having been at all times unflinching and steadfast in our loyalty to the State, and on having stood by it through all its difficulties and embarrassments. We trust that we have never been impelled by any sordid motives, but that we have been actuated by genuine appreciation of the goodness of the Government to lend to it our entire support and devotion. To quote the words of His Highness the Aga Khan, "the loyalty of the Indian Mohammedans is not a cold calculating loyalty bound up with the material sense of favours to come; but a warm and passionate attachment to the Imperial Throne under which the community has made such gigantic strides in progressive evolution." Under the auspices of the new Governor and during the new regime, it is confidently expected that the industrial and commercial interests of Bengal will be established on a basis of progress and advancement; that the legitimate aspirations of the inhabitants of Bengal will have a freer and larger scope; and that future generations will have good cause to remember with gratitude the epoch-making visit of King

George V to this country.

The statement is persistently made by some of our leaders, with florid eloquence and great show of reason, that India is for the Indians. The soundness of the doctrine cannot be called in question when it is qualified by the modifying clause that India is for the Indians only so far as it is in consistence with the rights and interests of the Supreme Government, without whose assistance, protection and guidance our political entity would be an impossibility. To link the different races of India in bonds of union and brotherhood is the goal of our progress; and the English Government, the best, the most humane and the wisest of all European governments must exist in the country to keep us all together in peace and harmony. We have not yet been able to thoroughly master and assimilate the political lessons which English education has imparted to us. I may be pardoned for describing ourselves as mere infants in the cradle of freedom.

It must be a matter of great rejoicing to us that we have enlisted on our side the sympathies of many far-seeing politicians, particularly those of the great philosopher and statesman Viscount Morley and Lord Minto the predecessor of our present Viceroy. Through their exertions, Indians have been allowed to participate in the government of their country. We cannot be sufficiently thankful to them for the considerate interest they take in the welfare of India. And we hope that the day is not far distant when they will think it proper invariably to have a well qualified Mohammedan representative of our special communal interests in the Imperial Executive Council, as well as to have a greater number of Indians associated with the Government of India. In connection with this question, I am sure I voice the unanimous sentiments of the Mohammedan subjects of his Imperial Majesty when I say that we are all grateful for the recent elevation of Mr. Hasan Imam to the Bench of the Calcutta High Court, and for the intended appointment of the Hon'ble Mr. Shamsul Huda as a Member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal. The office of the Law Member in the Viceregal Council, the

duties of which the Hon'ble Mr. Ali Imam discharges with great credit to himself and benefit to the Government, has been a gift for which every Mohammedan should consider himself bound by ties of gratitude to the State. The Right Hon'ble Mr. Ameer Ali's appointment as a Privy Councillor has been an act of grace on the part of the King which has secured for the Throne the love and loyalty of all the Mohammedans of India. The career of Mr. Ameer Ali has been marked with such success and has produced such splendid results, beneficial alike to his countrymen and to the administration of British justice, that it justifies our hopes and expectations that he will be found in every way worthy of the high honour done to him. Mr. Ameer Ali has brought his great talents, keen intelligence and untiring energy to bear on all questions concerning the Indian Mohammedans; and it is a circumstance of national felicitation that his labours in the field of literature and politics have been fruitful in producing that wonderful solidarity and uniformity of ideas in our community which we trust will prove its ultimate salvation.

I must also take this opportunity to express the gratitude of our community to His Highness the Aga Khan, whose burning zeal for the cause of Mohammedans has so lately been honoured by the highest recognition that the Indian Government can bestow. The part he took in securing the Mohammedans a proper share in the benefits accruing from the new reform is a matter of common knowledge; and we fully realize that but for his timely intervention, we should have been hopelessly handicapped in the race which India is just starting. We must also put on record our high sense of gratitude for his titanic labours in the cause of Muslim education; and we confidently hope that the Mohammedan University will soon be established as a permanent fountainhead of thought for the whole Muslim world and continue to exist as an everlasting monument of his noble labours in the Mohammedan cause.

Next I must express our sense of obligation to the President

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of this Session of the League, Nawab Bahadur Sir Salimullah, G.C.I.E., of Dacca. His selfless services to the Muslim cause in India, and specially in his part of Bengal, are a fit subject of emulation for all right-thinking Mohammedans. We offer the Nawab Bahadur our hearty congratulations for the signal mark of Royal favour which has been shown to him in the recent Durbar at Delhi. We take it as a compliment to the whole community to find that our Government has so highly honoured two of our distinguished leaders on such a memorable occasion.

Our thanks are also due to Her Highness the Begum Saheba of Bhopal for her earnest and sustained efforts to advance the cause of female education, and for the general uplift of the residents of the zenana. The partial success which she has as yet achieved must really be very disheartening. But we would fain remind Her Highness that great achievements have always had very small beginnings. There has, however, lately come into evidence a powerful development of opinion all over India in favour of the emancipation of our women. That the community has begun to appreciate the Begum's pioneer work in this field of social reform is a great step forward; and we are confident that in no very distant future she will have cause to be gratified at the success that will crown her philanthropic endeavour. Female education in one of the crying social needs of Muslim India. Purely through our own culpable neglect in denying them the blessings of a sound education, Muslim women had sunk to a low degree of social degeneration. Some grew to look upon them as mere commodities to be toyed with. They had no individuality of their own. They could not take part in the ordinary social and literary life of the nation—let alone the higher political and economic spheres of social activity. This regrettable backwardness of the lumber-room puppets and the empty-headed beauty-shows who now people some of our harems is a notorious cause of our social degeneration; and the betterment of their condition, which, we trust, the Begum Saheba will succeed in effecting within a short time, will be a most vital contribution to the cause of our national regeneration.

We heartily bid her God-speed in this profoundly important work which she has set before herself, and which, we trust, she will carry through with her usual unflinching zeal and undaunted energy. We congratulate the Begum Saheba on the high honours which her sterling worth has secured for her at the recent Delhi Durbar.

This much for felicitations and congratulations. I have now to turn to sadder duties and have to record our deep sense of bereavement and sorrow at the loss of those prominent members of our community whom death has removed from amongst us during the course of the last year. Prominent among these, alike by the position he occupied and the void his death has left in Muslim society, was the late Nizam of Hyderabad. He had established for himself an undying name in the history of India by the catholicity of his sympathies, his broad-minded statesmanship, his gentle humanitarianism, his administrative capacity and his active and whole-hearted co-operation in all schemes of national regeneration. It is a circumstance of the deepest national regret that the cruel hand of death should have taken him away from us at such a critical juncture, when Muslim India is just entering upon the threshold of a new life, and when so many of our highest hopes for the success of schemes of national uplift were centred in his person. We also take this opportunity of welcoming His Highness the present Nizam as a bright new orb in the firmament of public life. We sincerely hope that he will not fail to follow in the footsteps of his illustrious father. His high education, sound political training, and the healthy environments amidst which he has been brought up from earliest infancy raise great hopes in the heart of the members of his community; and we look to him to realize these hopes and ambitions in their entirety.

We would next express the deep sorrow we feel at the quite recent and untimely death of our able and energetic secretary, Mr. Aziz Mirza. His valuable services to this League are too well known to need recapitulation. As Secretary of the League, he has contributed, perhaps to a greater degree than anybody else, towards establishing it on a sound and stable basis, wid-

ening its scope of usefulness, increasing its influence and generally developing it as an agency of high potency for safeguarding the communal interest of the Indian Mohammedans and the national interests of the whole population of India, irrespective of caste or creed. He has earned a permanent place in our memory by his enthusiastic zeal in furthering all Mohammedan interests, his unfailing courtesy, his affability of temper, and all those qualities of head and heart which endeared him to all those who came in contact with him. He possessed in a pre-eminent degree that quality—so rare among the general run of Mohammedan leaders—of self-effacement, which is the true and only criterion of the real greatness of a leader of society.

The community has also had to deplore the loss of another of its prominent members in the death of Syed Ali Bilgrami, an eminent linguist of high repute. He belonged to that small band of illustrious Mohammedan leaders who have been working so incessantly to bring about the regeneration of the Muslim community, and we can ill afford to sustain such an irreparable loss at a time when we are just awakening to a sense of our political consciousness.

Gentlemen, I yield to none in my desire to help forward the cause of my community; but at the same time, I must frankly say that I feel myself embarrassed by the high honour done to me, and it is with great diffidence that I make bold to submit to you the results of my deliberations on current topics. The crowded routine of public events at the present time and the embarrassing series of reverses which are befalling our community in foreign lands must be my excuse for the inadequacy of the reception we have been able to extend to you. Had conditions been more propitious, we would have tried to give you a welcome worthy of you and befitting the occasion. We trust, however, you will look to the spirit that goes with the welcome and forgive us its inadequacy. Once more I repeat, gentlemen, that I heartily bid you welcome to our city. Calcutta will no more be the capital of India; but the City of Palaces, the City of Clive and of Hastings will not

sink into the oblivion of insignificance. Our Sovereign Lord, the King Emperor, has himself assured us that Calcutta would still be the premier city of the Indian Empire, and that the removal of the capital to Delhi will have no very adverse effects on its future prosperity. Delhi, after wearing widow's weeds for centuries, has again been restored to her ancient pre-eminence. Its importance has been re-established and its dead glory will live again in future ages; but it will not, I trust, rob Calcutta of the glory that is its due. Calcutta will still continue to loom big in the public horizon. True, it does not possess the romance of antiquity and the halo of departed glories, but it does possess the higher romance of Western organization and the more modern glamour of Occidental civilization. The history of Calcutta will go down to future ages as a remarkable instance of the unlimited potentialities and astounding virility of industrial energy. In future, Calcutta will draw our pulse just as Delhi draws it now :

"For men are we, and must grieve whenever
The shade of that which once was great
Has passed away . . ."

Whatever adverse circumstances might befall her, we can never forget the glory attaching to Calcutta, which from a mere hamlet of fishermen grew to be the second city in the Empire within the almost incredible period of just over a century and a half.

I shall now, with your permission, proceed to review some of the more important events of Muslim interest that have occurred since the last session of our League. The Muslim community all over the world is passing through very stirring times. Coming events are casting their shadows before them; and the whole Muslim world waits on the tip-toe of expectation to see what the womb of futurity has in store for us. Of these great events, the Italian raid on the Tripolitan coast at present looms biggest on the international horizon. There can be no manner of doubt that the course of action pursued by Italy in the present case is utterly unjustifiable and wholly uncalled for. I will not swell the literature already existing,

and daily growing, upon this unfortunate subject by expressing my personal views in the matter. I will only content myself with saying that I quite fail to see how any internal mismanagement by an autonomous power can give a rival power the right of territorial acquisition. It stands to reason that if Turkey had failed to guarantee fair treatment to her Italian subjects, Italy might have entered a strong protest against such a breach of international equity. She might even in the last resort have demanded of Turkey the surrender of all Italian subjects and the payment of fair and equitable compensation for any losses incurred by them. But no political reasoning, however sound, and no logic, however subtle, can establish her claim to a right of territorial sovereignty over the whole of Tripoli, just because a microscopic minority of the Tripolitan foreign population was alleged to be labouring under Turkish iniquities. Even granting that there had been—but I wholly deny that there was—such a maladministration, we should still fail to find any justification for the high-handed action on the part of Italy. It is a matter of great gratification for the Muslim community to find that the cold-blooded atrocities committed by the Italians have elicited strong and unqualified condemnation from almost all great international Powers. It remains to be seen how far these protests will be followed up by more vigorous declarations of policy, sufficiently practical to prevent a possible recurrence of such unfortunate and disreputable instances of international greed. In this connection the British Government in particular has its duties clearly outlined for it by the serious gravity and the magnitude of its own political stake. The British Government has a greater number of Mohammedan subjects than any other single power, European or Asiatic; and it is to the best interests of Britain herself to see that the sentiments and feelings of this vast population are not wantonly outraged. The Muslim community of India, therefore, confidently expects that it will not be long before the British Cabinet will become alive to its serious responsibilities, and, discarding the present halting policy of passive neutrality, will attempt to bring about some sort of reconciliation which may be acceptable to both the contending parties. Action in

this matter is urgently called for, and procrastination will only intensify the gravity of the situation.

The political situation in Persia is also a matter of grave concern to the whole Muslim world. Here, again, we have a superior power trying to bully a weaker constitution, and seeking to establish an utterly iniquitous claim by the primitive and highly objectionable rule of 'might is right'. How far Britain has involved herself inextricably in this mesh of international relations we are not in a position to judge. But rightly or wrongly, the idea has of late been gaining ground that the part taken by Britain in these transactions has not been wholly in consonance with ideas which we entertain of British justice. I, for one, am hopeful that these misgivings will prove groundless. The British Government, however, owes it to its Muslim subjects to set their mind at rest once and for all by a final declaration of the line of action it means to pursue, if matters come to a head and Russia persists in her irrational and obstinate conduct. The subjects of the British Empire have been taught from their cradles to believe that wherever the interests of British subjects are involved—directly or indirectly—we may rely on the international potency of Pax Britannica to secure fair and equitable treatment. The Muslim community all over the world expects that this conviction will ere long be actualized, and that the British Government, both at home and in India, will take an active part in ensuring political autonomy and territorial integrity to unfortunate Persia.

Let us now turn to the brighter side of the picture, and mention in passing some of those fortunate events, conducive to the brightest optimism, which have occurred during the same period. Of these, the first to arrest our attention is the recent visit of the King Emperor to India. The Royal visit was a unique event in the annals of British India—an event with results of the profoundest importance. It has for the first time given an opportunity to the Indian masses to realize that sense of warm fervid loyalty and strong personal attachment to the Crown which is the only loyalty that they can fully compre-

hend and actually feel. The royal visit has been a triumphant march all through, and the noble simplicity of the King Emperor, the genuineness present in every word of his epoch-making utterances, his invariable courtesy and spontaneous affability towards all his 'beloved subjects, irrespective of colour, caste or creed', have won for him a permanent corner in every Indian heart. The boons he was pleased to bestow on his subjects on the memorable occasion of the Durbar cover a wide range, and will have touched the Indians as they have never been touched before. It will echo through future ages, and grateful posterity will fully realize and enjoy the benefits accruing from these boons. It would hardly be proper of me to stand between you and the President of the Session by giving a long and detailed account of these boons. I would only draw your attention to the liberal and sympathetic instinct which breathes through every line of the Government of India's despatches, and the thorough comprehension and masterful grasp of an extremely intricate situation which characterize the replies of our enlightened and open-minded Secretary of State for India. This sympathetic tone has forged a new link in the golden fetters of loyalty and of love which bind the Indian subjects to their British benefactors.

Following close in the footsteps of these generous boons has come the Viceroy's proposal to grant a university to Eastern Bengal. Here, too, it was the Government's solicitude for Mohammedan interests that dictated the proposal. For though the university does not purport to be an essentially denominational university, cogent circumstantial evidence irresistibly points to the fact that it is meant to serve as some slight recompense to the Eastern Bengal Mohammedans for the loss of those educational facilities which the new province (Eastern Bengal) had secured them. We thank His Excellency Lord Hardinge for this kindly consideration for Muslim interests, and we welcome the proposal that it should be a teaching and residential university.

Apropos of this, I take this opportunity of offering our heart-felt thanks for the further grant of Rs. 125 lakhs which

has only yesterday been announced by Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, G.C.I.E., in his financial statement. We hope it is only an earnest of that series of liberal grants to the cause of education which we have been led to expect by the Durbar announcements.

The next point to which I would draw your serious attention is the absolute dearth of journalistic literature in the Mohammedan community of India. In fact, there was not until very recently a single organ of Muslim public opinion which could claim any wide circulation or considerable influence with the public or the ruling bureaucracy. This circumstance is particularly regrettable in view of the great importance and high potency which the press has been attaining all over the world, not only as a social and literary agency, but also as a political factor of predominant influence. From expressing and then guiding public opinion, it grew into a power absolutely, almost dogmatically forming this public opinion. And now, in these democratic and socialistic times, it has begun almost to dictate political policies to nations on the assumption, as often mistaken as correct, that it is a legitimate representative of true public opinion. At such a time, it is a serious drawback for the Indian Mohammedans, and a drawback likely to react most banefully on their cause, not to have a recognized and powerful organ through which to voice their grievances and in which to express their social, moral and political aspirations. Lately, however, Mr. Mohammad Ali of Aligarh, a distinguished graduate of Oxford University, has established *The Comrade*, which is a journal of a very high order and commands respect in the highest official and private circles. We thank Mr. Mohammad Ali sincerely for the valuable services which he has thus been rendering to his community and country at very considerable personal sacrifice. Paucity of funds, however, has heretofore tied his hands from increasing the efficiency of the journal by making it a daily paper, and supplementing it with an Urdu daily. I confidently hope that our liberal-minded patriots will not fail to come forward to help such an important cause and open their purses freely for a national under-

taking of such vital importance.

I beg leave next to draw your attention to the part we Mohammedans are taking in the industrial reorganization of India. It is a fact patent to the most perfunctory observer that India is just now passing from the stage of a purely agricultural to that of an industrial and commercial organization. Machine enterprise is marching onwards with giant strides; large-scale production is fast displacing the old craftsmanship and the petty domestic industries which characterized the economic condition of India in the past ages; the dignity of labour is being gradually recognized by the upper circle of the Indian community. The Indian hoard of precious metals so long buried in vaults or dissipated in wantonness is losing its shyness towards industrial ventures, and is being invested as capital to help forward manufacturing or commercial enterprises. The Government has recognized its duty towards the Indians in the matter of advancing India is economic efficiency and has established technical colleges, technical and scientific research scholarships, and has also opened large experimental farms. In short, to quote the words of Sir Theodore Morison, "India is fast emerging from that primitive stage of industrial organization which it had stuck to so tenaciously down to the end of the last century." And this general economic revolution is sure to lead to immeasurable good for India and to secure it a very much higher place than what it now occupies in the community of nations. It is therefore a circumstance of deep regret and of grave concern to see that Mohammedans have hitherto held themselves studiously aloof from this national movement of industrial reorganization. Most of our young men hanker after Government service, and forget that, in the words of a Madras merchant, "an income which is, in the last analysis, derived from the pockets of our own poor rate-payers cannot be in the best interests of our country." Failing Government service, our youths drift into the legal profession and swell its already crowded ranks. Our young men should be encouraged to go in more for the independent walks of life and actively participate in that leavening movement of industrial development which is now proceeding apace all over the

country. Such a procedure will not only tend to their ultimate good, but bring India considerably nearer to that goal of industrial independence which such Indian thinkers of admitted sagacity as the late Mr. Justice Ranade and his truly worthy pupil, the Hon'ble Mr. Gokhale, so fervently desired.

We hear a great deal in these days of local autonomy and communal interests. Self-government conducted within certain prescribed limits and under reasonable control of the supreme authority is productive of great results. The wisdom of the Government, always directed by a liberal and generous policy, has not hesitated to grant us, to some extent, the great and invaluable right of self-government; and the history of the past 25 years has amply proved that Indians are capable of governing themselves and fully deserve the right of self-government accorded to them. A close observer of the times, however sorrowfully marks that the Mohammedan interest is faint and almost invisible in these schemes of local self-government; and it is high time now to insist upon proper recognition of the hitherto almost ignored Mohammedan community, in whose way greater facilities should now be placed, so that Mohammedans might be properly represented in the district and municipal boards. It is also noteworthy that the Mohammedans do not by a long way receive their fair share in the different branches of the public service.

Gentlemen, it is also a truism to assert that strength increases with the constant exercise of it. We feel that we are everyday growing stronger and stronger, both morally and intellectually, by being called upon to exercise our judgment and discretion in positions of trust and dignity. To have our own representatives in the different deliberative and executive councils of Government is a high privilege which by our conduct and action we have proved to the world we are worthy of holding. A duty, at once serious and solemn, is therefore laid upon us to elect our representatives, ignoring all considerations excepting such as affect the weal of our community or the general interests of our motherland. In making such selections we have often to face some difficulties.

The Government were pleased to lay down certain rules to regulate Mohammedan elections to the Provincial Legislative Councils. Amongst other things it was provided that a person paying income-tax on Rs. 6,000 would be eligible for election and the voting for such election would be by delegates. The delegates were not to be bound by any specific mandate from electors. These rules were enforced during the last election, and the experience gained calls for their amendment. The Government also recognized the necessity for such amendment, and appointed a representative committee to go into the question. The committee has lately finished its labours. The elections should not be by delegates, as it may possibly lead to corruption. The voting should be direct by the electors; and if the election is at all to be by delegates, such delegates should be bound to follow the mandate of the electors, and the full property qualification in the case of those who seek election through that qualification should be insisted upon, and mere payment of income-tax on the statutory amount without actually having such income should not make one eligible for election. An equal number of seats should also be allotted to Mohammedans and Hindus.

I agree with the general principles of Mr. Gokhale's Bill on elementary education, and I am of opinion that it should be passed into law with some modifications safeguarding the interests of Mohammedans.

I now come to the consideration of the Wakf-alal-Aulad Validating Bill introduced by the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah. In the Mohammedan Law of Succession, unlike the English Law of Primogeniture, as you all know, even comparatively distant relatives come in for a share in the property of a deceased person. Such an enactment was indeed called for at the time and under the special circumstances under which our Prophet laid it down. But his far-seeing eye had also perceived that under a different set of attendant circumstances, such, for example, as those obtaining in India, this procedure might lead to the ultimate ruin and disintegration of Muslim families. Here in India the system of infinite subdivisions had always led to the gradual impoverishment and ultimate effacement

of ancient Muslim families. The misery resulting from this procedure has been great, and is bound to be acuter in the near future when industrial organization will have advanced to a high degree. For then this law will prevent that accumulation of large capital with individual capitalists without which no big enterprises can be built up. It will also be responsible for the very ephemeral character of all commercial and manufacturing establishments which might owe their origin to Muslim energy. All these catastrophies will make for national degeneration. Such an eventuality should therefore be avoided; and our Prophet laid down a rule which provides, where necessary, a remedy against the worst consequences of such infinite subdivisions among a succession of heirs. This was the institution of Wakf-alal-Aulad. It is greatly to be regretted, however, that the highest appellate court of British justice has set aside this eminently salutary enactment of Mohammedan law. This action of the Privy Council is calculated to result in serious mischief and much harm to the Muslim community, and we earnestly pray that the Government of India will see their way to undo this wrong by recognizing the institution of Wakf-alal-Aulad and passing Mr. Jinnah's Bill into law with such modification as may be considered necessary.

Apropos of this, I must put on record my strong protest against a movement set afoot by certain gentlemen to revive the old system of having Kazis in the courts of justice to interpret Mohammedan law. This is a retrograde and reactionary measure, and would not prove conducive to efficiency in the administration of justice.

I have already detained you long, gentlemen, and I do not think it would be permissible for me to encroach any more on your valuable time. It would be out of place at this initial stage of our deliberations to descend into details and to foreshadow the resolutions that will be put forward by the League in this Session. But I trust that these resolutions will be given due consideration by the Government, and that most, if not all, of our suggestions will be adopted after due

deliberations.

In conclusion, gentlemen, let me remind you that though we have achieved some success, we cannot yet afford to rest on our oars. Honest, earnest, and solid work must still be our task for a long time to come. Our future lies more largely than ever with ourselves. Other races have stolen a march over us and are pushing on with rapid strides. To regain our place among the nationalities of India, we must take time by the forelock, and not let slip any opportunity of advancing our cause in this transitional stage of national evolution. We have still very much to do; but if only we persevere in the path we have adopted and continue our labours with undaunted zeal, we are bound to come off with flying colours in the end :

“Let us then be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate,
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labour and to wait.”

5

FOR A COMMON AIM AND A COMMON PATH*

On behalf of the Musalmans of Agra and on my own behalf, I offer you a most respectful and cordial welcome. We thank you for the honour done to us in accepting our invitation to join the session of the League here and to take part in its deliberations. We feel proud to be able to welcome a gathering like this, representative of all the forces that make for progress and enlightenment of all ranks, ages and shades of opinion from all parts of the country.

It is a signal honour to welcome a distinguished assembly like this, and we assure you we will long and dearly cherish memories of this gathering.

Let us hope that views of the ancient monuments for which our city is so justly renowned will amply repay you for all the trouble and inconvenience which, in spite of our best efforts to make you comfortable, you may have to experience during your stay here, and that the past glories of our city, the calm and repose of its ancient monuments and their chequered history will lend colour to your discussions and produce that sobriety of thought and speech which the occasion demands.

We feel particularly proud that in this week no less than three such important bodies as the Mohammedan Educational Conference, the All-India Muslim League, and the United Provinces Muslim League should have responded to our invita-

* Welcome address delivered by Syed Alay Nabi at the Agra session held in December, 1913.

tion and sat in this Hall, all animated with one common aim, the progress and advancement of the community.

In addition to those of you who have been able to come, we have received numerous letters and telegrams from a large number of men in other parts of India who for some reason or other have been debarred from attending the League.

Everyone must admit that we are passing through a sad and eventful period of stress and storm, and if ever there was a time to close up our ranks and present a firm, serried and united front, that time is this, for the situation is of more than ordinary gravity. It is full of difficulty and full of peril, and unless we are imbued with a strong sense of discipline and of responsibility, grave consequences may ensue.

Attempts are being made in some quarters to create a division in the body of the League, to drive it into two camps in order to prevent our appearing in one solid mass, actuated by one common aim and walking along one common path, urging our demands and representing our needs to the Government from one common national platform, in the name of all of the community. I hope, however, that such attempts will meet the fate they deserve.

There is no real occasion for pessimism, especially, as I have said elsewhere, when we are guided in our deliberations by the ripe experience and mature judgment of elders, on one hand, and the well-directed zeal and enthusiasm of youth, on the other, and are ever ready to listen with respect and gratitude to the counsel and advice of all, and to act on such advice and counsel by the sanction of majority of votes, the only test available that we know of.

The Press Act

In recent years no legislative enactment of the Government of India has aroused such wide-spread and deep dissatisfaction as the Press Act of 1910. A country owes much of its progress and enlightenment to the power of the press. A free discussion and criticism of the actions of Government is absolu-

tely essential to the healthy existence of both Government and the people.

The unanimous judgment of the special Bench of the High Court of Bengal on the application of Mr. Mohammed Ali about the forfeiture of the well-known pamphlet, *Come Over into Macedonia, and Help Us*, is enough to condemn it, as a piece of legislation quite unworthy of a civilized Government. Sir Lawrence Jenkins, in the course of his judgment, comments in the following words on the language and scope of the sections of this Act: "The language of the section is as wide as human ingenuity could make it. It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section might not be plainly extended by an ingenious mind."

We have no doubt that His Excellency Lord Hardinge, who has done much to restore peace and goodwill to this land, will remove this most objectionable piece of legislation—a slur alike on the people and on the Government—from the statute-book.

The Religious Endowment Act

There is one piece of legislation more which stands in urgent need of amendment, as it is doing incalculable injury to the country.

Under Act XX of 1863 (Religious Endowments Act), a person who has once been elected or appointed as a trustee is entitled to work as such all his life. This is a rather long lease, and a trustee once elected or appointed feels himself immune from all liability to anyone, except when some one is self-sacrificing enough to file a suit and spend time and money on it. Unfortunately the number of such self-sacrificing people is not great, and a trustee therefore has not the same respect and does not feel the same responsibility as he would if his election or appointment were made only for a fixed term of years. I am glad to be able to say in this connection that the Hon'ble Raja Abu Jafar of Pirpur is taking steps to move an amendment to the Act in the Imperial Legislative Council.

Let us hope that it is speedily amended.

It is with great reluctance that I have to mention here the unfortunate disturbance that occurred between Hindus and Mohammedans during the last Moharram in our city. How we wish we could have averted it.

It is, however, some consolation to find that disturbances like these are confined to the masses of the two communities, and that with them too it is a question of time. Let us hope that with the advance of education, these outbursts of feeling will disappear. It pains me a great deal to look back on the amount of time and energy spent by us over this unhappy incident which would otherwise have been much more usefully and profitably spent in your service.

In conclusion, let us thank you once more for honouring us with your visit, and let us hope that you will carry back happy memories of Agra and its people.

6

FOR SELF-RELIANCE AND RECONSTRUCTION*

It is with the greatest pleasure that I rise on behalf of the Musalmans of Bombay to welcome so many distinguished representatives of our community assembled here to-day who have come from every part of India to attend the annual session of the League. Many of you have travelled long distances and borne considerable personal sacrifice in response to your keen sense of public duty; and your presence in this great communal gathering is, to my mind, the best guarantee we could have that the interests of our community and country are at heart. I thank you most deeply and sincerely, in the name of those whom I am privileged to represent, for the honour you have done us, and for the right counsel and judgment that you have brought to the service of the great ends we all have in view.

Gentlemen, the task that lies before us is rendered heavier and more anxious by the peculiar circumstances in which we meet to-day. The gigantic conflict in which more than half of the world is engaged affects, in a greater or lesser degree, the fortunes of almost every section of mankind; but the fate of India is in a very direct and intimate sense involved in the tremendous issues that are being fought out amongst the great nations of Europe. As an integral part of the British Empire, India stands or falls with Great Britain; and it is a bold and frank recognition of this fact that, in the supreme crisis, has evoked the profound attachment and devotion of the Indian people to the British Crown moved them as one man to bear all possible sacrifices in defence of the honour and stability of

* Welcome address delivered by Abdul Husain Adanjee Peerbhoy at the Bombay session held in January, 1916.

the Empire. The remarkable unity of purpose to which all classes in this country have given expression by word and deed can have but one meaning, that India recognizes to the full the benefits she has hitherto derived through her connection with Great Britain, and that it is only in the continuance of this connection that she sees the promise of a new resurrection and the ultimate realization of our supreme aim to raise her to her full stature as a free and self-reliant member of the British Empire.

In this unity of purpose, the Musalmans of India have freely and thoroughly shared ever since the outbreak of the war. What they owe to England in her hour of need they have cheerfully and ungrudgingly offered. They will not hesitate to do their duty to the King and to the country as long as this terrible struggle lasts. In circumstances of extreme delicacy and in moments of the sorest trials, they have held firm to the faith that binds them to England.

I refer to this mainly because of a few apprehensive souls amongst us who considered the holding of this Session of the League as undesirable on account of the war. If the action of the Council of the League had been influenced by the baseless fears which found expression in some quarters, it would have compromised the position of our community, and the most important political organization of the Indian Musalmans would have been reduced to impotence. I am thankful to think that saner counsels prevailed and the Council of the League was guided in its decision by wisdom and common sense.

I need hardly refer to the unfortunate differences of opinion which manifested themselves in Bombay about the meeting of the League in the city. Those differences are now happily over, and nothing remains of them, I trust, that should mar the success of this Session.

This is the first time that the All-India Muslim League meets in Bombay. I regard it as an event of happy augury for the future of Bombay Musalmans that they should have the

benefit of the counsel, sympathy and advice of so many of their co-religionists of light and leading from other parts of the country in matters relating to their welfare and in all questions of the public weal. My only hope is that the meeting of the League here will leave some tangible and abiding result behind, which would lead to a better organization of our efforts for the amelioration of the affairs of our community and country.

Gentlemen, as I have already said, we meet under the shadow of a devastating and terrible struggle in which our King Emperor is engaged. This necessarily imposes circumspection on us, but we are not surely debarred from the consideration of the vital problems of our destiny in India on that account. The war will not last for ever; it may, for ought we know, end before many months are over. It has already raised pressing problems for the internal organization of the British Empire which cannot wait long for solution. It has thrown the whole relationship between India and England into a new perspective. A new understanding has dawned on the British mind in regard to Indian affairs, and a new spirit of sympathy for the Indian people has been kindled in the heart of the British nation. The old horizons are shifting, and we stand at the threshold of a new era that will at last witness the fruition of India's hopes.

Could it be wise, could it be reasonable, could it be patriotic for us to have remained passive spectators while all the rest of the Indian people are stirring to new life, and the programme of India's immediate future is fast undergoing the process of formulation? If we are to lead the life of a self-respecting and self-reliant community, we must resolutely shoulder our part of the burden and actively and wholeheartedly assist in the task of reconstruction. No individual or community has ever deserved anything that it has not striven to achieve. Only fools and imbeciles trust to luck or happy accident in politics. To me, as indeed to every self-respecting Musalman, it would be a humiliating spectacle if our community shirked its duty to participate in the stress

and toil and the heat and burden of the day, and quietly walked up at the last moment to demand a share in the fruits of achievement with a large beggar's bowl in its hand. No such easy method would do now. We have to rely on ourselves, on our own efforts, and with our own energy shall we have to rough-hew the path of our destiny.

I rejoice to think that the spirit of self-reliance is growing fast in our community, and it is one of the happy results of this spirit that we see the rapid disappearance of distrust which has hitherto kept the Indian communities apart, and the birth of a new desire for mutual understanding and co-operation. The future of India is bound up with the continued unity of aim and purpose of her entire people.

Gentlemen, I would not anticipate in every detail the work that you have met to do. I have briefly indicated the spirit that I am sure will inspire your efforts, and trust to God that your labours may be crowned with success. I thank you once again for the trouble you have taken to be here to-day. You will please accept the poor hospitality that we have been able to offer you in Bombay. Our shortcomings are many but you will kindly take the will for the deed.

In conclusion, I beg the distinguished President of this Session to take the Chair.

CALL FOR UNITY AND PATRIOTISM*

It is my proud and happy privilege to offer you, on behalf of the Musalmans of Lucknow, a most cordial welcome to this historic city. Many of you have travelled long distances at considerable personal discomfort to take part in this great and representative assembly of your community. I need not say how valuable an asset in our public life is the sense of public duty that scorns distances and grudges no sacrifice of money and time that is demanded of our public men in the service of communal causes. The presence here today of so many distinguished Musalmans from every part of the country, great leaders of thought and opinion, men who in their respective spheres have contributed to the growth and success of all modern movements for the regeneration of their people, some of whom are, indeed, the architects of the fortune of Islam in India—the presence of such public workers in this great gathering is the surest pledge we could have that our deliberations at this eventful stage in the history of India will be fruitful and conducive to the ultimate welfare of our community.

Gentlemen, to the modern eye, the place where we are holding this annual session of the All-India Muslim League must seem to be singularly barren of interest. Lucknow is not a modern city, alive with the hum and bustle that are characteristic of a roaring trade centre or a busy hive of industry. It has none of the push and go of Bombay, none of the intellectual energy and up-to-datism of Calcutta, none of the un-

* Welcome address delivered by Nabi Ullah at the Lucknow session held in December, 1916.

conventional, aggressive ways of towns of humbler origin and lesser dignity, but not less pretentiousness, where the spirit of modernity has found a dwelling and reared its dominant symbol in the shape of smoking chimneys of factories and mills.

Lucknow is still wedded to its old ways of life and seeks its intellectual and spiritual nourishment in visions of the past. Please do not be led away by the vast green spaces and the trim beauty of its parks into imagining that such bribes can induce it to emerge from its populous and wonderous dreamland. The city 'improvements' which are the costly fruits of the garrulous reforming zeal of the city fathers, with their geometrical precision and their passion for right angles and straight lines, have scared old Lucknow and driven it to cling still more tenaciously to itself. It is living its life serenely and with a vengeance in strongholds where no town-planning reformer or sanitary iconoclast can hope to penetrate, in an environment which retains its old-world features in unimpaired outline and which the Cook's tourist on a brief holiday in the East loves to describe as 'picturesque'. Well, gentlemen, we are old-fashioned and 'picturesque' people, living picturesque lives and luxuriating in picturesque fancies, and though we have little to offer you by way of suggestion or stimulus in your quest for things that are progressive and up-to-date, we can at least furnish a rich and dainty feast to your sense of the archaic. If those of you who have come from far busier and more animated scenes of present-day enthusiasms and endeavours, carry back the persuasion that all that is past is not dead, and that the poet who still sings of gul and bulbul, or the elaborate-mannered gentleman to whom social life is one long scheme for receiving and imparting pleasant sensations, are but the expiring spirits of an ampler and more leisured conception of life that may well bring a breath of fresh air to the pent up and high-pressure intensity of modern existence—if you can take this persuasion back with you, even our easy-going conservatisms and polite inanities would not have been altogether in vain.

Lucknow was once famous for its hospitality. Times have,

however, changed, and what was once a power and a joy in its social life, remains as a mere pious aspiration. If our distinguished guests find anything lacking in our efforts to make their stay among us comfortable and pleasant, I would beg them to overlook our undoubted shortcomings and take the will for the deed. Of one thing, however, I wish to speak with frank assurance. Lucknow has been disinherited of many of its priceless gifts, but still retains its dowry of good manners. Happen what may, it would never permit that unspeakable outrage on its sense of hospitality, which a few hooligans organized last year at the instigation of the enemies of Islam in Bombay. How and why that outrage came to be perpetrated and what were its instruments are now matters of common knowledge. Need I say, that the whole of Muslim India was filled with deep indignation at that shameful incident. Its only result was to increase still further the determination of the Musalmans to tread the path of duty fearlessly and with unfaltering steps, undeterred and uninfluenced by the intrigues of reactionary cliques and vested interests, or the vulgar escapades of their hirelings.

The War

From these somewhat personal explanations due from the host to the guest, I now, with your permission, pass on to matters of general public concern which will no doubt engage your undivided attention at the sittings of the League. The first thing that must naturally strike anyone interested in public affairs is the abnormally grave character of the circumstances in which we meet to-day. The greatest war in history, which began more than two years ago, is still going on with unabated fury of destruction and carnage, and no one can as yet set limits to its duration. I need not set about to detail the causes that have brought about this unparalleled catastrophe in the affairs of the world. They are well-known to you all. It is enough for us to realize that our King Emperor and his allies are fighting for the complete vindication of international right and justice, that it is a life-and-death struggle for the British Empire, and that all the

resources of this vast Empire, in men, money and material will have to be mobilized and thrown into the fight, if the stubborn, determined and resourceful enemy is to be completely and finally crushed. In this gigantic task, the whole of the Empire, of which India forms a part, is absolutely of one mind and one resolution. There can at this stage be no turning back from the stern path of duty, no temporizing and no contentment with half-measures. The arch-enemy of human peace and civilization, the evil spirit that flourishes the mailed fist and has raised militarism to the dignity of a high spiritual cult, must not simply be scotched but killed outright. For this purpose, all parts of the Empire are firmly united and are prepared for all manner of effort and sacrifice that they may be called upon to bear. India stands no less firm than Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa or even the British Isles. At the outbreak of the war, she pledged, of her own free will, all the help that she could give in the successful prosecution of the struggle. She has been redeeming that pledge in no niggardly spirit. Her soldiers have borne their full share of the fight for the safety and honour of the Empire on the battlefields of Europe, Asia and Africa; and had not the invidious bars of colour and race stood in the way, millions of her sons would have sprung forth joyously at the first call to arms and rallied under the banner of the Empire. The contributions of her princes and people in money and material have been free and generous. And let me assure the representatives of our King Emperor in India that they can count in full confidence on steadfast Indian devotion and support to the Imperial cause till it is triumphantly vindicated on the field of battle.

Through the supreme and searching test of this war, the loyalty of India has emerged untarnished and proved to be one of the greatest and most precious assets of the Empire. I need not dwell on the character and quality of its widespread manifestation. It has shown itself in a variety of ways and through acts and deeds in which all classes of His Majesty's Indian subjects have shared with equal enthusiasm. In such an atmosphere it may be a piece of irrelevance to talk of

Muslim loyalty. However, in this great Muslim assembly, it may not be wholly out of place to note, with deep satisfaction, the unswerving fidelity with which the Musalmans have borne their part of the Imperial burden. The sense of this satisfaction is immeasurably enhanced when it is borne in mind that Muslim soldiers have cheerfully gone into the fight against the forces of their Caliph in defence of the cause of the Empire to which their destinies are linked.

India and the Peace to Come

At a time when all efforts and energies concentrated on the conduct of the war, it is natural that all schemes of normal and peaceful development and advance should be held in abeyance. At the beginning of the war, a sort of political truce was declared in India, and the voice of controversy has since been hushed. All public activities have been suspended that could even remotely have the effect of distracting the mind of the Government in its task of organizing victory. Even some of the most urgent needs of the country have been allowed to wait till peace comes to restore to the affairs of mankind their true proportion and balance. This does not, however, mean that we are to remain in a state of suspended while the hammer-blows of fate are fashioning the framework of a new and we trust a better and a freer world. The organization of peace after the war is, in the opinion of most thinking men, a more complex and anxious problem than the winning of the war itself. In Great Britain and the countries of her Allies no less than among the people of the Central Alliance, strenuous thought and energies are being applied to the discovery of stable foundations for a new political, economic and social order. Is India alone to stand still and take no thought for the morrow, when that morrow is to usher in a new era in the history of the world and the nations, saved from the perils of militarism, are to undertake the replanning of their lives with the freedom and joy of a new resurrection? The war is not to last for ever. I would not be surprised if 1917 brings the end definitely in sight. Are we to wake up one fine morning, when the peace has been signed, to collect our

scattered thoughts hastily together and start a wild, academic discussion about the future of our country? The Indian public man who has grasped the psychology of the existing conditions, and yet helps to waste, through a policy of masterly inactivity, the all too brief interlude for planning and preparation, is a traitor to the cause of India.

Substantial changes in the administration and governance of India have become inevitable, and it is the duty of the intellectual and political leaders of the Indian people to participate actively in the evolution of the new order of things and determine what those changes should be. If solemn public declarations count for anything, we may take it that the British nation and responsible British statesmen have discovered the true heart of India in this great crisis of their history. The scales of ignorance and prejudice have fallen from their eyes, and in the stress of common sacrifice and common emotion there has come to birth in England a genuine movement of sympathy for the aspirations of our people. Early in the war we were definitely assured by an Under-Secretary of State for India that 'a new angle of vision' would henceforth be applied to Indian affairs. As a recognition of the need by a responsible British Minister to broaden the basis of Indian governance, nothing could be more explicit. It must, however, be remembered that 'a new angle of vision' cannot be picked out at will from a textbook on political science. It is an intellectual process, an adjustment of policy and principle to new aspects of a case. In the case of India, it will be a mere empty phrase, if it does not mean the introduction of a policy of trust, of allowing Indian opinion steadily and increasingly to assume the ultimate control and direction of the affairs of this country.

The Need for Unty and Patriotism

Now, with this broadening of the intellectual horizon of India's responsible rulers and with the goal clearly set before our eyes, it now rests with the Indian people themselves to take heart of grace, close their ranks and shrink from no effort

and sacrifice that may be needed to bring the coveted prize within their grasp. Gentlemen, with all the sympathy and goodwill that may come to us from quarters where a short time ago we used to meet with indifference and cold reserve, the path that lies before us is neither easy nor smooth. The temper of 'the man on the spot' in India is yet an incalculable factor in the situation. And you are well aware how formidable 'the man on the spot' is and what tremendous weapons he can employ, if it is his whim and pleasure to thwart the will of the people. Then, there are other forces, representing interests of alien origin, and frequently hostile to the needs of Indian nationalism, which we have to take into full account. These forces are controlled by a section of the Anglo-Indian press, and all of us know how easily they can be set in motion against the forces of Indian progress. These and a host of other difficulties we have to overcome, and you can well imagine what patience, cool-headedness, clear thinking, organisation of will and effort—above all, that sustained inspiration for public which patriotism and unity alone can give—are needed if these difficulties are to be effectually removed before India attains to its ideal of a self-governing nation. But unity and patriotism are the sovereign remedies for the ills that afflict our body politic at this critical period of our history.

This brings me to the central point that lends exceptional value and significance to the session we are holding to-day. The affairs of the country, which we Muslims are proud to call our motherland, have reached a stage where they call for the sinking of all petty differences of race and creed and demand united action. An overwhelming responsibility lies on the shoulders of every community in India at this juncture. Their patriotism and sense of duty to the generations yet unborn are on trial. The future of India hangs in the balance. If their lives are touched with the divine spark that moves men to vaster planes of common duty and service, the petty anxieties and perversities of self will be burned to ashes and the dream of the Indian patriot will become a glorious reality. But if these groups of human beings have never known the

light of a common purpose, nor has the reality of a common ideal ever entered their lives, if they are so many diverse atoms held together by the accidents of geography and political subjection and the narrowness of little creeds, then there is absolutely no future for India, and all this sterile din and clamour of politics should cease. Need India wait for an answer from the followers of Islam in this great crisis of her fate? We know what our answer ought to be and will be. Let me assure our fellow-countrymen of other creeds, that a Musalman cannot betray the cause of India without betraying his whole past. He shall, God willing, be in the vanguard of the forces that are to fight the battles of constitutional freedom. His active political life is of a short duration, but during this brief period he has traversed the ground that the great Hindu Community took about a quarter of a century to cover. The history of the All-India Muslim League is a faithful reflex of the political growth of Indian Musalmans. Within six years of its birth, this great Muslim political organization emerged from its primeval shell, and set before itself a goal towards which the rest of India was gradually moving. This widening of purpose and out-look was not due to the fiat of any masterful personality, but was the result of the strong pressure of popular opinion. If the League had not adapted its policy and programme to the self-reliant and liberal spirit of the Muslim democracy, it would have probably ceased to exist. To-day it embodies the dynamic force and vitality of a living movement. It works in close touch with Muslim opinion and is, in the widest sense, the representative of the will of the community.

Two Principal Objects of the League

The All-India Muslim League stands to-day for two principal objects, namely, for the safeguarding of the political position of Musalmans and for co-operation with the other communities for the attainment of self-government or home rule. The realization of the first object is, as all fair-minded persons would be ready to admit, an essential condition of the success of the second. It would be idle to talk of co-operation

if the Musalmans did not feel a complete sense of security as regards their communal future. They are a 'minority', and in all political developments tending towards a democratic form of State organization, a minority must have certain definite, statutory safeguards. The Muslim demand for such safeguards is, therefore, natural and legitimate; and the 'majority', which in any case holds the balance of power, cannot oppose this demand without laying itself open to the charge of selfishness and political insincerity. Let our Hindu brethren remember that an adequate and effective separate representation of Musalmans in the self-governing institutions of the country can in no case deprive them of the decisive power of the majority. When such power is guaranteed to them by their number, I fail to see why some of their communal enthusiasts should deny the Musalmans the right to secure the basis of their political existence. Opposition of this character breeds distrust, and the good faith of those who justify such opposition on the overworked pleas of 'unity' and 'nationalism' comes to be questioned by the Muslim rank and file. Let me take a recent unfortunate episode by way of illustration. Some months ago the Legislature of this Province passed an Act relating to municipalities in which the Musalmans were given the right of separate representation slightly in excess of their numbers. The Hindu majority on the municipal boards was in the aggregate complete and decisive. And yet some of the Hindu leaders, with a strange lack of the sense of proportion and with a painful disregard of the infinitely vaster issues confronting their country, took up the cry of "Hindus in danger" and rushed the whole Province into the throes of a bitter and violent agitation. This exhibition of uncompromising temper had scared a considerable section of the Musalmans, and there was a serious danger of the new-born movement for Hindu-Muslim co-operation being strangled at its birth, if the Muslim leaders had also lost their heads and allowed a counter-agitation to grow up with sectarian cries to match. It would have been a bitter irony of fate indeed, if the whole of India were to be punished for the sins of a few unbalanced individuals.

It has given considerable relief to all of us to find that the responsible Hindu leaders in all parts of India realize the Muslim standpoint and are ready to offer all reasonable guarantees for the safety of the Muslim political position. With the settlement of this fundamental question involving the fate of India's future, nothing else should remain in the way of a complete Hindu-Muslim co-operation for the supreme end we both have in view. That end, I need hardly say, is United India, alive to her destiny and recoiling from no toil and sacrifice to rise to the summit of her aspiration, i.e., to the position of a self-governing member of the British Empire. Is there a single Indian in and outside of this hall, born of Indian woman, whose heart fails to warm up and whose pulse does not beat faster as he gives even a moment's thought to this glorious conception? If there is such a miserable wretch in existence, he is a freak and a monstrosity. For such an ideal, no effort can be spared, no sacrifice can be too great.

The Task of Reconstruction

Our task to-day is essentially a task of reconstruction. In concert with the rest of our fellow-countrymen, we have to prepare a scheme of reforms for the administration and government of India, to be introduced as soon as possible after the end of the war, which would go a long way towards securing an effective voice to the Indian people in the conduct of public affairs. Your best energies will no doubt be directed to the framing and consideration of such a scheme, and I need not, therefore, waste your time by trying to anticipate you, and evolving *obiter dicta* of my own. I need not, in these circumstances, embark on along recital of the customary grievances that have been the stock-in-trade of the Indian political reformer ever since he took to constitutional agitation. Nor need I undertake a detailed review of the administrative sins of omission and commission from the point of view of an Indian and a Musalman. These grievances, like the poor, have always been with us. For the present, we have a far bigger and more essential task in hand, and on its satisfactory accomplishment all our energies should be bent.

The Press Act

I cannot, however, close without referring to the administration of the Press Act and the Defence of India Act and the grave feelings of anxiety and alarm to which they have given rise. I need not argue at length to demonstrate the lawless character of the Press Act, or set forth the nature of the circumstances under which it was forged. It is enough to remember that it has proved to be a singularly harsh and drastic measure. The highest tribunals in the land have shown its provisions to be of a nature that have reduced the freedom of the Press to a farce. It confers arbitrary and absolute powers on the executive, and public opinion can be expressed only on sufferance. Many of the most influential and independent Muslim newspapers like the *Comrade* and *Hamdard* have succumbed to the operations of this Act. Free and independent journalism in the country has become a most hazardous and risky undertaking. The whole of educated India has been demanding, with one voice, its removal from the statute book, and the sooner it is done the better it would be for the peace and contentment of the country.

The Defence of India Act

The Defence of India Act is an emergency measure which confers extraordinary and exceptional powers on local governments with the object of preserving public safety during the period of the war. No Indian public man has ever questioned the right and the duty of the State to arm itself with exceptional weapons in a crisis like the one through which the Empire is passing. However, the administration of this measure, which was primarily intended to deal with the enemies of the State, has become a matter of growing concern to the public. The Defence of India Rules have been used with alarming frequency throughout India, and some of the most distinguished and popular Muslim leaders, like Mr. Mohammad Ali and Mr. Shaukat Ali, have been deprived of their liberty and interned. No definite charges have been brought against them, there has been no public trial for any known offence under

the law, and they have been given no opportunity to explain the grounds on which the order for their internment may have been based. It is, therefore, no fault of the people if they regard these gentlemen as innocent victims of some cruel misunderstanding or suspicion. I need not speak of the great hold that Mr. Mohammad Ali has on the esteem and affections of his people. Within his comparatively short but crowded career as a devoted servant of his community he has won his way to the heart of Muslim India. The feeling for him and his brother is one of deep sorrow and sympathy, and if this feeling has not found an organized public expression, it is because the Muslim community has exercised wonderful self-restraint, and has refrained from embarrassing the Government at such a time as this. May we hope that the Government will be pleased to take the Muslim sentiment into consideration and restore these Muslim leaders to liberty, thereby earning the deep and abiding gratitude of the entire Muslim community?

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have done. It only remains for me to step aside and make way for my distinguished and able friend, whom we have summoned to preside over our deliberations at this important session of the League. The Hon'ble Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah stands in no need of introduction to an assembly of Indian Muslims. Though comparatively young in years, he has already made his mark in the public life of this country. His clear gaze and ripe judgement, his cool, imperturbable temper, his sweet reasonableness, his fearless courage and devotion to duty have stood the test through serious crises in public affairs and have helped to save many an awkward situation. I have no doubt that under his guidance the work of the Ninth Session of the All-India Muslim League will be crowned with success.

NEED FOR UNITY AND SELF-SACRIFICE*

I do not use the language of conventional formality when I say that I feel extremely flattered by the compliment that has been paid to me by the Reception Committee of this All-India Muslim League in electing me the Chairman of the Committee. I need hardly say that I feel proud to be accorded the high privilege of welcoming on behalf of Bengal, and Calcutta in particular, such distinguished and brilliant representatives of the leaders of political thought in Muslim India. Next to being called upon to occupy the presidential chair, I look upon the honour which has been bestowed upon me as one of the highest in the gift of the community, and I am all the more grateful to my friends that they have been kind enough to make me the fortunate recipient of such a reward at so early a stage of my political career. I feel overpowered by a sense of diffidence at my own incapacity for the great task which has been entrusted to me, but I hope that the same kindness and indulgent consideration to which I owe this exalted honour will also animate my brethren whom I am addressing, in overlooking my faults and short-comings in the discharge of the onerous and responsible duties entrusted to me to-day.

Brethren of the Muslim League, on behalf of the Musal-
mans of the Bengal Presidency in general, and of the city of
Calcutta in particular, I beg to offer you a hearty and sincere
welcome to this city. On their behalf as Chairman of the
Reception Committee, I also offer my heartiest thanks to all

* Welcome address delivered by Abdul Latif Ahmed at the
Calcutta session held in December, 1917.

who have taken the trouble to come here to take part in the deliberations of the All-India Muslim League, and I particularly offer my thanks to all who have travelled long distances at great personal sacrifice, discomfort and inconvenience. It is because there are men in our community who will not hesitate to make such sacrifices that we see gathered here to-day the best, the noblest and the highest representatives of the intellect of Muslim India of the present day. It is a matter of the utmost gratification to every Musalman who has the good of his community at heart that such a representative gathering of Musalmans from different parts of India is possible even under adverse circumstances, for these gatherings are the surest indications of the success of those activities for which the All-India Muslim League has become conspicuous amongst the representative institutions of this vast continent as the staunchest champion of the rights and privileges of the Musalman community in India. There can be no doubt that these gatherings are amongst the surest indications that the labours of the League have not been in vain, and that, through the blessing of Almighty Providence, the work which the League has undertaken will be productive of the utmost benefit to the community.

Brethren of the League, in welcoming you to our beloved city, I cannot boast that it has any attractions to offer to lovers of antiquity or the student of historical research. Calcutta is after all a modern city, and has grown up with the growth of British rule in this country. It is essentially the handy work of a few generations of Englishmen who have laboured to build up a centre of trade and industry which, in the rapidity of its growth and its marvellous development, bears eloquent testimony to the unrivalled constructive genius of the British race. But I think I may well maintain that Calcutta has also got its own claims to your attention, more varied, though less sentimental, in character than the older cities in other parts of India. I think that its very modernity must be a welcome change to gentlemen coming from older cities, for I feel that, while amidst the surroundings and ruins of vanished glory, you can only derive inspiration by recollect-

tions of the past, in a modern city like Calcutta you are stimulated to exertion and activity by a hopeful outlook into the future. For those to whom a contemplation of the past glories of Islam brings mournful recollections, the stress and turmoil of modern Calcutta brings home the lesson of the supreme necessity of honest work and earnest endeavour as essential requisites in any programme of work for the regeneration of our community. Viewed in this light, a visit to Calcutta can hardly be looked upon as having been in vain, or without its object lessons. The bustling activity on all sides of modern life brings home to the mind the stern reality of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest, which Indian Musalmans are so apt to forget, but which is the one lesson of all which they ought to lay deep to heart.

My heart almost breaks when I am reminded of the fact that in welcoming you to Calcutta, I cannot claim that we are welcoming you to the metropolis of British India. Our city has fallen from the high position which it occupied on that score, but it still continues as before to be an epitome of all India in consequence of the diversity of races living here. I do not think I will be far wrong when I say that members of the League from different parts of India will find numbers of their own countrymen amongst the heterogeneous populations of this vast city. I sincerely hope that our brethren of the League will find themselves at home, at least in coming across their own people from their own respective provinces. It is true that Calcutta is sometimes called the 'City of Palaces', but Mohammedan Calcutta after all has a much humbler prospect from the point of view of wealth and affluence. We cannot boast of any merchant princes like those in Bombay, or the magnates of Lucknow, and hence there can be no wonder that our hospitality is also poor; but I can assure our brethren that the will to offer our services for their comfort and convenience has not been wanting, and true to Islamic traditions, we have placed our little all before them and have tried our best to make their stay amongst us pleasant and comfortable. If we have failed in any degree in our efforts,

we confidently look up to all our brethren to overlook our shortcomings.

Internment of President-Elect

My joy at your presence here is tempered with unspeakable sorrow on account of the sad and depressing circumstances under which we meet to-day. The vacant presidential chair expresses our feelings far more eloquently than I can do. I believe that for the first time in the history of all representative gatherings, the present audience has been compelled by force of circumstances to hold deliberations with a vacant presidential chair. The history of Muslim India during the past few years has been full of many surprises, but I assure you that this has been the most cruel, the most poignant and the most heart-rending of all. I grieve for the absence of Mr. Mohammad Ali, not merely because he was our president-elect, but also because he has all along been one of the sturdiest champions of the Muslim cause in India. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, for I feel that his absence from the presidential chair to-day is the result of an act of despotism and unreasoning autocracy on the part of our rulers, which has cast a slur upon the fair fame of British rule in India. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, because at a moment when the most vital questions of constitutional reform are being discussed from all points of view, his absence from our midst has been the greatest possible disaster to Muslim interests. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, because he was one of the most trusted and most intrepid of our leaders, and we can ill afford to be deprived of his sage counsel and sober guidance at this crisis in the history of our community and our country. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, because I firmly believe that he has fallen a victim to misrepresentations and mischievous reports of the Criminal Intelligence Department, for no other reason than being a true Musalman and a fearless exponent of the progressive ideals of Islam. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, because his absence from our midst to-day is a studied insult to the feelings and sentiments of the loyal Musalmans of India. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, because the refusal

of the Government to release him in spite of our repeated prayers and entreaties is an act of unparalleled high-handedness on the part of our rulers, which is sure to rouse discontent amongst the peaceful members of our community in India. I grieve for Mr. Mohammad Ali, for I feel that he is at the present moment suffering an unjustifiable and unmerited incarceration, whereas the crown of glory should have adorned his head as a reward for his unselfish labours on behalf of his community and his country.

But, gentlemen, while I grieve so much for Mr. Mohammad Ali, and feel the keenness of our loss on account of his enforced absence from our midst, I grieve still more for the blundering self-sufficiency of those officials who seem to be bent upon pursuing a policy which stands condemned by the unanimous opinion of all the leaders of political thought in India. We are all human and liable to make mistakes, but we can hardly lay claim to any sense or reason if we continue acting in defiance of the unanimous and unmistakeable opinion of the public in general, or persist in adhering to a course of conduct about the error of which there is a perfect unanimity of all shades of opinion. Whatever may be the differences of opinion about other matters of public interest amongst the various sections of the Indian people, I think I am right in saying that there is a perfect unanimity of opinion on this, that the internment of Mr. Mohammad Ali is wholly unjustified. Within the last few months there have been public meetings all over the country denouncing the internment of Mr. Mohammad Ali, and all other leaders, in the strongest terms; and still Government persist in defying all this volume of opinion in a spirit of autocratic high-handedness of which even the Russian Czar would possibly have been ashamed. I wonder how these officials, who seem to be so utterly impervious to public opinion and public criticism, can lay claim to any of those qualities of which the British people are often so proud. For the fair name of the British people themselves I am sorry, for these Englishmen whose blind career of autocracy in India has brought discredit on the British Government and branded the British nation in the eyes of the whole

of India. The interned Muslim leaders will survive the injustice that has been done to them; but I doubt very much if the prestige of the British administration will survive the shock it has received by these ill-conceived and narrow-minded acts of officials who ought to have known better, and whom experience, if nothing else, should have taught the inestimable lessons of prudence, caution and statesmanship.

internment of Other Muslim Leaders

And this leads me to the subject of the internment of Muslim leaders in general. Azad, Mahmudul-Hasan, Hasarat Mohani and many others of the trusted leaders of our community have been taken away from us by the machinery of what I consider to be one of the most cruel and unjust enactments that have ever been in force in this country. I maintain that these internments are wholly illegal and unjustifiable, as being based on orders which have been passed under an arbitrary and unjust law. The War has been responsible for many anomalies, not the least remarkable of which is the Defence of India Act. The Executive in this country were long on the look out for powers by which they could readily pounce upon their victims without the risk of their actions being challenged in a Court of Law. The War gave them their long looked-for opportunity. A Bill, intended primarily for the defence of the country against the enemies of the King, was rushed through the legislature, but no sooner did the Bill become law than this supposed measure of defence was utilized as one of the most terrible means of offence. The Executive took full advantage of the authority given to them under the Act by ruthlessly depriving unoffending citizens of their liberty. No formal charges were brought against them, no definite accusations made, the accused were not even given a chance of clearing their conduct, while mere suspicions based on the report of an irresponsible C.I.D., were enough to wrest a man from his friends and his family.

As in the case of the operation of the Press Act, the Muslims were again singled out for the special mark of

Executive favour. Within three years of the passing of the Act, almost every one of our honoured and trusted leaders has been taken away from us. I do not wish to dwell on the case of all the interned leaders, but I will certainly make a passing reference to a few of them. The cause of our President-elect Mr. Mohammad Ali, comes naturally uppermost in my mind. The story of his internment has been told from so many hundreds of platforms that it will only be a waste of time to repeat the same melancholy story over again. I will therefore only refer to the reasons given by the Government for detaining him in custody. An interpellation in the Viceroy's Legislative Council by the Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah elicited the astounding assertion that the order of internment was justified on the ground of Mr. Mohammad Ali's sympathy with the King's enemies. Although the Government did not care to specify who these enemies of the Government are, we have no difficulty in finding out that by these enemies Government means the Turks. Now, gentlemen, the attitude taken up by the Government with regard to the internment of Mr. Mohammad Ali directly raises the issue of whether an expression of sympathy, or even the promotion of that sympathy with our co-religionists in trouble, is such a serious offence as to merit internment under the Defence of India Act. Musalmans all over India have considered this question, and whether the answer is palatable to Government or not, there is now no ignoring the fact that every sincere Musalman adheres to the opinion that such sympathy is not in itself any sufficient ground for an interference with our liberties under the Act. Musalmans have answered the question, and have declared from hundreds of platforms and in hundreds of thousands of voices that every genuine and sincere Musalman does feel sympathy for the Turks in their present troubles. Of course, if any one were to translate this sympathy into action, and be guilty of any act of sedition or disloyalty, the case would of course be quite different; but so long as the Musalmans keep within the bounds of loyalty and due allegiance to the Crown, I do not think the Government has a right to quarrel with their opinion in this matter, any more than it can

take exception to their religious tenets of faith. It is time for Government to take note of this considered opinion of the Muslim community and to cease persecuting people for the sake of their personal opinion.

I next pass on to the case of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad for whom Bengal, not to speak of the rest of India, has been mourning for nearly two years. The family of the Maulana has been domiciled in Bengal for nearly half a century, and its members always made it the mission of their life to impart religious instruction to the people. Like his father of revered memory, the Maulana also had devoted himself solely to the life of a teacher and preacher of Islam. For politics he never cared, and so far as I am aware, he never allowed himself to be dragged into it. His activities were mainly confined to the compilation of works on religion, and imparting religious instruction to his disciples. But the all-knowing C.I.D. suddenly discovered that his presence here in Calcutta was dangerous, and an order immediately went out demanding that he should remove himself bag and baggage from Bengal. People were horrified at this order, but there was no help for it, and the Maulana had to obey. A memorial signed by over 70,000 Musalmans of Bengal was sent to the Government for the cancellation of the order. To the credit of the Government of Lord Carmichael be it said that His Excellency was disposed to accede to our prayer and permit the Maulana to come back to his peaceful avocation. But, unfortunately, before this order of cancellation could take effect, the Bihar Government intervened and passed orders for the internment of the Maulana on the alleged ground of treasonable correspondence with the King's enemies. The voice of criticism had to be hushed for the moment in the face of the enormity of the alleged offence; but the Maulana immediately repudiated the charge and challenged Government to prove the accusation in a court of law. This challenge has not yet been taken up by Government. Insults were heaped upon him by offering him a pittance by way of allowance and putting restrictions on his movements which interfered with his attending the mosque to offer his *Isha* and *maghrib* prayers. We all know how the

Maulana met the situation. He declined to accept the allowance, and he has been attending the mosque regularly to say his prayers in defiance of the orders passed by Government.

The case of Maulana Mahmud-ul-Hasan stands on a par with that of Maulana Azad. Throughout his life he has been a recluse, and his activity, either religious or political, had never been at all pronounced. We have not the means of knowing what secret intrigue he was carrying on, or what seditious doctrines he was preaching to his disciples, for we are not in the confidence of the C.I.D ; but what we do know is that by nature and temperament he is not a man who could have got himself entangled in any revolutionary movement against the established government of the country. While on his way home from Mecca, it was suddenly discovered by the C.I.D. that he was dangerous to the safety of India, and he was accordingly arrested and removed to the Prisoners of War Camp of Malta, where he has been rotting in internment ever since. In his case also, neither any definite accusation nor any attempt to justify the action taken by Government has been made. It is rumoured that in deference to public demand, the Government are going to restore the respected gentlemen to liberty. If so, it is a matter of sincere gratification. Let us hope that in this case at least, the wrong done will at last be rectified.

I cannot pass on in silence over the case of Mr. Hasrat Mohani who has given signal proof of courage, of a devotion to duty and honesty of purpose of which every Musalman ought to be proud. He is another of those brilliant leaders of our community who by sheer merit, strength of character and steadfast devotion to the cause of the country and the community, have covered themselves with undying glory and renown. At a time when the whole of Muslim India was filled with bitter feelings of hostility towards the Hindus, it was he who dreamt the dream of a Hindu-Muslim unity and persisted in teaching the doctrine of co-operation with the advancing communities of India for the common good of our mother-

land. Like many other leaders, it was not long before he was interned. Restrictions were placed on his movements; but he refused to admit the legality of these restrictions on the ground that they were passed under an Act which he did not admit to be either just or proper. He purposely disobeyed the orders passed against him; and he was prosecuted and placed on trial. When brought before the court, he freely admitted having broken the conditions imposed upon him under the Defence of India Act, and instead of defending himself, he expressed his willingness to go to jail rather than recant his conduct. He was sent to jail at Faizabad; and then comes one of the most touching episodes in his life. His health broke down in the Faizabad jail, and his wife sent a petition to Government praying that he might be transferred to the Aligarh jail, where the climate suited him better. His wife also submitted that she was too poor to pay for the railway fare from Aligarh to Faizabad, and that if Mr. Hasrat were kept at Aligarh, she would be in a position to see him frequently and render him whatever services were permissible under the jail regulations. She never for a moment prayed that her husband might be released. Gentlemen, you will be horrified to learn that the prayer of this unfortunate lady was summarily rejected by the benign Government of the United Provinces. At the present moment, it is a familiar sight in that part of the country to see Mrs. Hasrat in almost the tattered robes of a beggar woman covered by a *burqa*, leading her little daughter by the hand and wending her weary way from Aligarh to Faizabad to see her husband in jail. Gentlemen, if you have tears of blood, this is the time to shed them. To the eternal credit of Hasrat and his wife be it said that they are as firm and unyielding as ever. All honour to this brave and courageous lady who has set an example of wifely devotion, courage and fortitude of which the womankind of India may well be proud.

I could go on recounting other instances and adding to the tales of the sufferings of our leaders in exile and in jail, but I hardly think it necessary to do so. These are melancholy chapters in the history of our community, and I doubt very

much if they redound to the credit of British rule in India. **But** apart from the illegal and highly arbitrary character of this policy of internments, I wonder that our rulers do not recognize the fact that an unrestricted career of repression is hardly consistent with the gratifying message of hope of August 20, 1917, which the pronouncement of the Imperial Government seeks to convey to the Indian people. The words of that announcement are still ringing in our ears and only serve to add to the keenness of our disappointment at the failure of our efforts to release the interned leaders of our community. Let us hope that our rulers will yet learn and remember that it is never too late to mend, and that by an early cancellation of these orders of internment, they will make amends for the injustice and wrong done to the Musalman community. The release of these leaders will come as a balm and a solace to the afflicted hearts of the millions of loyal Musalmans. It is the only effective means of bringing about that calm political atmosphere which the Viceroy desires should prevail in India.

The Pledge of Political Emancipation

Gentlemen, we cannot begin our deliberations at this session of the All-India Muslim League without being reminded of the fact that the year which is just coming to a close is destined to mark an epoch in the history of India. The pronouncement of the Imperial Government dated August 20, to which I have already referred, is one of the most weighty and solemn declarations of policy which the Imperial Government has made from time to time relating to the constitution of the government in this country. Ever since the memorable day when Lord Macaulay, speaking from his place in Parliament, on the occasion of the passing of the Charter Act of 1833, uttered those memorable words about the growth and development of political consciousness in India, all the communities in this country have been anxiously looking forward to the redemption of those solemn promises which our rulers have repeatedly made for the political emancipation of the Indian people. "It may be", said Lord Macaulay, "that the public

mind of India may so expand under our system as to outgrow that system; that our subjects, being brought up under good government, may develop a capacity for better government; that being instructed in European knowledge they may crave for European institutions. I know not whether such a day will ever come; but when it does come, it will be the proudest day in the annals of England." To the credit of our British rulers in India it must be said that in spite of occasional blunders, and even grievous mistakes, they have steadily pursued a policy of generous sympathy and helpful guidance in directing our activities into well-ordered channels of a steady and progressive political development. Following on the declaration of policy in 1833, our rulers in India flung wide open the gates of the temple of knowledge, and Indians began to drink deep and with avidity of the fountains of Western learning and culture. Through more than half a century, Indians were nurtured on the vivifying food of English constitutional freedom; and through the pages of history, our countrymen were brought face to face with the struggles and triumphs of the English people in their progress towards the attainment of constitutional liberty. Macaulay foresaw the day in his almost prophetic vision; but the day came much sooner than either he or his contemporaries ever contemplated. And no wonder that it was so. English constitutional history is replete with inspiring examples of courage, devotion and sacrifice—courage tempered by caution, devotion leavened by sobriety, even partisanship softened by large-hearted charity, and all subordinated to the one predominating ideal of a readiness to sacrifice self in the solemn cause of the country.

We would have been unworthy of ourselves and of our preceptors, we would indeed have been something less than human if, with our souls stirred to their inmost depths and our warm Oriental sensibilities roused to an unwonted pitch of enthusiasm by the contemplation of these great ideals of public duty, we did not seek to transplant into our own country the spirit of those institutions which have made England great amongst the liberty-loving nations of the world.

And we, the Musalmans of India, would also have been unworthy of ourselves and unworthy of our past traditions if the rousing call of England to liberty and emancipation had failed to receive a responsive echo in our hearts. For a time indeed, Musalmans were apathetic to Western education and maintained an attitude of sullen indifference to passing events. But the heart of democratic Islam could not long remain unresponsive to a call which it had been her own privilege to raise in Europe when the Western nations themselves were mute and dumb, and when it was the Musalmans alone who were trusted repositories of the treasures of knowledge and culture. From the platform of the Indian National Congress, India first raised her voice for constitutional freedom, much like an infant crying for the light. The cry grew in volume and intensity as years rolled on, till at last the greatest political organization of the Musalmans of India, our own, our cherished Muslim League lent its voice to swell the national cry. No earthly power could resist such a cry, coming deep from the inmost recesses of millions of hearts. The resolutions of the Congress and the League were hardly more than a few months old, when the Imperial Government made the epoch-making pronouncement of August 20, which we all hope is a pledge for the final political emancipation of the Indian people

Constitutional Reforms

And this gentlemen, brings me to the important question of constitutional reforms, about which so much has been said, and whose discussions have brought down so much unmerited obloquy on the devoted heads of the members of the All India Muslim League. It was in November, 1916 that, by a joint consultation of the representatives of the All-India Congress Committee and of the All-India Muslim League, the scheme of reforms was formulated which is now known as the Congress League Scheme of Reforms. The Scheme was presented to the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League at Lucknow just a year ago, and was considered and accepted by both these political organizations. It was then

published and distributed, broadcast all over India; and not a single voice was raised in dissent, either as regards the principles or the details of the proposals underlying the Scheme.

After the pronouncement of August 20, and the announcement that the Secretary of State would visit India, a number of mushroom political organizations grew up all over India, and they arrogated to themselves the high privilege of suggesting schemes of reforms for the future Government of India. It is quite certain that but for the declaration of the Imperial Government about self-government in India, and the announcement of the Secretary of State's visit to this country, all these political prophets would have remained in the seclusion of their homes, and these precious proposals and schemes would never have seen the light of day. The temptation of getting an opportunity of shaking hands with the Secretary of State was too much for most of these leaders to resist, and they set about devising ways and means to accomplish their cherished end. They well knew that no interview would be granted to any except those who claimed to represent one or other of the various schools of political thought in this country, and they accordingly set about formulating schemes to be put forward before the Viceroy and the Secretary of State to serve as passports for their cherished interview with these representatives of our Sovereign. A wholesale copy of the Congress-League Scheme would not, however, have served their purpose; for in that case they would have been told to come through the gates of the League, gates which alas, they knew would open to only one magic "Open Sesame", namely, acceptance of the creed of self-government for India; but these were words they could not utter. Devoid of any power of making any suggestions of their own, they had to fall back on the Congress-League Scheme as a basis of operations, but variations in that Scheme were necessary in order to give their proposals an air of originality. This is the reason why our critics, while dissociating themselves from the Congress-League Scheme, have invariably taken our Scheme as their guide and model, and in most cases have copied wholesale

passages from it verbatim. This will be evident from a comparison of our Scheme with every other that has been presented on the question of constitutional reforms. Imitation, gentlemen, has always been regarded as the sincerest form of flattery; and we think that in freely copying from our Scheme, our critics have really paid us a compliment of which we should all be justly proud. Far from hearing any animus towards our critics, I think we should offer our hearty thanks to all our opponents who have borne unconscious testimony to the value of our suggestions and have unwittingly subscribed to the dominant principles underlying our Scheme of constitutional reforms.

And this leads me to a consideration of the Scheme of Reforms itself. It has been said that in voting for constitutional reforms, we have imperilled the interests of our community in India, and have betrayed the trust which had been implicitly laid in us by our community. It has been argued that the best policy for the Musalmans would have been to pursue a policy of political inaction, and some have even gone to the length of suggesting that it was the bounden duty of the Musalmans of India to oppose constitutional changes which might have the effect of undermining the power and influence of the bureaucracy in India. This specious *Kalema* of political notation has been sought to be preached by so many false prophets that I would crave your indulgent leave to examine it a little closely.

Sir Syed on the Political Responsibility of Muslims

The world has grown older and wiser by more than half a century since our leaders, headed by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, advocated for the Musalmans of India a policy of total abstention from politics. I am not going to sit in judgement over our great leaders of the past, but I will certainly venture to say that a policy like the one advocated by Sir Syed Ahmed and his colleagues more than half a century ago, can hardly be held applicable for all time and to all circumstances. Even the great Sir Syed himself had to modify his own views in his

own life time. At a meeting held on the May 10, 1866, at Aligarh, Sir Syed in a deliberate speech, said :

“It is with great regret that we view the indifference and want of knowledge evinced by the people of India with regard to the British Parliament. Can you expect that body to take a deep interest in your affairs if you do not lay your affairs before it? There are many men now composing it, liberal in their views, just and virtuous in their dealings, who take a deep interest in all that affects the welfare of the human race. . . To excite this interest, however, it is necessary that the requirements and wishes of that portion of mankind on whose behalf they are to exert themselves be made clearly known to them. Their interest and philanthropy once excited, you may feel assured, gentlemen, that the wants of the Jew, the Hindu, the Christian or the Mohammedan, of the black man or of the white will be attentively studied and duly cared for. India with that slowness so characteristic of Eastern races has hitherto looked on Parliament with a dreamy apathetic eye, content to have her affairs, in the shape of her Budget, brought before it in an annual, and generally inaudible, speech by Her Majesty’s Secretary of State for India. Is this state of things to continue, or has the time now come when the interests of this great dependency are to be properly represented in the governing body of the British nation? It has come, gentlemen, and I entreat you to interest yourselves for your country. The European section of the community in India, now grown so large, have set on foot an association in London with branch associations in India, in order to have Indian affairs, and the wants and desires of all classes of her inhabitants, brought prominently to the notice of Parliament; but unless the entire native community out here co-operate with them, place funds at their disposal, and take such measures as may conduce to place the scheme on a permanent basis, the opportunity will be lost, the natives of India will be unrepresented, and you will only have yourself to reproach when in after-years you see the European section of the community enjoying their well-earned concessions, whilst your wants remain still unmet.

"I am afraid that a feeling of fear that the Government or the district authorities would esteem you factious and discontented were you to inaugurate a measure like this, deters you from coming forward for your country's good. Are the Europeans thought factious and discontented? Believe me, this moral cowardice is wrong, this apprehension unfounded; there is not an Englishman of a liberal turn of mind in India who would regard with feelings other than those of pleasure and hope such a healthy sign of increased civilization on the part of its inhabitants. If you will only show yourselves possessed of zeal and self-reliance, you are far more likely to gain the esteem of an independent race like the English than if you remain, as you now are, apathetic and dependent. The actions and laws of every government, even the wisest that ever existed, although done or enacted from the most upright and patriotic motives, have at times proved inconsistent with the requirements of the people, or opposed to real justice. The natives have at present little or no voice in the management of the affairs of their country, and should any measure of Government prove obnoxious to them they brood over it, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy whilst discontent is rankling in their minds. I hope you, my native hearers, will not be angry with me for speaking the truth. You know that you are in the habit of inveighing against various acts of Government in your own homes and amongst your own families, and that you, in the course of your visits to European gentlemen, represent yourselves as quite satisfied with the justice and wisdom of these very acts. Such a state of affairs is inimical to the well-being of the country. Far better would it be for India were her people to speak out, openly and honestly, their opinions as to the justice or otherwise of the acts of Government."

Sir Syed then quotes the following passage from John Stuart Mill: "The rights and interests of every or of any person are only secure from being disregarded when the person interested is himself able and habitually disposed to stand up for them. The principle is that the general prosperity

attains a greater height and is more widely diffused in proportion to the personal energies enlisted in promoting it."

Our respected leader then proceeds :

"These principles, my friends, are as applicable to the people of India as they are to those of any other nation, and it is in your power, it now rests with you alone, to put them into practice. If you will not help yourselves, you may be quite certain no one else will. Who should you be afraid? Here am I, a servant of Government, speaking out plainly to you in this public meeting. My attachment to Government was proved, as many of you know, in the eventful year of the Mutiny. It is my firm conviction, one which I have invariably expressed, both in public and in private, that the greater the confidence of the people of India in the Government, the more solid the foundation upon which the present Government rests, and the more mutual friendship is cultivated between your rulers and yourselves, the greater will be the future benefit to your country. Be loyal in your hearts, place every reliance upon your rulers, speak out openly, honestly, and respectfully all your grievances, hopes and fears, and you may be quite sure that such a course of conduct will place you in the enjoyment of all your legitimate rights, and that this is compatible, nay, synonymous with true loyalty to the State, will be upheld by all whose opinion is worth hearing."

The Importance of Organized Political Agitation

Gentlemen, I do not think a more eloquent testimony to the efficiency of political agitation could be forthcoming than is contained in the words of our great leader, and I am sure I would be guilty of reprehensible impudence were I to add anything more on this point. It is recognized on all hands that organized political agitation on constitutional lines is the only effective means for a just consideration of our rights, and that a policy of political inaction would be utterly suicidal to the interests of our community. We must move with the time, or else we are doomed. But apart from all these considerations, I would ask you to consider whether it would have

been wise or politic on our part to maintain an attitude of stolid indifference to passing events, or to the political activities of the various communities in this country, which have naturally been moulding the policy of our rulers in matters affecting the Government of this great dependency. Even if we had remained silent, or worse still, even if we had taken up an attitude of active hostility towards the communities which have been agitating for reforms, I do not doubt that reforms would have come sooner or later, in spite of the attitude taken up by the Mohammedan community. It is a great mistake to suppose that the British people have any idea of governing India in the interests of any class or community, or that they will consent to sacrificing the interests of the Empire at large by showing any special predilections in favour of any one class as against another.

It is only natural that any policy they adopt in this country must be guided by considerations which have in view the interests of the Empire at large, and it is these considerations which alone must always guide them in granting or withholding privileges. If, for instance, our rulers have at any time shown any desire to ignore agitations for political concessions, it is because, in their judgment, concessions would not be justified by reasons of Imperial concern, and not because any particular community or communities may have been opposed to such concessions. Of course, any opposition from any section of the Indian people must carry the weight which it deserves; but such opposition can never be the sole guiding factor in inducing our rulers to come to a decision. Similarly, if our rulers think that certain concessions ought to be granted, we may be sure that these concessions will be forthcoming, irrespective of any opposition to the grant of such concessions that may exist in this country. I could illustrate my remarks by quoting numerous instances, but I would content myself with only a few recent cases. We all know that for long Mohammedans kept themselves aloof from all political movements; and it was an accepted political doctrine in India that the Musalmans, as a community, were opposed to the demands of the Hindus. Yet in spite of our indifference, and

even opposition, the Government of Lord Ripon made a big concession to the demands of the Hindus by introducing those beneficent measures of reform which have inaugurated the beginning of self-government in this country, and for which we all now cherish the memory of Lord Ripon in loving regard and veneration. Then, when the Indian National Congress was started, the Musalmans thought it wise to keep themselves away from it and they were known as opponents of this institution, which in its earlier days was considered a purely Hindu organization; but it is the demand of the Indian National Congress which induced the Government of Lord Landsdown to make a beginning towards the expansion of our Legislative Councils, and the introduction of an elective element in these Councils. Be it remembered that in deciding upon this reform, Government had to ignore or, at any rate, had not the support or endorsement of the expressed opinion of the leaders of the Musalman community. Hardly a decade had passed when we find a further expansion of the Legislative Councils, in deference to the demands of the Congress, and again unsupported by the endorsement of the Musalman community. Then came, again within less than a decade, the Minto-Morley reforms which brought about the present expansion of the Legislative Councils and a real and effective recognition of the demands of the Congress for a non-official majority in the Legislative Councils, as also various other rights and privileges for which the Congress had been fighting for nearly a quarter of a century. These examples emphatically prove that political concessions have been granted to the Indian people, quite irrespective of the attitude taken up by the Musalman community.

I do not for a moment imply that these concessions have been made by our rulers regardless of the interests of any of the various communities in this country, but the point I wish to emphasize relates to the outstanding fact that the question whether any concessions are to be granted or not, quite apart from the manner in which these concessions are to be applied to the fabric of the Indian administration, has always been decided, and very rightly decided, by our rulers in accordance

with reasons of state and according to the particular policy which required that a particular concession should be granted or withheld. A glaring instance of what I mean was afforded by the reversal of the Partition of Bengal. Our brethren in Eastern Bengal were told that the Partition was a settled fact, and they were induced, and even encouraged to carry on an agitation for the maintenance of the Partition. Successive Viceroys and Secretaries of State, including even Lord Morley, declared that the Partition of Bengal would be upheld at all-risk, even as much as the British would be prepared to uphold the British Empire in India. "The Musalmans of Eastern Bengal", says Lovat Fraser, "were told again and again by Ministers, by Viceroys, by Lieutenant-Governors, by all the officers of the new Province, that they would never more be placed under the dominion of Calcutta Bengalis. Under the greatest provocation they remained perfectly quiet for seven years, relying and implying upon British pledges." Speaking in the House of Lords in February 1912, Lord Minto gave his testimony on this point with his accustomed directness: "We told the Musalmans that the Partition was a settled fact, and we over and over again asserted that it must continue to be so. We assured the Musalman population of Eastern Bengal of our appreciation of their loyalty and our determination to safeguard their interests. I should think there could have been scarcely a civil servant in India who had not declared that it would be impossible for the British Government to reverse the decision it had come to as regards the maintenance of the Partition of Bengal."

Hardly any political leader in India thought, after all the weighty declarations of our rulers that the reversal of the Partition of Bengal was within the bounds of human possibility. But what is the actual fact? As soon as it suited Government to annul the Partition, our rulers did not hesitate a moment to disown declarations of the Government both of India and at home. The pledge that had been solemnly given to our brethren of Eastern Bengal and repeated over and over again for six years was ruthlessly sacrificed in furtherance of what is called the Delhi Scheme. All the sturdy loyalty

and the devoted allegiance of the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal were quickly forgotten; and our rulers did not hesitate to sacrifice them, like so many valueless pawns on the political chess-board, to suit the requirements of Imperial expediency. I maintain, therefore, that it is of very little moment or consequence whether Musalmans take part in politics or not. The problems that arise in connection with the constitutional changes in this country must be answered; and if the Musalmans do not furnish an answer or a solution themselves, so far at least as such changes affect their interests, the answer or the solution will be furnished by others. The Muslim League is a living protest against the policy of political inaction; and the members of the League have decided, after having learnt many a bitter lesson in the school of experience, that questions affecting the well-being of the community had best be decided by Musalmans and Musalmans, and Musalmans themselves (*sic*).

I hope I have made my point that a policy of political indifference could hardly have been justified in the light of the happenings in recent years. But apart from the question of advisability or justification, I think it would have been extremely foolish on the part of the Musalmans of India to range themselves in opposition to the forces of progress. Had we done so, we would only have covered ourselves with ridicule, without having advanced the interests of the community by one jot. We would only have found ourselves in much the same position as our Musalman brethren of Eastern Bengal are after the reversal of the Partition. We had therefore to take it as a settled fact that the reforms were due and forthcoming, and the only question we had to answer related to the manner in which it was necessary to safeguard the interests of our community in any scheme of constitutional changes.

The Congress-League Scheme of Reforms

For this purpose, the All-India Muslim League issued notices all over India for Musalmans to come and take part in

the deliberations; and at the Bombay Session of the League, a strong committee, consisting of representatives from every province of India, was appointed to draw up a scheme of constitutional reforms. This committee met a representative committee of the Indian National Congress in November 1916, and after deliberations lasting for four days, a scheme of constitutional reforms was drawn up on the basis of a mutual understanding between the various communities in India. This is the much vilified Congress-League Scheme which has been repudiated by many, but which has been followed, copied, endorsed and practically accepted by all.

I do not wish to enter upon an elaborate discussion of this Scheme, nor do I propose to defend the scheme or answer the adverse remarks of our critics. I firmly believe that as time goes on and people begin to take a saner and lustre view of things, and to look at the Scheme in its true perspective, all the objections to the Scheme will disappear, and the voice of opposition will grow faint and small, and will be ultimately and finally hushed. But there is one point about the Scheme on which much has been said in Bengal, and I therefore think it necessary to say a few words in order to throw some light on the subject. It has been said that in providing for the representation of Musalmans in the various Legislative Councils, our scheme puts the Musalmans in a position of numerical inferiority; and the apprehension has been expressed that if our scheme is accepted, Musalmans will only be at the mercy of a dominant Hindu majority. Now, a slight reflection will show that this criticism is unjust, inasmuch as the apprehensions expressed are wholly unfounded. It will be observed that according to our Scheme, the Musalmans in the Punjab will be in an absolute majority, and in all provinces except Bengal, the representation provided for Mohammedans is very much more than their numerical strength in the population. In Bengal alone have we accepted a representation less than our numerical strength in population, but we did so after careful thought and anxious deliberations.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the leaders of all
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the non-Muslim communities in India have always been strenuously opposing the principle of communal representation. We have only to recall the persistent manner in which resolution after resolution has been passed at sessions of the Congress and at all public meetings in this country. All the distinguished leaders of the Hindu community, not to speak of others, had hitherto expressed themselves most strongly in opposition to the principle of communal representations, with the single exception of perhaps the late Mr. Gokhale, who ultimately consented to tolerate this principle of communal representation as a necessary evil under the present political condition of India. The late Mr. R C. Dutt, from his place as a member of the Decentralization Commission, put on record a note of emphatic protest against separate representation of Mohammedans on local self-governing bodies, as being contrary to the acknowledged policy of absolute neutrality, as between class and class, to which the British have pledged themselves in the government of India. It is true that in the Minto Morley Scheme, the separate representation of Musalmans forms an important feature of the changes introduced by the expansion of the Legislative Councils; and it is also true that Lord Morley defended this principle from his place in Parliament as being not only justifiable but also fair. But the fact cannot be ignored that the representation of Mohammedans hitherto recognized by Government is so hopelessly inadequate as to be practically ineffective, and further, that there has as yet been no guarantee that this principle would be adhered to for any length of time.

Having regard to the persistent agitation against communal representation and the weight of opinion opposed to it, we thought that it was quite within the bounds of possibility that the separate representation of Mohammedans on public bodies might one day suddenly be taken away. Our leaders, therefore, felt that it was of the highest importance that a compromise should be arrived at on the basis of a mutual understanding of the rights and duties of the various communities in India, so that a matter of such vital importance to our community might not be left entirely at the mercy of the caprices

or the whim of British politicians. The All-India Muslim League therefore gave an ultimatum to all other communities through the medium of the Indian National Congress that any demand on the part of a united Indian people must proceed on the basis of a common understanding and a common agreement between all, and that, in any case, the principle of the communal representation of Musalmans in any scheme of self-government in India must be definitely and clearly recognized and amply provided for. After mature deliberations on the part of the leaders of non-Muslim communities, the conditions laid down by the League were accepted by the Congress, and it was on this basis that the Committee of the League and the Congress set about working out a joint scheme of reforms

We might have worked out a scheme of our own without reference to the rights and privileges of other communities, and I admit that in such a scheme we might have asked for the lion's share of the prizes on behalf of our community. But in that case the scheme would not have been binding on the other communities, and the controversy as regards the separate representation of our community would have remained wholly unsettled. In such circumstances, it would have been open to the Government to recognise the principle or not, and even in case of recognition, to have reduced our representation to an insignificant minority. Experience has shown that Mohammedan interests have seldom received adequate representation when left solely and entirely in the hands of the authorities. I have already referred to the inadequate representation of Musalmans in the present Legislative Councils. In the Calcutta University Senate, where the Government exercises the power of nomination to the unusually large proportion of 80 per cent of the members, the representation of Musalmans on the Senate does not exceed even 6 per cent. In the proposed amendment of the Calcutta Municipal Act, the representation which it is proposed to give to the Musalman interests continued to be grievously neglected, until recently when our leaders adopted the modern and the more effective method of public agitation for securing

recognition of our legitimate rights and claims. Our leaders in the Muslim League therefore very properly thought that to leave the question of our communal representation within the pale of controversy would be extremely risky, and they accordingly thought it prudent to clinch the matter and come to a definite understanding between ourselves and the other communities in this country. If the Muslims and non-Muslims had disagreed on the question of communal representation, either as to the principle involved or the details the matter would necessarily have gone into arbitration by a third party, namely, the Government. Having learnt by past experience that the result of such arbitration has generally been disastrous to Muslim interests, we thought that it was better and wiser to leave no chance for arbitration at all. This is the principal merit of the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms, and our leaders thought that to secure the end in view, we might even make some sacrifices.

But have we really made anything in the nature of a sacrifice? In the Punjab we have provided for an absolute majority, and in all the other provinces the proposed representation is very much in excess of proportion in population. It is said that even with this excessive representation, Mohammedans are in a minority in all these provinces; but our critics forget that there is a world of difference between a minority whose votes can effectively turn the scale on an important question, and a minority which is so insignificant as to be capable of being ignored and left out of calculations altogether. It is in Bengal that the acceptance of a representation of 40 per cent has been most strongly criticized and the Congress-League Scheme denounced in the strongest terms. Let us examine the position briefly. It is provided that the Muslims will have a representation of 40 per cent of the total number of Indian members, and when we remember that the remaining 60 per cent would consist not merely of Hindus, but various other communities as well as the representatives of special interests such as municipalities, district boards, universities, landholders, trade and commerce, I doubt very much whether the Hindus themselves will have a representa-

tion of more than 40 per cent. Besides, there will be the Anglo-Indians and the whole body of officials in order to keep the balance even between contending communities. If perchance the expanded Councils become the scene of petty strife and party factions, rather than trusted repositories of our national interests, I cannot conceive of Mohammedan interests ever being imperilled. except on the supposition of a combination of all the other elements in the Councils against them. This, gentlemen, is a contingency which can hardly arise; and if it ever did arise, I should be disposed to think that the Musalmans were in error on that particular question, and a defeat under such circumstances can hardly be a matter of much concern. We claim that under the Congress-League Scheme, even the apparent slightly inadequate representation of Mohammedans in Bengal can never be of real risk to the interests of the community, and a little reflection will show that all apprehensions on this score are wholly unfounded.

Gentlemen, I hope I have been able to show that we are in a position of advantage in the Congress-League Scheme of Reforms so far as the representation of our community is concerned, and that even in Bengal there is no risk under the slightly inadequate representation to which we have subscribed. At the same time, with all these advantages to ourselves, we have wrung from the important non-Muslim communities of India a formal acceptance of the principle of adequate representation of the Musalmans in any scheme of reforms in the future Government of India. Far from the Congress having captured the League, the members of the Muslim League might as well claim that the League has captured the Congress. We claim that it is a great triumph for such a young organization as the Muslim League, and it is a matter of very great regret that the community has not yet acknowledged or fully appreciated the achievements of the Muslim League in this direction.

***The Ideal of Political Enfranchisement and the
Opposition to It***

Gentlemen, I have dwelt at some length on the question of constitutional reforms, because I think that opinion of all shades and grades is now unanimous that, for a patriotic Indian there can be no higher, no loftier, no nobler duty than working for the ideal of the political enfranchisement of India. To attain this end ought to be the highest aim and ambition of every Indian, and no sacrifices ought to be too great to enable us to reach this cherished goal. When we remember the various and obvious defects in the present system of Indian administration; when we remember the untold oppression that is being daily committed on simple and inoffensive people by the Police, under a system which has been condemned by judges of all shades of opinion; when we remember the appalling poverty of the Indian masses which renders them an easy prey to devastating famines, when we remember the ceaseless economic drain which is sucking the life-blood of the Indian people and rendering them an easy prey to visitations like plague, pestilence and famine, I cannot but feel that a system of government which is mainly responsible for such a deplorable state of things, and against which such severe indictments could be levelled, stands in need of urgent and speedy reform. I repeat that in my opinion no sacrifices can be considered too great to attain the goal of our ambitions. I therefore regret that some of our educated fellow-countrymen have actually set themselves in opposition to the agitation for self government in India, and are doing their very best to render reforms distant, if not actually impossible. I have no doubt that our rulers will be in a position to discriminate between the false traitor and the true patriot, and that our countrymen will also not be slow to recognize the essential difference between a genuine patriot and one whose sole business in life is to trade in politics.

Unfortunately, however, our efforts towards attaining any substantial measure of constitutional reforms are not free from difficulties. There is opposition on all sides, not merely

the veiled and secret opposition of the bureaucracy whose vested interests are threatened and imperilled, but also from a few sections of the population in this country. The case of those Indians who are playing the part of traitors to their country for the sake of base lucre, or for other selfish motives, deserves only to be treated with the most unutterable contempt. Their motives will soon be exposed, and the country will know how to mete out condign punishment for such mean and base treachery. But there are others whose opposition has got to be reckoned with, and whom it is necessary to reconcile, in view of the influence which they are likely to exercise in the councils of our rulers. I refer to the opposition of the Anglo-Indian community. They claim that they are protesting against all impending reforms not so much in their own interests as on behalf of the voiceless millions of India, for whom they seem to have constituted themselves trustees and guardians. It almost moves one to laughter to hear Anglo-Indian merchants like Sir Archy Birkmyre and Sir Hugh Bray talking of Indian peasants being in the position of their wards, for such a relation can only exist in much the same manner as the tender kid was privileged to enjoy the caresses of the generous lion in the story. Do our Anglo-Indian friends really want us to believe that they care a farthing for those unfortunate people out of whom they wring their millions of pounds every year, and who are starved to death in order to enrich European traders and manufacturers? The manner in which the Anglo-Indian merchants have driven the jute cultivators practically to the starvation point, and the oppression committed on Indians in the tea gardens of Assam, are a sufficient refutation of these preposterous claims of the Anglo-Indian community. I do not, however, deny that Anglo-Indians as a community have got their special interests, which cannot be ignored in any scheme of reforms for the future government of this country, and the matter would become quite intelligible if our Anglo-Indian friends discussed the question from this practical point of view. Considered in this light, I would assure the Anglo-Indian community that we are not

unmindful of their special interests, nor are we disposed to forget their contributions to the advancement of our mother country. We would ask them, however, to come forward and join us in our efforts for constitutional reform, and co-operate with us in working out a scheme beneficial to all the parties concerned and worthy of the great British Government under which we all live.

To them, I will take the liberty to repeat the appeal which was once made to secure their help and co-operation by our esteemed leader Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjea : "In our efforts for the improvement of our political status, we feel that we may appeal with confidence to the sympathies of the Anglo-Indian community. They are Englishmen. By instinct and by tradition they are the friends of freedom. In regard to many, their interests in the country are permanent. In regard to many more, in view of the falling exchange, they are looking forward to making India their permanent home. Burke's well-known aphorism, of the Anglo Indians of his day being 'birds of prey and passage' is well-nigh an extinct tradition. Our interests and their interests are identical. Their political status is not a whit removed from ours. If they have more influence in the Government, it is due to sufferance. They cannot claim it as a matter of right. Any extension of our political privileges would benefit them as well as ourselves. Difference there will always be between the different sections of the same community, as there is in this country between zemindars and ryots; as there is in European countries between capitalists and labourers. But we are essentially members of the same community, in the sense that we have common rights and common grievances, and that it is our duty to stand shoulder to shoulder to remedy our grievances and to promote our rights. We are all interested in the development of our manufactures, and we all know what pressure is brought to bear upon the Government here, sometimes masked under the guise of philanthropy, sometimes less thinly veiled, to interfere with the growth of our manufacturing industries. Here, as in other matters, united we stand, divided we fall.

The Arrah Riots

I cannot leave this subject of the impediments in our way without making a reference to one of the most regrettable incidents which have disturbed the peace and harmony between the great communities of India. I refer to the Arrah riots and the unspeakable oppression and outrages committed on the Musalmans in Arrah and various other parts of Bihar by a band of ruffians calling themselves Indians and claiming to belong to a community which has hitherto done so much for the dissemination of nationalist ideas in India. No true son of Islam can refer to these outrages except in terms of strongest condemnation; but in my opinion these Arrah incidents are far more deplorable from the nationalist point of view. These Arrah riots have done the greatest possible disservice to the nationalist cause, and have supplied a plausible argument to our enemies for opposing the cause of constitutional reforms. Fortunately the Musalmans as a community have kept their heads cool and met the situation with the utmost sanity, moderation and sobriety, but there are unfortunately men in the community who are not disposed to look very much beyond the present, not to speak of far into the future. It is no exaggeration to say that these Arrah riots have tended to scare Musalmans away from sympathizing with the agitation for constitutional reforms, and have had a marked effect in weaning away a large number of enthusiasts from active participation in the cause of reforms. The most regrettable part of the whole affair has been the attitude of the Hindu leaders in adopting a policy of *laissez faire* in this matter, and practically refraining from denouncing the authors of these horrible crimes. In the name of humanity itself, if nothing else, every civilized Indian ought to denounce such unprovoked oppression on defenceless men, women and children; but a higher duty rested on our Hindu fellow-countrymen: to mark their disapproval of a course of conduct on the part of their co-religionists so utterly subversive of all the cannons of peace and good will between the two communities.

I cannot leave this painful reference to the Arrah riots

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without putting on record the strongest condemnation of all the dastardly deeds of which the rioters have been guilty. I cannot conceive of anything more fatal to our aims and aspirations than these occasional outbursts of misguided religious frenzy and bigotry. In the name of an indignant Muslim League, whose aims and aspirations they have compromised, in the name of an awakened Indian nationalism, whose dearest interests they have imperilled, in the name of the Hindu community, whose fair fame they have sullied, I emphatically denounce the awful crimes of which Hindu rioters have been guilty at Arrah and other places.

It is sad to think that while the task before us is so onerous and difficult, obstacles should be thrown in our way, knowingly, by our countrymen, as the goal gradually comes into view. Difficulties and obstacles are bound to increase and it requires all the courage, all the forbearance and all the statesmanship of which our leaders are capable, to win their way to ultimate success. The League has already introduced a new spirit into the community and infused a new enthusiasm into our people; but it has yet to bring together the scattered elements of a vast and diversified population, to weld them into a compact and homogeneous whole so that it may vibrate with the new-born sentiments of an awakened nationality. Our leaders have to place lofty ideals of public duty before their country and their community and must slowly mould the national character. They will have to contend with oppositions from within. Above all, our leaders of the Muslim League have got to remember that they are the trusted custodians of the interests of 70 millions of their co-religionists in various stages of political development, and that every step they take must be guided by caution and deep political foresight. I have no doubt that the members of the Muslim League will, one and all, realize the full responsibilities of their positions, and learn to work in selfless devotion to the interest of their community and their country and in a spirit of healthy co-operation with the other great communities of India, so as to secure, for their common mother country, the speedy realization of that responsible form of government,

under the aegis of the British Crown, which has now been authoritatively declared to be the final goal of British rule in India.

Hopes and Disappointments of Mr. Montagu's Visit

I have already referred to this year as an epoch-making one in the history of British India, epoch making in the high hopes it had raised in the minds of the people, but I am afraid that it also seems destined to be somewhat epoch-making in our disappointment. The announcement of Mr E.S. Montagu's visit, in connection with the question of constitutional reforms, following close upon the pronouncement of August 20, sent a thrill of exultant jubilation throughout the country. Mr. Montagu has come and is now very nearly at the end of his visit; and although the future of the question of constitutional reforms is yet open to speculation, the circumstances surrounding his official progress through the country have raised gloomy apprehensions in the public mind. The Indian Civil Service found an excuse to secure the presence of the Viceroy at the discussions that took place between Mr. Montagu and the various deputations on questions of constitutional reform, and it is no wonder that these discussions wore an almost official aspect. Free ventilation of real grievances was greatly hampered, and I doubt if very many of those who were honoured with the so-called private interviews really spoke out their mind. This is hardly a hopeful omen; but there are other reasons for real apprehension. It is now an open secret that Mr. Montagu was prevailed upon, if not actually compelled, to stay away nearly 1,000 miles from Calcutta during the national week, lest his liberal instincts might lead him to enter the portals of the *pandals* of the Congress or of the League. Half of our battle would have been won if Mr. Montagu could have had a personal contact with these national gatherings, and our enemies arranged matters to avert such a 'catastrophe'. Let us hope that these effects of the reactionary atmosphere in India will pass away as soon as Mr. Montagu sets foot on English soil and once more breathes the free atmosphere of England.

Mr. Montagu may come and go, but the fate of India's grievances goes on for ever. Our long list of disappointments in consequence of promises unfulfilled and pledges unredeemed seems destined never to come to an end. The repeal of the Arms Act; the repeal of the Press Act; the separation of judicial and executive functions; the question of police reform; the repeal of the enactments that enable the Executive to deprive law abiding subjects of His Majesty of their liberty, such as the Defence of India Act; these are amongst the most prominent of those matters of national concern about which the Congress and the League have been crying themselves hoarse year after year. We raise our voice once more, in conjunction with that of the Indian National Congress, for the early redress of these grievance. At the present day the heart of Bengal is sore on account of the operations of the Defence of India Act in consequence of which more than 1,700 Hindu youths are now interned in different parts of the country. It is true that the operations of this Act in Bengal have been confined mostly to the youths of the Hindu community, but Bengali Musalmans can never be happy so long as their Hindu brethern are suffering from an afflicted heart. I hope Government will pronounce an early amnesty for all these youths and thereby allay the wounded feelings of millions of His Majesty's loyal subjects in Bengal.

A Bereavement

Brethern of the League, I cannot resume my seat without making a reference to two matters of a particularly painful character, both of which have cast a gloom over our hearts. I refer in the first place to the sudden demise of the last Mr. A. Rasul, whose untimely death, under the most pathetic circumstances, has been an irreparable loss to the Muslim cause in India. All the communities in this country, as well as the highest official, including His Excellency the Governor of the Presidency, have paid the highest tributes to his memory; and I do not think I can usefully add to anything that they have said. Mr. Rasul was one of those towering

hearts be full of overwhelming grief and sorrow, is it difficult to conceive the agonizing feelings of a distracted mother, for whom hitherto there has been no comfort or consolation of any kind? Let us hope that the courage and fortitude, the intrepidity and energy she has shown will animate the hearts of the Musalmans of India to make one more effort for the release of our interned leaders, so that the cause of justice and righteousness may be vindicated in the liberation of these victims of bureaucratic highhandedness and unjustifiable tyranny.

Unity and self-Sacrifice to Meet Crisis

Gentlemen, I am afraid I have already detained you much longer than I had intended, or should have done; but I sincerely hope you will all pardon me. There are moments when one has to speak in spite of oneself, and when language, however imperfect and inadequate, affords the only means of relieving the fullness of an afflicted heart. In more respects than one, we meet today under exceptional circumstances. Apart from all our melancholy association in connection with the fate of our President-elect and other leaders, we are being persistently reminded of the fact that we are now at the threshold of a great crisis in our fate. A prospect like this is enough to make the bolde hearts quail, but we have the additional melancholy foreboding that our community as a whole does not realize the perilousness of the situation. In place of that divinely inspired unity, that singleness of purpose, courage, devotion, self-sacrifice and a hundred other qualities for which Islam alone has been a living example for all the world, we have in our people to day, a perfect negation of all these qualities in the most superlative form. A house divided against itself; dissension and discord amongst our prominent men; moral cowardice, mean and petty jealousies and a burning desire to put self before every other consideration seems to dominate the minds of many of us at the present day. It is a melancholy and sickening picture, but I am afraid it falls far short of the actual reality.

Added to this, there are the innumerable difficulties and

dangers in our way due to the peculiar political position of the Musalmans of India. The participation, against England, of Turkey in the war put the final seal on our difficulties, and created for us an embarrassing situation, the seriousness of which is increasing day by day. The world has seen how the Indian Musalmans answered the call to their loyalty and devotion, and the world will also judge how their loyalty and devotion have been honoured and appreciated. We are about a fifth of the whole Indian population, but our contribution to the fighting forces of the Empire amounts to very much more than a third, only slightly less than an actual half. Of the nine Indian recipients of the Victoria Cross, as many as four were Musalmans. And yet the stain of suspicion and distrust with which our enemies have been branding us continues to be a dark spot on the fair fame of our community, although we have not hesitated to wash it with our blood. If it is the Press Act which has to be put into operation, it is the Musalman journalists who are singled out as prominent victims; if it is the Defence of India Act, it is our prominent leaders who fall an easy prey to its stringent and arbitrary provisions. We are indeed fallen on evil times, with dangers and difficulties compassed around. If ever there was a supreme necessity for unity, co-operation and self sacrifice there could not have been a greater opportunity than the present in the entire history of Muslim India. Let us hope that we will be wise in time, and it is for the Muslim League to bring home, to the entire community, the necessity of sacrificing ourselves at the solemn altar of our duty to our community. Then and then only will the Muslim League have fulfilled its mission, accomplished its high destiny amongst the political organizations in India, and covered itself with imperishable renown and everlasting glory. May the Almighty God bless our efforts and crown our activities on behalf of our community and our country with unqualified success.

MUSLIMS AND THE NATIONAL MAINSTREAM*

The dominant consideration with all of us, when we set out to think on any matter, is the war. And in this connection, the recent success of the Allies on the Western Front is a matter at which we all sincerely rejoice, because it will bring victory and peace nearer, and the solution of all problems arising from the war. In this struggle in which the future of the whole human race and of human civilization is involved, the position and sympathies of India have always been clearly set out. While Europe is being bled to death for the sake of the principles of nationality and for the sake of the highest conceptions of political liberty, the attitude of those that have been administering this country has undergone an enormous change. India's participation in the war during the first year meant merely the participation of the Government of India. But as time went on, all that was changed, and in the appeal of the Prime Minister and in the gracious message of the King Emperor at the last War Conference at Delhi, in the announcement of August 20, and in the subsequent efforts towards extensive political readjustment, we have had unmistakable signs of the fact that India will no longer be regarded as a mass of subject people administered by a few able men at the top, but will stand forth as she has now stood forth, as a united community, in spite of all differences of caste and creed, guided perhaps, in benefit channels, by able English Administrators, but conscious nevertheless of her collective strength, her rights in the great Empire of England and her duties towards the

*Welcome address delivered by Fazulbhoj Currimbhoj at the Bombay session held in August-September, 1918.

great Commonwealth of nations of which she is going to form, in future, the most powerful member, a free nation amongst an alliance of self-governing communities linked together by common ties of personal loyalty to His Majesty the King Emperor, cherishing gratitude to England as the oldest of them all, but occupying an equal rank with her in the great role of advancing the civilization for which common blood is being shed side by side. In this war, as time goes on above the din and clash of daily battle, there arise great and dominant conceptions which are going to govern human life in the future, the greatest of all of them being the principles of self-determination so ably enunciated by President Wilson, the leader of the greatest democracy the world has seen.

India's War Service

In this great struggle, India has willingly and cheerfully borne her share of the burden and sacrifice, and the tribute of acknowledgement and gratitude which English statesmen of all ranks and opinion have been paying us until now ought to be lasting evidence that—notwithstanding the absence of any preparations in the past, on the part of the administration or on the part of the people, for this great task—we have acquitted ourselves remarkably and with great credit. In the matter of the War Loan and in the matter of recruiting, the active co-operation which the Government have secured from the people of this country will ever remain memorable in the new chapter of Indian history which has now been opened. The position of India in the Empire has also changed and the presence of Indian delegates at the Imperial War Conference and in the Imperial War Cabinet signifies an advance which was beyond our dreams. The time is not now distant when the Musalmans shall also be enabled to contribute to important deliberations and great decisions in the world's history which will be taken at the future meetings of these bodies, at which, let me hope, the elected representatives of India, whether Hindus or Musalmans, will occupy the same honoured places as the prime ministers and other Colonial statesmen hailing from other members of the Empire.

It is gratifying to be able to express the fact, before you and before the world, that we Muslamans of India have not fallen behind in the discharge of our civic and military obligations to the State, of which we are proud citizens. We do not shrink from sharing the burdens of the Empire, and when the time of reckoning comes in future after a victorious peace—and I hope that is not now very far off—it will be found that in contributing money and in contributing men and, above all, in maintaining the general moral of the Indian communities, we Musalmans have been foremost, and our contributions are absolutely second to none. In spite of numerous doubts, in spite of blunders here and there committed by British statesmen, in spite of the inevitable turn of circumstances resulting from the stern necessities of war, the Muslims have stood firm in their purpose, and they have shouldered responsibilities and proved their indisputable claim to the political rights for which they have formulated their demands. The attitude adopted by the Musalman community with regard to the war and in respect of political reforms has undergone considerable change. In the first flush of the war, in response to the appeal made by statesmen like Lord Hardinge, there was some feeling that political agitation should be suspended till the close of the war, but now that the issues are more clearly understood, and now that the first surprise of the war is worn out, the bearing of the war on all our lives stands out very clearly. The war has only accentuated that process of liberalization in the government of India which had begun through the Council Acts of 1861 and 1892, and through the reforms under the Morley-Minto Scheme. We are now face to face with another momentous change, this time more real and far-reaching. We are no longer content with the passive position of subjects; we are becoming councillors whose co-operation and advice are welcomed by the Government even in its present form. I firmly believe that the ground that we have won in this manner will never be lost to us, but will become, notwithstanding all controversies that are now raging, a position of vantage from which further progress will be inevitable.

Muslim Political Sentiment

The position created by the war makes it difficult to keep pace mentally with the changing order of things. Remarkable events are happening everywhere in the world with such rapidity that it is very difficult to reach definite conclusions or to fix upon a well-defined programme for any purpose whatsoever. One thing is, however, clearly understood and generally accepted, and that is that nothing is going to be the same in the world after the war. The titanic struggle in which the whole world is involved is everywhere overthrowing accepted traditions, old ideals and time-worn customs; everybody is taking stock, and everybody is going to put his house in order. Old landmarks are being washed away; old animosities are being effaced; new and deeper unity is being established among those that are fighting together for a common cause, for the vindication of the ideals of justice and freedom. Side by side with the geographical, the moral map of mankind is going to be altered, and those who have endured the woes of war together will join hands during the new period of reconstruction. The interest evinced by the British democracy in Indian affairs has grown apace. The fruits of this quickened interest in the welfare and political progress of this country, we are soon going to reap. As an earnest of this new relation, the Secretary of State for India has been sent down to examine the conditions personally, and to submit his report on this matter for the consideration of the British Parliament. In the British Parliament democratic forces are gaining strength, whose reaction on Indian problems will be eminently beneficial.

These world changes have not left Indian thought and the Indian mind untouched. Instead of a narrow and circumscribed outlook, men have begun to take a longer view and to see things in their proper perspective, through very trying times, through moments of wavering and indecision. The Musalmans of India have also begun to feel, unmistakably and in a striking manner, a pure sentiment which is really national. The Musalmans fully share with other members of the Indian nation the larger hopes and the larger ambitions. A new and

real interest in life, in education, in politics, has been created in them; and instead of apathy or mere jealousy of other communities, there is now a genuine desire among them to share in the common weal and in the common task of nation-building. All this is to the good, and we are here assembled to give a living proof of this tendency, which I am convinced will bear great and lasting fruits.

The Reform Scheme

Coming now to the Reform Scheme, I must say, at the outset, that to the British Parliament and the British democracy we are really grateful for the acceptance of the goal of responsible self-government for this country. To Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu, we are more grateful for the sympathetic interpretation of the spirit of the announcement of August 20. Even if we suggest some modifications, we cannot but acknowledge that these two statesmen have, on the whole, worked on lines that are admirable. We do not yet know the materials from which they constructed their report. We must therefore make our own suggestions and attempt to convince the British democracy. In the meantime we must acknowledge that the distinguished authors of the report have given much anxious thought to the problem of Indian administration, and they have made a sincere attempt to meet the difficult situation. Even while we ought to get our modifications, the names of these two liberal statesmen will remain for ever memorable and will go down in history as among the benefactors and friends of India.

Coming to the Reform Scheme itself, I have no desire to prejudice the issues at this stage. I should like to point out that the Scheme put forward in the report is by no means final. Criticism on the report is welcomed and asked for by the authors themselves. It is expected by local governments and the Government of India. It is awaited by the Parliament and the democracy of England. My own humble views have long since been published, but on this important occasion I should like to place one or two important points before you. The

acceptance by the House of Commons, and the coalition Government in the United Kingdom, of the principles of the announcement of August 20, is undoubtedly a very satisfactory thing. The report is by no means final, and does not pretend to be that. On the ultimate political status of this country, everybody is agreed without any difference. There is no influential group of people of any kind in this country or in the United Kingdom that does not acknowledge that the aim of British Government and of British statesmen in India is to lead this country to the position of a self-governing member of the British Empire. This goal has also been accepted by the All-India Muslim League which truly represents the Musalman interests of the country. To this goal we are going to stick through thick and thin; and as citizens of this country, the Musalmans will, in spite of all the sneers of their enemies and the misgivings of their timid friends, contribute their proper share. While everybody is agreed on this goal, there are different opinions as to the intervening steps through which we have to reach that stage. We have before us Mr. Gokhale's scheme published by His Highness the Aga Khan as the first step towards that glorious destiny. We have in the memorandum of the 19 members of the Imperial Legislative Council a document that forms a counterpart to the famous despatch of Lord Hardinge, from which the history of what is now called the Chelmsford Montagu Report could be said to have begun. Last but not least, we have the Congress-League Scheme, in framing which the leading and representative men of all communities sat down together, sinking finally all that was keeping them apart and agreeing to a common workable basis; and now we have before us the Chelmsford-Montagu Scheme on which such anxious thought has been devoted by its authors.

Stage of Transition

In regard to the stage of transition, we must all admit we have to pass various modifications of this Scheme in order to satisfy all our aspirations. In the resolutions which will be placed before you, will be found the modifications which alone, as self-respecting men, we can suggest, and

nothing short of which is likely to satisfy us or to create those conditions of co-operation on which all progress must ultimately depend. In the matter of local self-government, on the one hand, and in the matter of the India Council and the entire organization of control from the United Kingdom by the Secretary of State, on the other hand, even the joint report of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy proves entirely satisfactory to everybody. But in the matter of the Government of India, there is an extraordinary sense of unity amongst all grades and sections of the Indian population and of the parties in Indian politics. No advance in the provinces could be satisfactory or certain, so long as the structure of the Government of India is maintained as it is in its entirety. In this matter the Chelmsford-Montagu Report has caused some disappointment throughout the country, and in this we would urge with all emphasis that we are capable of adopting changes that will secure us a real voice. In the matter of provincial governments, in the matter of provincial autonomy, and of administration in the provinces with reference to the reservation of subjects, the Grand Committee organization, the power of certification, the rules of business, the power of disallowing question and resolutions and Bills, and in many other respects, at many places in the body of the Report some distrust is shown, not only of the representative assemblies as they would come to be formed, but of individual Indians and their capacity for public work, their power of co-operation and their real desire to see representative institutions successful in the country. This want of confidence is, in my mind, entirely gratuitous, and is founded on an old tradition which, like everything else, is considerably weakened, if not altogether annihilated, by the new conditions under which the Reform Scheme will be inaugurated. I have great faith in the good sense, in the tolerance, in the sense of duty, which will actuate the men in whose hands the success of this experiment will lie; and I am confident that we shall not betray the trust which will be given to us, and we shall prove in every respect, when the time comes, that the changes that we now demand are in no way premature. There will, however, be a discussion on

these matters before this assembly, and I do not wish to prejudice the issue in this discussion. I shall not therefore dilate any further on the details of the constitutional reforms.

Muslim Interest

One of the functions of this organization, and a function which was regarded by us as even greater than the function of securing self-government for India, is the safeguarding of distinct Musalman interests in this country. In regard to this therefore, I would like to say a word—and on this I must crave the indulgence of those friends that have come from Bengal, the United Provinces and the Punjab. Speaking as a Bombay Musalman, I wish to commend the extreme sense of harmony that has actuated everybody in the Bombay Presidency and the very cordial relations that have been maintained here between the Musalmans and the non-Musalmans of this province. These relations have so far been devoid of every bitterness of any description. Notwithstanding this, I wish that this assembly would uphold, for a considerable period to come, the separate representation for the purpose of the legislative assemblies in the provinces, the Imperial Legislative Council, and the Council of State. It is therefore very satisfactory to note that the proportion of members of the two communities on these bodies which we had agreed has been, in a truly just spirit, reiterated and given acceptance by the Hindu leaders and others assembled in the Indian National Congress. The need for separate arrangements arises, as you know, not merely because of the disparity of population, in which respect in most cases, the Musalmans are in a minority; but because of the disparity in the actual electorates in which, even in those provinces like the Punjab, where they are in a majority as regards population, the Musalmans may find themselves handicapped because of their backward condition. I feel that the value of the compact thus reached, and honourably maintained between the two communities, intrinsically does not lie merely in the actual representation which we shall thus secure; it is a great evidence of the spirit of co-operation and of give and take which is going to characterize the future

activities of these two great communities in the Commonwealth of India.

This compact which was solemnly proclaimed, and which has been sincerely adhered to, has become something sacred; and its inclusion in the Scheme of Reforms and in the Bill embodying that Scheme, we must demand with one voice. We must assure the English statesmen and the British Parliament that this is a matter between us and the other communities in India—it is a matter which we shall decide best without the intervention of anybody whatever from outside. In this as well as in other items referring to separate Muslim interests, it is my earnest hope that members of the Muslim League will arrive at decisions most favourable to the future of the community.

In all these matters there is need to view things with an eye to the future. I have given serious thought to this, and it seems to me that we Musalmans are really at a disadvantage in the matter of education, and that we are suffering from chronic poverty to a larger extent than the Hindus. From any improvement that we shall effect as the result of provincial autonomy, I expect we shall stand to gain much more than the rest of the population—from better sanitation, from wider education and other larger opportunities for industrial growth. The Musalmans stand to gain more because they are at present backward in education, living in unhealthy surroundings, and suffering from poverty. There are numerous communities of Musalman artisans that will gain an entirely new impulse from the improved conditions in industry which we hope to bring about by a real transfer of administrative responsibility to us.

Essential Considerations

In fighting over details we should not lose sight of essentials, and we should conduct our discussions of these problems in that atmosphere of common good, in that atmosphere of give and take on which alone the future of this country and, with it, our own future depends. Whatever shape the reform

takes, the path that lies before us is full of difficulties; and I hope that both the officials and the people will adapt...to the new conditions created, and will show that forbearance and that devotion to common duty and the public weal for which Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu have made an appeal in the Report. Only the experience gained as we go along will help everybody concerned to make the experiment successful. I am one of those who believe that the logic of circumstances is stronger than any other logic. We are all passing through very trying times. The shadow of famine overhangs us in some parts of the country, and a great increase in prices has arisen. The mass of the people has in every respect been reduced to suffering. Some of us have opportunities of judging these difficulties that arise; but Government should once for all realize the impossibility of managing things in the old style. It is only by co-operation, by tolerance, and by the fullest confidence in Indians that government in this country can be carried on in the future.

I view all these things as a businessman. In political matters as in others, a businessman always takes a practical position. He has always got an eye for getting the best return for efforts put forward. Judging matters in this light, I am convinced that whatever is agreed upon as necessary in the Scheme, and whatever modifications we may ultimately come to decide upon as necessary in the Scheme, and whatever is agreed upon by the British Parliament, any forward political step that we may take will inevitably create the conditions which will take us still further forward, until we reach the final goal of complete self-government. I confess, however, that I am convinced that whatever the modifications of the cave—that is to say by the prejudice of my own calling—my mind turns from questions of mere administrative machinery to the economic interests and material well-being of this period...The political reforms will, during this period, form merely a background to sustain the great efforts for the economic uplift of our country. That, we shall have to do with our new-self-respect and our new self-consciousness. It would be humiliating to feel that the econo-

mic penetration by Germany should begin again, or that India should continue in the same helpless dependence on foreign supplies as in the past.

Side by side with the political, we have got to secure the economic emancipation of India. We have got to make up a great leeway to come to where the other nations of the world are, and then we have got to make another upward sweep in order to push ourselves in front, and in order to hold our own in the free competition of the economic world. We have to redeem the country into a more self-reliant and robust economic position. I feel that I should bring to the special notice of this august assembly that portion of the Chelmsford-Montagu Report which touches upon but does not decide the question of fiscal autonomy. The tariff policy of this country has for a long time been determined from London to suit interests other than our own. We have suffered in more ways than one by the domination of the Manchester School of Economics and the policy of the open door. I submit that no country situated as India is can get on economically unless a more intelligent and discriminating policy is adopted—unless a detailed study is made of her own difficulties, and the tariff fixed upon accordingly by her own citizens. No political reforms, however valuable they may appear, will be worth having if they are not accompanied by complete fiscal autonomy that is, to-day, by full powers placed in the hands of the Government of India, in which we shall have a real voice, in the future to decide the tariff rates in the best interests of our country. The Indian nation has demanded this right with singular unity in the past and I have every hope that this assembly, before it complete its sittings, will have reiterated this demand in unmistakable terms.

I pass on to the question of general industrial progress. On this, I am not at liberty to disclose the conclusions reached by the Industrial Commission, but I am confident that when these recommendations are published and when they have been definitely adopted by the Government of India, they will give every satisfaction to the people. Complaints are heard everywhere

about 'British and other vested interests'. We have no desire to do any harm to any other interests, but in this country which is our own, we must and we shall have an equal, if not prior, right in the exploitation of all its resources and in building the industrial prosperity on which alone the larger structure of national life can rise. More money will be required for undertaking works of public utility like education and sanitation, and this cannot be drawn from the people without creating more wealth and thus increasing the taxable surplus in the pockets of the people. In the matter of Indian commerce also, there are many points at which difficulties are experienced by us. I am particularly anxious that with the expansion of Indian commerce—which I foresee—larger opportunities could be created for Musalmans to share in the benefits, so that we too may bring to the common altar our share for the expanding glory of the motherland.

Islam in India

In conclusion, I wish to say one or two words with regard to our position in this country. The Musalmans in India are no longer an isolated community, and to appear so is to put ourselves in the wrong with the rest of the nation. We have in the past made important contributions to India's great civilization, of which we are proud. We have influenced the architecture of the country and put an indelible mark upon it for all times to come. We have preserved and advanced the fine arts. We have adapted ourselves to and enriched the system of wonderful music that is neither Hindu nor Musalman, but which is distinctly Indian. In arts and crafts, we have always maintained the foremost position. We have influenced the common language of this country. We have put our mark on the national dress. In every other respect, though numerically small, we have made contributions of real and abiding value to the common life of the country. How few of us can claim to be directly descended from those who came over the frontier and who made India their home, and yet we, who belong to the common races of this country, have still possessed and developed an individuality of our own. We

are going to contribute no small share to the common life of the future, and to this future we can confidently look up.

Gentlemen, I welcome you once again in our midst. I shall not interpose myself any longer between you and the distinguished President, whom we are all anxious to hear. The Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad is our permanent President and in his wisdom, in his firmness, in his patriotism and in his advocacy of our cause, we have the fullest confidence. We are fortunate in having him to guide us at this time.

DIVIDENDS OF CONGRESS- LEAGUE COOPERATION*

It is my proud and pleasant duty to welcome you to this annual session of the All-India Muslim League. Many of you have come from far at the sacrifice of your personal comfort to participate in the deliberations of our political association, which in itself is a proof of the interest you must be taking in the success of the aims and objects of the League, and which, I am sure, will much encourage the workers in their efforts to attain the goal in view. This year, besides the performance of my duty to welcome you, I have also to perform another and equally pleasant duty of welcoming the League itself back to its birthplace, after so many years of its absence from Aligarh. The memory of the early association of the League with Aligarh is still fresh in our minds, and it gives us much happiness to see the League once again amongst ourselves.

I am sure it will be within the memory of many of my audience in this *pandal* that the idea of a political association was mooted and matured here in Aligarh in the early years of the present century, which ultimately resulted in the formation of this very League in the year 1906. Though at this day it will be a sheer waste of time and breath to enter into a discussion about the causes of the culpable indifference of the Musalmans to the political affairs of their motherland in the pre-League days, I have got a clear recollection of the fact that the then advanced party used to hold Aligarh responsible

*Welcome address delivered by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah at the Aligarh session held in December, 1925.

for keeping the community back from the field of politics. But I can say, without any fear of contradiction, that it was not Aligarh which kept the community back from politics; it was the community itself, which, for want of a full and clear grasp of the new conditions of life to which it had been subjected by British rule, continued to feel shy, for a considerable time, of participating in the agitation and demands for popular political institutions. It was Aligarh which first of all realized the new situation, and in justification of its position as the centre of Muslim activities, gave the Muslim community a lead in the field of politics, just as it had done before in the field of education. I hope that future historians will give a prominent place to the event of the birth of the League. It must be admitted that the awakening of India to the political needs of modern times began with the birth of the Indian National Congress, full 20 years before the birth of the League; but the abstention of the Musalmans, as a community, from the former body did not permit it to make any great progress during that period. The coming into existence of the League and the entry of the Musalmans into the field of politics gave a great impetus to the forward movement of the Congress itself and caused a great acceleration in its speed. Besides this, the League proved beyond any question that though the Musalmans were backward in education and modern ways of thought, their political instincts were much stronger than those of any other community. It established before the country that the Muslim community possessed a much higher capacity for political combination as a people. No community in India ever showed such aptitude for unity of aims and concert in action as did the Musalmans under the auspices of the League in those early days. Though the League initiated for them a new policy and opened before their eyes a new political aspect, the Musalmans showed no hesitation in the least in giving their full adherence to it, and in conferring upon it the status of a true representative body of the whole community. The success of the League in its initial stage was phenomenal; and had it continued to follow its own straight path, to-day it would have been some stages ahead of the place where it

stands. It was very gratifying to the late Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk of revered memory, and to the other founders of the body, to see all the politically minded Musalmans being attracted to the League platform so quickly and adopting it as a rallying point for giving a united expression to their political views.

Congress-League Relations

The League, like any other body in similar position and circumstances, in the beginning excited much hostility and criticism from the politicians of the Congress school, who suspected that the organization was to be merely a puppet in the hands of the Government to be employed for retarding the political progress of the people of India. But in spite of all the discouraging criticism and opposition, the League continued to work independently on lines suitable to the conditions of India. It reached its first stage of success in the year 1916, when the Congress politicians, hitherto its opponents and critics, were persuaded to acknowledge the fact that the attainment of the goal in view would not be possible until special political needs of the Muslim minority were recognized by the Hindu majority. This recognition on the part of the Hindu leaders was followed by the famous Hindu-Muslim Pact of Lucknow towards the end of the year 1916. The League and the Indian National Congress thereafter worked together in a sort of political partnership for attaining the ultimate goal of self-government; and there cannot be two opinions that the event of alliance of these two bodies will ever remain a most prominent landmark in the history of progress of the new political life in India.

One of the obvious and immediate outcomes of the alliance between the League and the pronouncement of August 20, 1917, by the British Government. I remember the Lucknow Pact being specially referred to by some of the speakers in the British Parliament as one of the grounds which had persuaded the Government of the time to place before the people of India the goal of self-government. The same Parliament in which,

only eight years before the above pronouncement, no lesser a Secretary of State than Lord Morley had emphatically declared that the Government in India was to remain British and absolute for all time to come, was ultimately compelled to yield to the joint demand of the two communities, when after giving up its old, rigid and unjustifiable position of a rank autocrat, it gave India the hope of self-government. Such is the force of combination which our countrymen must learn to value better than they are doing in these days. Now the goal of self-government is before the country and our League has got a claim of equal credit for it with the Indian National Congress. If a few years after this solemn pledge, the British Government failed to respond to the impatient demands of a section of our politicians for the fulfilment of the same in the course of a year only, it does not follow that it will never be fulfilled. It must be fulfilled as a matter of course. British statesmen know as well as anybody else that autocracy or bureaucracy are no forms of government for the progressive races of man, and that the moral and intellectual forces now at work in the world will soon make the existence or continuance of any of the old forms of government quite impossible. We should hope that India will soon prepare herself to give all the old forms of government a reverential burial and take her place among the self-governing nations of the world.

Lack of Balance in League Policy after 1918

After the famous Pact mentioned above, the League had to perform a double duty : to the cause of the country and to the cause of the community it represented. It had, on the one hand, to co-operate with the Congress for bringing constitutional pressure on the Government for a speedy liberalization of political institutions, and, on the other hand, it had to remain on the watch to see that nothing detrimental to the interests of the Muslim community was done by the joint action of the two parties. The task was a difficult one; but upto the year 1918, the League went on doing its allotted work satisfactorily and in a spirit of laudable fidelity to the country as well as to the

community. But in the year stated above, it began to show signs of unsteadiness in pursuing the course chalked out for it. It is the period intervening between the year 1918 and this day during which the League has been remiss in more points than one. One of them is such that it ... must be emphasized and pointed out at this place. I think I have got the whole of the Muslim community, with the exception of a very few persons, to agree with me that the action of the League in going ahead of the people it represented in an unwarrantable and frantic haste was fraught with the most dire consequences for the Musalmans of India. There could be no objection to the Muslim politicians joining any of the wings of the Indian National Congress, as, that body being a common political organization, its platform was open to the Musalmans as well as the Hindus. But the organization of the League submitting itself to be bodily dragged to the Congress platform for giving its agreement to all the resolutions of the extreme wing of that body was an unthinkable event. It is a regrettable fact that, under the influence of the general political excitement in the country, the League suffered the balance wheel of its speed to be taken away from it to the greatest possible detriment to the cause it was designed to serve.

Thus the League, by an extraordinary and unmanageable acceleration of its speed, went quite out of joint with the community, and lost all hold upon the people it represented. The Musalmans could not be blamed for not keeping pace with the extreme wing of the Congress as was done by the League, because a very considerable section of the Hindu politicians was also left behind by that wing. The difference in the case of Hindu politicians thus left behind and of the Muslim community has been that the Hindus took pretty good care not to discontinue the political education of the people in their own way, while the Musalmans simply withdrew their interest from the League and reverted to the state of their old apathetic attitude to politics. The Hindu, by setting up a separate platform under the name of the Liberal Federation, are giving the country the advantage of their education for

the last eight years; but Musalmans, by keeping aloof from the League as well as any other political platform, have suffered much in their political education. The League must justly realize its responsibility in this matter, and make amends for its past mistake.

Now I should not say a word more on the point of the past actions of the League; but with regard to its future, I want to strike a note of warning in the interests of the Muslim community as well as the League itself. It must be well known to everybody here that a large section of the politically minded Musalmans have become quite impatient with the present state of affairs; and if they find that the League has gone irretrievably beyond their reach, they are sure to start another organization for the political education of their people most suited to their capacity and needs. Now, it rests with the League either to submit to the will of the majority of the people and re-adapt itself to the policy of steady progress, or force upon the Muslim community an injurious political split. It must be borne in mind that as long as the resolutions of non-co-operation and boycotting stand on the record of the League, there will be very few Musalmans who will give the body their adherence. The Musalmans as a community are not of extreme political views, nor can they afford to be so under the circumstances unmistakably noticeable by all. I hope that there will arise no need of a new political organization; and the League, in the exercise of its foresight, will make it clear, even in this very meeting, that it is no longer an association of our extreme politicians, but a representative body of the Musalmans in general.

Hindu-Muslim Relations

After giving an assurance of its old fidelity to the people, the League will have much uphill work to accomplish in the near future in the solution of various problems confronting the country at this date. I will refer only to one of these problems here; and I hope you will agree with me that the problem I am going to mention is of the first importance.... The problem of such great importance in my mind is the

problem of the present unfortunate relations between the Hindus and the Musalmans. The spirit of mischief is at work in these days and we find ourselves in the grip of the demon of discord. The intellectual and moral and even religious resources of certain leaders of the two communities, which ought to have been spent on making the life of the present and future generations more comfortable and happy, are being employed to create permanent causes of friction and strife. The matter has now reached the stage that even a leader of Mahatma Gandhi's sympathies—once the idol of the people and the apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity—has been compelled openly and candidly to admit that the solution of the problem has gone beyond his control and the control of his friends. For the last two years, we are under the visitation of an epidemic of riots and communal outbursts, and no town or village, from one corner of the land to the other, has escaped the infection. The cause of these riots and fracas, if minutely examined, will prove to be the most frivolous and idiotic. But they have quite overpowered the sanity and the common sense of the people; and in agreement with Mahatma Gandhi, I should say that we are quite helpless in their hands. The authors of this unpardonable mischief, whether Hindus or Musalmans, must bear in mind that their action is fraught with the most disastrous consequences for future generations, and that posterity will find ample grounds for passing an adverse verdict on their shortsighted policy. The causes of the strife are neither fundamental nor real nor rational. Only recently in this very town, the members of the two communities gave a most despicable and degrading exhibition of their prowess, when they butchered six helpless old citizens of theirs in cold blood and maimed and disabled scores of others, mostly innocent. If anybody desires to know the causes of this bloodshed and mad fury, I cannot name them, as they were of such a trivial nature that one cannot remember them.

The real cause of the Hindu-Mohammedan estrangement and strife in these days is to be found in the notions of false patriotism of certain leaders. Even some first-rank political leaders have fallen into the error of thinking that it would be

possible for them and their community to attain *Swaraj* without the help and co-operation of the other community. Propaganda in this direction has already begun bearing poisonous fruits; and the most harmful and provocative of all the overt acts, as influenced by this propaganda, is the training of young men of one of the two communities under the names of *Jathas* and *akharas* to match their physical strength against the members of the other community. This is practically a preparation for civil war by one section of the population of the country against the other. This excites much suspicion and irritation in those against whom the preparation is being made. The other side has become very nervous, and apprehends a sinister intention against their life and property; and as a matter of precaution, must be contemplating to do something to keep themselves ready for self-defence. Thus all relations of neighbourly love and amity existing before the new conception of a single-community *Swaraj* came into existence have been replaced by distrust and suspicion. This notion of *Swaraj* of a single community has unquestionably sprung from some unhealthy brain; and I hope its absurdity will soon be declared by the common sense of the Hindu community itself. But the question is how to stop immediately the course of the growing mischief in the land. The League has got a very clear duty before it in this behalf, and must do something to stop the further growth of the great mischief to the cause of the motherland. The tension has not reached a breaking point so far, but it may reach it at any moment and cause an unthinkable catastrophe to be lamented by posterity for generations.

I fail to understand what good purpose, under these circumstances, is to be gained by a persistent advocacy for *Swaraj* from the Congress or the League platforms, or by our condemnations of the anti-*Swaraj* utterances of the Secretary of State or the Viceroy. The attainment of *Swaraj* must be admitted to be an impossibility by a mere advocacy or condemnation, when a vast majority of our countrymen are so busy in raising an abiding barrier between India and *Swaraj*. Nobody can be deluded into believing that bureaucracy can be scared away either by fine speeches or by outburst of indignant feelings. The

Englishman is there and stands on his own strength, and his position cannot be shaken by mere speeches or resolutions. He may or may not be liked; but when after quarreling amongst themselves, the Hindus and the Musalmans both appeal to him for . . . his protection, or for judging their cases himself and not entrusting them to be tried and judged by the magistrates and judges belonging to communities other than their own, he is doubly strengthened in his conviction that he stays in the land as a matter of necessity and for the protection of the weak. A demand for the Indianization of services loses all force when the Indians themselves show their distrust of the fairness and impartiality of Indian judges and magistrates. So the position of our leaders has become inconsistent with the actual facts of life; and now it will be wiser for them to suspend their activities for a while in the higher sphere of politics, and devote their whole attention to the question of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Some of our critics say that the Musalmans are the aggressors, and that their aggressiveness is to be assigned to their leanings towards people beyond the frontiers of India—that they do not love their motherland and their sympathies are always apt to flash across the borders of India to reach Muslim lands and Muslim communities in Western Asia, that they never pay any regard to the sufferings and miseries of their countrymen, and hence they behave like aliens in the land. Now if this imputation were true, I would be prepared to admit it as a serious fault on the part of the Musalmans. With regard to the charge of aggressiveness on the part of the Musalmans, I have simply to refer to the judicial proceedings in the Hindu-Muslim riot cases, which disclose that the Musalmans are not the only sinners. But it is a highly misleading accusation to aver that on account of a few disturbances in which turbulent Muslim elements were shown to be the aggressive party, the whole of the Muslim community has become aggressive in their attitude towards the Hindus. The whole of the Muslim community or the Hindu community cannot be held responsible for the misdeeds of a few members of the two communities acting under the heat of passion in the unfortunate communal

outbursts.

I assure the critics that the generality of the Musalmans, and particularly their educated classes, are as good patriots as the Hindus themselves. Of course the Musalmans of India have got much warmth in their feelings for Musalmans all over the world, based as they are on the conception of Islamic brotherhood; but at the same time, they are not ignoring their duty to their motherland. Now, without the least inclination on my part to discourage this grand and noble conception of the world-wide brotherhood of Islam, I must be emphatic in telling the whole body of my brethren in faith that the love of our motherland is our paramount duty, not on rational grounds only, but on religious grounds also. No Musalman should ignore that love of the motherland is one of the articles of our faith, and it should be cherished as such. On behalf of the educated Musalmans, I can positively say that they are no longer under a sense of confusion as to the proper and correct meaning of the word 'motherland', and that they do in no way love their true motherland less than their Hindu compatriots.

Now I may confront our accusers for a moment, and ask them to search their own minds and examine their own past attitude to the Musalmans, and tell me frankly whether some of the lingering foreign tendencies and sympathies of the Muslim community are not partly due to the inhospitable social treatment meted out to them by the accusers themselves? But accusations and recriminations will in no way improve matters, and therefore both communities should forget the past and think of the present and future only.

The World of Islam Outside India

Before I conclude, I feel it is necessary to refer to a few matters concerning the world of Islam outside India. In these days Syria, Morocco, Hedjaz and Mosul are places which are uppermost in the minds of every Musalman, and so we cannot avoid a reference to them in our political meetings. The first and foremost in our minds is the case of Syria. France by her

recent staggering barbarities and merciless massacres in Damascus and other Syrian towns and villages has caused much pain to Muslim feeling in this country. France is admittedly killing people in Syria to establish and uphold the prestige of the Christian civilization of Western Europe. But France must remember that if these are the only fruits of her civilization which she can bestow upon the people who have been forced by England to accept her yoke, the civilization of Western Europe will soon come to be regarded as a detestable luxury by Europe herself, and a dire curse by the nations not possessed of fire-arms, poisonous gases and bomb shells. France, by her mad fury in bombarding the ancient and defenceless town of Damascus for 57 hours, by smashing to pieces its sacred relics and ancient monuments and blowing to atoms pious men in their mosques, helpless maidens and matrons in their in-offensive homes, and innocent babies, has wounded the heart of Islam. This unworthy nation, though a republic herself, is for others proving a callous usurper of their lands and liberties, a sordid imperialist and a merciless butcher. The tales of the present excesses of France give us reason to thank our stars that we so narrowly escaped her yoke in the beginning which would have proved far more galling and humiliating than the one to which we have been subjected. The difficulty with us is that we have no hold upon this merciless and so-called civilized nation. All that we can do is to urge before England, the major partner in the civilization of Western Europe, to intervene and put an end to the Maudatory Despotism of France. England should not shirk her own responsibility and duty to Syria, as it was she herself that, after conquering Syria—partly at the sacrifice of the manpower of India—forced that unhappy country to the subordination of France.

The civilization of France is a complete disappointment to us in these days. Her unholy and most unjust alliance with Spain for crushing the small, valiant, and freedom-loving Riff community is another example of her abominable imperialism. I do not want to take much of your time in my reference to the Hedjaz question. I have not appreciated this issue very clearly, perhaps for the reason that there is not much in it to

be appreciated. The simple fact which will find a place in history is that a Muslim ruler of one part of Arabia invaded and conquered another part of that country and established his rule over it. We could neither stop him from his conquest nor lend him any help for it; but all the same, we are fighting among ourselves and no party can say what is the real issue for us. Though it might be quite premature for us to show any partiality for Ibne Saud, there could be no difference of opinion, however, that the Sharifa family must go. This should be the first and the final verdict on the part of the Musalmans of India, and the matter should end with it so far as we are concerned.

The question of the Mosul Wilayat of the Turkish Empire is also one of the questions which is causing excitement among the Musalmans of this country in these days. The British seem to be bent upon wresting these provinces from the hands of the Turks; and the Turks are displaying a marked pertinacity in resisting all attempts at depriving them of this part of their motherland. We may raise our voice against the British pressing of this matter to an unhappy issue, as we know that a war between Turkey and England will inevitably destroy the peace of mind of the Muslim population of India and of other countries under the sway of the British. We hope the matter will find an amicable settlement soon.

Conclusion

Gentlemen, I feel I have taken more of your time than I intended in making these brief references to the present political situation, at home and abroad, in its special bearing on the welfare of our community. I do not wish to take up more of your precious time. Let me, in conclusion, say that we meet once again politically united . . . and I earnestly hope and pray that our deliberations will result in evolving a common political programme for the guidance of our community, the forward march of our country, and the early realization of our political aims and objects. Gentlemen, I welcome you most cordially to this present session of the League.

MINIMUM DEMANDS FOR CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

“It is only (a) when we are accused of planning the restoration of Musalman rule in India, which we take to be an astute move on the part of interested parties to subject us to suspicions of the rulers and concomitant disadvantages, (b) when we are denied our fair share in the Government of the country, (c) when we find the hypocritical plea of efficiency raised by Hindu friends to maintain their monopoly of officers, (d) when we find that the majority community is carrying on an intensive campaign for communal organization in the hope of establishing Hindu Raj in India—it is but human that we should think of protection against such aggressiveness.” Continuing, he said that all Indians must strive to build up a composite culture, a happy and progressive Indian (as distinguished from Hindu) nation which should draw upon what is best in each of the several cultures which have found their way into the country.

With regard to the question of music before mosques, he said that Government had taken a correct view of the problem in such questions, and had settled it by executive order. Had the Hindus followed Mahatma Gandhi’s advice and left the question of routes for sacrificial animals to be determined by the goodwill of Musalmans and not asserted an aggressive attitude, this minor issue would never have arisen. By abandoning the correct attitude suggested by Mahatma Gandhi and

*Extracts from the welcome address delivered by Khan Bahadur Pirzada Muhammad Hussain at the Delhi session held in December, 1926 in the form of indirect version.

following a course of provocative aggressiveness, Hindu zealots had themselves postponed the settlement of this issue. Now that the question had been reduced to insistence on civil rights, the executive decision of Government had, once again, put the contending parties in their correct position. He would, however, draw the attention of Indian Musalmans to the advisability of maintaining a perfectly calm atmosphere for the exercise of their rights, which must not be tainted by resentment.

If India was to be a self-governing Dominion of the British Commonwealth, and a representative system of government suited to the genius of the people was their goal, each constituent of the Indian Empire, in federal development or otherwise, must know the exact position of India. Neither unanimity of purpose nor prosecution of a common object would be possible without it. A clear statement of Muslim demands, based on accepted principles of representation and self-determination, must be placed on record for the acceptance of both the Government and other constituents of the Indian Empire. With this question in view, he put forward the following suggestions for discussion :

1. Each compact group with common interests, bound by ties of common religion, language and culture should (as far as possible and practicable) be parcelled out into separate provinces to determine its own future in harmony with the larger common interests of the entire continent. The present distribution of provinces had a history of haphazard development behind it, and had no rational basis to rest upon.

2. All provinces must work out their destinies as far as their distinct interests were concerned and contribute their share in common to the Central Governments.

3. There should be proportionate representation in the legislature and services.

4. An irreducible minimum of representation in legislatures by Musalmans elected by exclusively Muslim constituencies should be guaranteed.

5. The question of the proportion of Muslim seats in provinces where they were in a minority would be solved automatically. When the first suggestion was given effect to, it would be only fair and just that where any community was in an effective majority, it should retain its effective power, and where it was in an ineffectual minority, adequate safeguards should be provided to protect its legitimate interests.

The basis of co-operation with either the Hindus or the Government, said the speaker, was the recognition of the irreducible minimum of Mohammedan constitutional demands. He deplored the differences of opinion between Muslims over foreign politics, which unfortunately and unwisely were prevalent in India.

In view of the forthcoming Royal Commission in 1929, he considered it most appropriate for the League to issue an invitation to the Central Khilafat Committee and other organizations claiming a representative character for the formation of a coalition which would formulate the Muslim demands to be placed before the Commission. Should the Indian National Congress find it worth its while to call a Round-Table Conference for the purpose of exploring the possibilities of formulating a Constitution acceptable to all communities, the League should hold itself in readiness to respond to its invitation.

BOYCOTT SIMON COMMISSION*

I should not like to enter into any question of abstruse political theory; but to me, it seems a matter of bare justice and elementary common sense that the people for whom a constitution is intended should have a paramount and exclusive voice in the drafting of the constitution. I take exception to the preamble of the Government of India Act of 1919, which lays down that it is the British Parliament that will be the judge of the time and measure of every advance towards the realization of responsible government in India. Moreover, the total and the deliberate exclusion of Indians from the Commission is not merely 'a calculated affront to India'—that may be the language of sentiment and wounded susceptibility—it is a denial of elementary political justice. It is a negation of India's right to have a paramount voice in settling her own Constitution. It indicates a subtle and deep determination to prejudice the issue and forcibly to cram down the throat of our people a constitution, the details of which have been settled and readymade beforehand.

While boycotting the Commission, we must accept Lord Birkenhead's challenge and evolve a Constitution for our country. I must frankly say that if we cannot do this much, we do not deserve a better government than what we have at present. I am not, however, a pessimist and I do hope that the leaders of different political parties and communities will put their heads together and then frame a Constitution, and thus show to the world that we mean business.

*Welcome address delivered by Mujibur Rahman at the Calcutta session held in December, 1927—January, 1928.

It seems to me that many of those who are against the boycott of the Simon Commission are labouring under an unspoken fear that boycott of the Commission, on the part of the Muslim community, will injure the cause of separate representation. For the assurance of such gentlemen, let me tell you in plain and unequivocal terms that, in the present state of our national life, I look upon separate representation through separate electorates as the corner-stone of Muslim politics. When each community is assured that its interests and privileges are safe in the hands of the common State that we have succeeded in evolving, there will be, I believe, no necessity and no cry for separate electorates. The day we long for is yet to come. Between the two great communities of India, there is still 'doubt, hesitation and pain'. Let us recognize, honestly and frankly, the existence of mutual jealousy and suspicion; let us agree to be represented through the medium of separate electorates. As the edge is taken off the acerbity of mutual suspicion, so, day by day, we shall advance nearer towards that *rapprochement* which in the fulness of time will make communal representation take its rank among the evil necessities of life.

CASE FOR PEOPLE'S RULE*

In the course of his speech, the Chairman of the Reception Committee said, "At the dawn of a new and significant orientation of the conception of India's political and economic freedom, and on the eve of momentous changes in the Constitution and administration of India, it is not a light task to stand under the portals opening on to the future destiny of our country, and point an unerring finger at the right and straight road which India should take in order to achieve self-determination and national well-being in the speediest and surest manner".

Upon the results of their deliberations, he said, depended the future of the Muslims, and to a large extent the destiny of India itself. It was therefore to be regretted some forces were at work to divide the political strength of the Muslims of India at a time when vital interests, both of the community and the country, required that there should be solid unity.

He was afraid that people had been fighting over a shadow instead of getting to the substance. Until the required political rights were actually secured, the question of their division could not arise. Franchise and electorates were only to be considered with reference to responsible self-government. They had no value or significance of their own until this was attained. The primary and joint aim of all parties for the present should therefore be the attainment of government of the people, by the people, for the people. When this was secured, he did

*An indirect and summarised version of the welcome address delivered by Moulvi Abdul Karim at the Calcutta session held in December, 1928.

not think there would be any insurmountable difficulties regarding the adjustment of the claims of the different communities.

Moulvi Abdul Karim warned that failure to create inter-communal harmony meant a perpetuation of India's bondage. Referring to the political aspirations of the intelligentsia of India, he asked, "Was it too much to hope that the British people would realize their responsibility and avert, before it was too late, the dire consequences of their policy, and raise India to the position of a self-governing colony; or would they drive them, in utter despair of British good sense and good faith, to set themselves to work to find means, active or passive, open or secret, to get rid of their European rulers?"

The Chairman gave a detailed description of the process by which Britishers were exploiting India and draining her of wealth and said that a change of Government was also necessary to relieve the economic pressure on the masses brought about by this exploitation.

Referring to the Simon Commission, he said that British policy in India was definitely committed to a progressive realization of responsible government; but he feared that it would be a calamity if the Commission pronounced its sentence on India's political destiny without recourse to a proper representation of her case. It was too late in the day to doubt India's fitness for democratic institutions, especially when Turkey and Persia had already attained them without Western tutelage for a century and a half. He did not agree either with the people who thought the Nehru Report to be sacrosanct or with its detractors. He thought that it was a good basis for final deliberation and an effective presentation of India's joint demand. But resolutions and constitutions could not achieve anything unless they were backed by a real and abiding unity of hearts and singleness of purpose.

Proceeding, Moulvi Abdul Karim observed that for economic and cultural autonomy, Dominion Status gave India,

as it had given all other Dominions in the British Commonwealth, all the scope they needed for the present. It would therefore be unwise to fritter away their limited national energy at the mere name and chimera of independence.

Speaking on the communal aspect of the Nehru Report, the Chairman said that Musalmans wanted adequate and effective representation in the legislatures; for their past experience had shown that, unless reserved and special electorates were provided for, an adequate number of able Musalmans could not be returned to the Council, and that they would be swamped in a common joint electorate. Adult suffrage would of course ensure electoral fairplay; but if this was not provided, the Muslims of Bengal would demand representation in proportion to their population.

FIGHT FOR JUST RIGHTS OF THE MUSLIMS*

At the outset I must frankly state that we claim to be and are as much Indians as any other community in India, and are just as keen to see our country achieve freedom. Were our claims acknowledged and our just rights and privileges recognized in a spirit of fairness, we would gladly overcome the obstacles in the way of our common goal. But troubles really begin when we are accused of Pan-Islamism or of planning Muslim rule in India, merely because we demand certain safeguards, rendered necessary on account of bitter experience in the past, or ask for our fair share and opportunities in the legislatures and public service.

I take this opportunity to assure my Hindu brethren that we, the Musalmans, belong to the Indian soil and that our outlook is essentially Indian; but we refuse to recognize the right of any other community to dominate or overawe us. We must all strive in unity to develop a common Indian culture and build a happy and progressive Indian nation, which should be composed of all that is best in the varied cultures that have found their way into India. But so long as any one community strives for domination over the other and dreams of Hindu or Muslim raj, trampling under foot the rights of the other communities to develop along their own lines, there is little hope of a speedy realization of our legitimate aspirations to become a great and free nation. We, the Musalmans of India, must be assured by our Hindu brethren that we have our just rights

*Welcome address delivered by Sheikh Muhammad Abdullah at the Delhi session held in December, 1931. (Extracts).

and share in the future Constitution of India. They can do so by displaying a spirit of generous and fair treatment in regard to our claims relating to representation in the legislatures and the public services. This is the real crux of the entire Hindu-Muslim problem in India.

Ladies and Gentlemen, my regret is that such a generous spirit has not yet been shown to us by the majority community, and even the Hindu leaders at the Round-Table Conference have taken shelter behind vague expressions. I make bold to say that this was the main reason for the failure of the Conference itself. Here I must refer to the often repeated accusation that the Muslim delegates had made common cause with the diehards in England. The speech of Lord Hailsham, delivered by him during the House of Lords debate on India the other day, has revealed the reality, and has fully exposed the myth. The noble lord is reported to have made the following observation: "They were not going to impose a final settlement on a reluctant population, and they were not going to have a settlement scheme held up by one recalcitrant minority in one province. A provisional agreement would be put into operation until a final settlement was reached." What the Muslim delegate actually did was to show solidarity, and refuse to be hoodwinked by any other community. Musalmans had formulated their demands in Delhi two years ago, and since then, have been solidly standing by them. But, unfortunately, even these modest demands did not meet with the approval of the Hindu community. So far we have succeeded and succeeded well in preserving unity in our own ranks; and God willing, with this solidarity in our ranks, ultimate success should be ours.

The Statement of the Prime Minister was good as far as it went. But it must be read in conjunction with the speech of Sir Samuel Hoare in the House of Commons debate on India. Reading between the lines, the statement of the Prime Ministers comes to this, that the Conference would continue, new committees would be formed and the process of negotiations would go on *ad infinitum*. The statement may be a Magna Charta,

but apparently it gives nothing and promises nothing. It is merely an attempt to satisfy British Tories, Indian Mulmans and the rest in the same breath, Sind is to be separated, but subject to conditions which are not likely to be fulfilled. The North-West Frontier Province is to be given the same status as the other provinces, but its Governor is to have such extensive powers as would make responsible government a mere shadow. And yet some of my countrymen are jubilant over this shadow, and wish us to believe that India has got its Magna Charta.

So much of the present, but what of the future? The terrorists, on the one side, are engaged in a campaign of indiscriminate murder, the Congress on the other, has already launched a no-rent campaign in the United Provinces, while there are threats of a civil disobedience movement. And last but not least, the Government is bent upon making good the losses incurred as the result of these movements. It is saddling the country with an unbearable burden of taxation, and promulgating ordinances, which are hitting the guilty and the innocent alike. The question is what are the Musalmans to do?

Our path is clear. We have not yet lost faith in British justice and in constitutional methods of winning self government through consultations and negotiations. We must, on the one hand, condemn and combat terrorism, as we are convinced that it retards the progress of the country. We must also oppose the civil disobedience movement, as we are certain that it is not in the best interests of the nation. And lastly, we must not give up hope of a communal settlement. We must continue negotiations, if our Hindu brethren are willing to do so, although, in view of the recent announcement of the President of the Hindu Mahasabha, we have little hope from such negotiations. If, however, the attitude of the majority community remains as defiant as it has been so far, we must not hesitate to say that they do not desire real *Swaraj* in this country, and are really an obstacle to its progress. Musalmans, though they may be poor and weak, must remain a thorn in

their path, and will not let them lie on a bed of comfort unless this demands are conceded, and attainment of independence must for ever be a mere dream and speculation. And even if our Hindu brethren were ever to succeed some day, and win what they are struggling for to-day without our co-operation, they must clearly understand that the same weapons which they are using against the Government today will be used against them by the Musalmans. The present Kashmir agitation has shown to the world that the Musalmans are in no way behind in using their weapons as effectively as their brethern.

PITFALLS OF THE PROPOSED CONSTITUTION*

The ancient and historic city of Delhi, the greatest centre of Indo-Muslim culture, the cradle and grave of Hindu and Muslim empires, the place of birth and death of ancient sages and saints, the victim of innumerable vicissitudes, the scene of great events, and last but not least, the Capital of the Indian Empire, has, once again for the fourth time, been privileged to accord you its warmest welcome on this auspicious occasion of the Twenty-third Session of the All-India Muslim League.

When the last session was being held here, under somewhat difficult circumstances, it was generally expected that the next session would be held during the era of the promised new Constitution, and it was believed that during the discussion some light would be thrown on the working and experiences of the reformed regime; it is a pity that these hopes have not yet been fulfilled. The grant of a Constitution has been greatly delayed; and even now, its inauguration is not in sight. We have met here again, just as we have been assembling for the last five years, either to formulate our demands, or to criticize what is being proposed for us, which unfortunately is said to be still under enquiry or consideration.

The League being the first political organization of our community, it has, since its inauguration in the year 1906, been foremost in rendering effective service to the community, and though it has had to pass through many a process of

*Welcome address delivered by Haji Rashid Ahmed (Hidayat Group) at the Delhi session held in November, 1933.

evolution, it has yet always been fully alive to the changing needs of Musalmans, and has so far kept pace with the political advancement of the country. It will not be out of place to mention here that the well-known Muslim demands of to-day, for which almost the whole nation is fighting with commendable solidarity, and upon which lies the foundation of the future Constitution from the Muslim point of view, and the credit for which is being given to individuals or other sister organizations, were first thought out by this League, and were adopted as resolutions in its Sixteenth Session, as far back as May 1924, held at Lahore; and it was only after this, that they were adopted by others.

Never was the need for presenting a united front more imperative than it is to-day. Great political changes are impending, and we can ill-afford to pull in different directions. The different organizations may continue to function, but it is absolutely essential that there should be complete harmony and unanimity inside and outside the league; and these organizations should all coalesce with it, to help it to vindicate its demands and to hold itself in readiness to take any emergency action, if necessary.

As Chairman of the Reception Committee, it is not within my scope to enter into any elaborate discussion of the present situation, and I should really refrain from doing so; but I may kindly be forgiven, if I encroach a little upon your valuable time by giving a brief account of some recent political events.

I cannot begin to summarize such events without making a reference, with feelings of horror and sorrow, to the most brutal, inhuman, and dastardly murder of His Majesty the late Ghazi Mohammad Nadir Shah, the King of Afghanistan and one of the most enlightened and progressive Muslim rulers of Asia. He was not only immensely popular in his own country; he also took a very keen interest in the welfare of the Indian Muslims. The last of his many noble announcements which was to subscribe Rs. 3,600 annually to the Muslim University of Aligarh, showed he had the cause of the education of the

Muslims of his country dear to his heart. The education of his own country was his chief concern; and it may be recalled that one of the last tributes paid to his wise and firm rule while he was alive was by two leading Indian educationists, Sir Ross Masood and Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, when they were recently invited to Kabul to advise him on educational affairs. I find no words to express our contempt and indignation at this foul crime, and ask you, gentlemen, to join with me in praying for eternal peace in Heaven for the soul of the late King Ghazi and Shaheed, and for the welfare and prosperity of his successor and the neighbouring Muslim country of Afghanistan, for the destruction of which intrigues and conspiracies are prevalent among her enemies—the enemies of Islam.

After our last meeting in 1931, efforts were made by the different communities to come to an agreement as regards their respective shares in the proposed reform; but they failed to reach any common understanding. With the full concurrence of the leaders of various communities, the Prime Minister agreed to intervene; and although the resultant famous Communal Award fell short, not only of the minimum Muslim demands, but even of the recommendations made in the Government of India's Despatch, the members of the major community accused the Muslims of making some secret treaty with the Government. Fortunately it was proved later on that the allegation was true in the case of their own leaders. The Third Round-Table Conference then met; and it was considered most probable that after the conclusion of this, the country would receive the new Constitution. Although the communal questions were not touched, the Conference failed to achieve the desired success. The Secretary of State announced his intention to summarize the proposed Constitution in the form of a White Paper, which was duly published in March 1933. It was further pronounced that a Joint Parliamentary Committee would meet and hear objections, and that after its report was submitted to the Government, steps would be taken to present the new Constitution Act to

Parliament. This Committee has been sitting since last May, and has just finished its task of hearing evidence. It is encouraging to note that it gave an opportunity to the League to vindicate its views through its representative.

Our learned President will, I hope, give a full and comprehensive account of the present situation in his Presidential Address, shortly to be delivered to you, from which it will be clear what is being proposed for us, and what it is that is essential for the welfare of our community—that which would help us to maintain an honourable and dignified status in the country. We yield to none in our burning sense of patriotism and earnest and passionate desire to see a free, united and honoured India at as early a date as possible; but this should not be taken to mean that we are for a moment ready to merge our individuality into what appears to us to be a chaotic whole. We want to live as a separate living force, yet in all possible harmony with other forces; we want to live as a community with her own culture and time-honoured traditions, contributing to the welfare and advancement of the country as a whole. We want to live and let others live, and our patriotism consists in trying to establish goodwill, peace and harmony in our motherland by not allowing even those in whole hands political power may happen to rest in the future Constitution of India to trample over the rights and liberties of others.

The Muslims, though fully conscious that both the Communal Award and the White Paper were much below their just and reasonable demands, agreed to give them a trial, simply because they were decidedly a step forward on the present system of government, and their total rejection meant another indefinite delay to the introduction of reforms in the country. The proposed future Government was in no way favourable to the Muslims; for if in a few provinces, speaking purely for argument's sake, they may hold some power, in several others, it would be the majority community that would hold supremacy and be all. My Hindu brethren and countrymen are nevertheless strongly bent upon the total rejection of

the Constitution, if the Award and the White Paper are not materially modified. The proceedings of the last meeting of the Hindu Mahasabha at Ajmer and the deliberations of Bhai Permanand at Ajmer and Nagpore which I need not repeat here, are well known to the audience. They are a true picture of the traditional mentality of the Hindus, and a vivid and clear expression of their intentions that they do not want any *Swaraj* or reformed Constitution unless Hindu Raj throughout is promised to them.

We admit that the proposed Constitution will not help to establish a true national Government, and will not lead us towards Dominion Status, which is the goal; but what more can we expect amidst the present atmosphere of mutual distrust and disunion? A deputation to the League of Nations, or threats of strengthening the *Sangathan* movement, cannot solve this difficult problem. The only solution now is that we should accept, for the present, the proposed reforms, give them a fair trial and join our heads to find out ways and means, by deeds, and not by mere talk, to restore trust, goodwill, harmony and mutual understanding. The sooner we achieve this, the quicker we shall succeed in the attainment of what is the real need of India.

Gentleman, the deliberations of the Joint Parliamentary Committee are finished, and the delegates will now be engaged in preparing their reports. The Muslim case has been fully presented to them with firm solidarity. The Chairman and the delegates have given a patient hearing to our representation, and we should have every confidence that the report will be favourable. In addition to all that we have hitherto done, let this momentous Session of the League impress upon the members of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, as well as upon the Government, that nothing short of the proposals contained in the White Paper, coupled with certain important additions vital of Muslims, represented from time to time, will satisfy Muslim aspirations.

The most crying need of the day and the real cause of the

disgraceful manifestation of ill-will and distrust, from both sides, is the very inadequate representation of Muslims in the All-India as well as in the provincial services. Many declarations were made and promises given to various Muslim deputations by responsible Government officials to secure the minorities their fair and just share, but the ratio still is very meagre and much below our proper share. At this juncture, this very important cause must be taken up very strongly; and it should be urged that right may be given to Muslims by an Act of the Constitution, and not by mere declarations and conventions.

Another important demand still in obscurity is the grant of fundamental rights and security for the application of personal Muslim laws in strict accordance with Islamic *shariat* by Muslim *qazis*, which I believe will receive the full consideration of the Session.

When we assembled last, the country was in a state of chaos and dis-order, on account of the Civil Disobedience Movement, which has now been admitted by its organizers and supporters to be greatly injurious to the welfare of the country, and highly detrimental to the achievement of self-government. The losses sustained by the country on account of this movement are indescribable. It is almost impossible for us to make good these losses, specially now, when a general economic depression is surrounding us at all points. It is, however, gratifying to note that the country is now completely relieved of that destructive movement. The terrorist movement which took many valuable and innocent lives, and was a great menace to the peace and tranquillity of the country, has also, to a very great extent, been brought under control. There may still be some conspiracies being hatched among a few misguided youths of Bengal; but it is hoped that the firm and strong measures taken by Government, and the general condemnation of such activities from all parts of the country will soon dig out their roots. It is our duty now to show strong disapproval of both the movements, and to help the authorities in main-

taining law and order, so very essential for the progress of the country.

Gentlemen, I am sorry I have dwelt so long on all-India matters. I now wish to place before this representative gathering the needs of local Muslims and the handicaps from which my unfortunate community suffers in this illustrious city. Although, the White Paper assures Muslims a separate seat in the next Federal Assembly by separate electorates, in the Upper Chamber only one general seat is proposed, which the poor Muslims can never even dream of capturing. The qualifications of the voters and the system of election to the Upper House are still under consideration. The population ratio of the Hindu and Muslim communities within the municipal limit is 52 and 48 per cent respectively, while the ratio of Muslim members in the Municipal Committee is only 37 per cent. Muslims have no, or very meagre, representation in the other local bodies of Delhi. There is a general desire among the Muslims that the Muslim *Auqafs* should be protected in this Province, so that the endowed properties may be fully safeguarded. I hope these local needs also will receive your due consideration.

I cannot close this address without a brief reference to the affairs in Palestine, and to the treatment accorded to the unfortunate Arab community of that place. Efforts are being made to turn the country into a Jewish State at their expense. We must here urge upon the Government the total withdrawal of the Balfour declaration.

I fear, gentlemen, I have taken much of your valuable time, and I beg you and the President to forgive me for it, and also for any shortcomings in the arrangements of the Reception Committee. Our arrangements have fallen far short of what they ought to have been, but we hope that you will be generous enough to accept our humble yet warm-hearted hospitality.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not take this opportunity to express my thanks to my honourable colleagues in the

Reception Subcommittee, specially Khan Bahadur Syed Bahauddin, Khan Sahib S.M. Abdullah, Khan Sahib Mr. Rashid Ahmed, Khan Sahib Hafiz Mohammad Siddiq Multani, Khan Sahib H. Ghulam Hassan Khan, Agha Abdul Aziz and Syed Mohammad Husain, who have taken great pains and have worked hard for the success of the Session. We are most grateful to the Managing Body of the Anglo-Arabic College for the sanction to use this spacious hall, where we are assembling so comfortably during this winter night. The Honorary Secretary of the Reception Committee, Sheikh Ataur Rahman (Advocate), deserves my special thanks, who in spite of his professional engagements, took great pains in discharging the onerous duties and giving satisfaction to us all.

Nothing remains for me to say now, except to ask you, gentlemen, to join with me in praying to the Almighty for the success of this Session, for the establishment of unity and harmony in our midst, for the speedy attainment of our goal, and for all other heavenly blessings that can possibly be bestowed upon us.

COMMUNAL HARMONY AND NATIONAL UNITY*

On behalf of the Reception Committee, and as its Chairman, it is my pleasant duty and proud privilege to welcome you to this City in the spirit of that cordiality and fellow-feeling for which Bombay has made a distinct reputation. I am, indeed, extremely grateful for the honour of this rare opportunity of meeting the chosen representatives of Muslim India, and I take the honour conferred upon me more as a tribute to the memory of my worthy ancestors than as a recognition of high political services and achievements on my part; for I am, as yet, a volunteer in the field of communal and national advancement, a sphere of work which by reason of its comprehensiveness can absorb and find a place for all workers high and low.

I invite you to our city, Bombay the beautiful, the Second City of the Empire, the city of politics and business, of business politicians and political businessmen, the city which has led in every phase of Indian life in modern times, and a city, above all, which is unhesitating in repeatedly coming to the help of suffering and distressed humanity. Bombay is the Gateway of India—a gateway in every respect, even of ideas, influences and experiences. It is, therefore, very appropriate that the present epoch-making Session of the All-India Muslim League should be held in this city.

Ladies and gentlemen, much as it has been my desire and the desire of my Committee to make all possible arrangements

*Welcome address delivered by Sir Currimbhoy Ebrahim at the Bombay session held in April, 1936.

for your conveniences and comforts in a manner befitting your high place as delegates to the Session, we are aware of the shortcomings in this regard. I request you to overlook these shortcomings in the spirit of Muslim forbearance, and courtesy; and I assure you with a full heart how highly the Muslims of this city value the opportunity extended to them of entertaining you to the extent in their power.

On behalf of the Reception Committee, it is also my duty to thank you for the readiness with which you have responded to the call of the League. When I look in front of me and consider the extent of the sacrifice which many of you may have made in attending this Session, my heart goes forth in gratitude to God for exercising our mind towards real earnestness and self-sacrifice in the common cause of Muslim amelioration. The all-round uplift of the Muslims is the main object of the All-India Muslim League, which has met to-day at a most important juncture in our country's history. The sun of the Reformed Constitution is rising on the horizon, after years of conjoint deliberation at the seat of Imperial power, when every community had its own opportunity to put its case in furtherance of its interests. After a period of collaboration, in which Muslim representatives played a worthy part on behalf of the welfare of our community, the Government of India Act 1935, embodying the principles of the Reformed Constitution, has been passed by Parliament and has received the Royal assent. On the eve of the introduction of the Reforms in the government of the country, it is our duty to examine the features thereof in the light of Muslim interests and requirements and consider such policy and procedure, both individually and conjointly with the sister communities, as will make the Reforms yield the best possible results from the point of view of Muslim welfare and national advancement. It is also our duty to take stock of the present situation as regards the status of the Muslim community, to consider the extent of the progress made as a result of our past efforts, in the different departments of Muslim welfare, and the augmentation of our efforts in the future.

The necessity for the holding a session of the League on the eve of the impending constitutional changes was urged by no less a politician than Mr. M.A. Jinnah, whose patriotism and unqualified devotion to Muslim well-being have been the main-springs of the All-India Muslim League during the long period of its work and activity. It is needless for me to speak at any considerable length on the merits of our leader, Mr. Jinnah, who is held in high esteem by all the communities in the country and by the Government, and to whose incessant work on her behalf, all India owes a deep debt of gratitude. This is even more the case with Muslim India, whose cause he has championed without fear or favour; and I assure you, ladies and gentlemen, when the history of present-day India comes to be written, the name of Mr. M.A. Jinnah, the fearless upholder of the Muslim cause, will find a place of everlasting renown.

As if to fit in with the requirements of the momentous character of the present Session, we have been given a President who is in every way well equipped to give the lead that our community needs at this juncture. Sir Syed Wazir Hasan is a well known figure among the founders of the All-India Muslim League. As the former Chief Justice of the Oudh Chief Court, our President has set an example in self-sacrifice by agreeing to guide us in the service of our community, rather than enjoying his well-earned rest and leisure. Example is better than precept, and it is the light of the lives of such men as our President that must illumine our path to progress and all-round prosperity.

It is not for me to stand for any length of time between you and our President, who will give us the lead at this momentous juncture, but you will certainly extend to me your kind indulgence to speak a few words on topics of vital interest to our progress and well-being. First and foremost is the question of our attitude with regard to the Reformed Constitution. I consider that whatever criticisms may be levelled against it, it has come to stay and my friends here are all agreed that it must be worked in a spirit of co-operation. The Reforms may not have gone far enough, but that is no reason for a counsel

of despair and an attitude of negation. As a result of the unremitting labour of our leaders, we have found, in the Reformed Constitution, a measure of rights which must be used and applied to the best advantage. A detailed examination of the features of the Constitution, in so far as it affects our life and well-being, will be within the province of our President; but I hope that our attitude towards the working of the Reforms will be so framed and co-ordinated as to lay special stress on directing our efforts at improvement towards bringing more education to the poor, realizing better conditions for the agricultural and industrial classes, and improving relations between the various communities in the land.

It is a matter of no small gratification that, as a result of efforts in the past, much headway has been made in the matter of Muslim education. Education is the very breath of modern civilized existence; and a community that neglects the education of its sons and daughters has very poor chances in the struggle for existence and success, which is the most exacting feature of contemporary life. Illiteracy leads to indolence and superstition, producing, in its extreme forms, fanaticism and disharmony; and if the Muslim community is to take her rightful place among the sister communities in the land, working for, and sharing in peace, the common good with the rest of the country, there is no doubt that her sons and daughters must become blessed with the guiding light of education and reasoned understanding. Though the record of the past few years shows a creditable rise in the number of Muslim boys joining schools and colleges, much ground still has to be covered before at least half the number of our young men can be called educated. It is a work of steady toil, requiring the energy and sacrifice of all of us; and I sincerely hope that this aspect of Muslim regeneration will be kept in the forefront of our programme and worked at with devotion. In this connection, it is necessary for me to refer with special emphasis to the need of the education of Muslim women. The conditions of modern life have made education of women no less important than the education of men, if a society is to achieve all-round success.

The attention of our leader should also be drawn to the need of providing for vocational training in the courses of education, so that the unemployment of educated youths may be avoided as far as practicable. It has been an unfortunate feature of our present-day education that thousands of educated young men with high attainments in arts feel stranded as soon as they complete their course. Practical training for an industrial or commercial career, side by side with general education, will relieve the stress of unemployment and direct youthful energy into useful channels. It is also necessary not to neglect the aspect of the physical development of our youth. A short course of military training at the right period will make the community strong, vigorous and self-reliant, and imbue our youth with a feeling of fitness and confidence in the life's battle of them.

Ladies and gentlemen, permit me to state that, in common with the lot of our fellow-countrymen of our sister communities, the lot of the Muslim masses is deplorably bad. The resources of agriculture and industry, which form the main-springs of our country's wealth and well-being, have been steadily drying up, with the result that after meeting the burdens of his work the worker is left with very little for himself. It may not be possible for us town-dwellers to visualize the extent of the misery prevailing all around; but true it is that the food and clothing problem for the masses is rapidly becoming very acute. Various causes have contributed to this pathetic situation; and I feel that the time has come when those who guide our destinies should put their heads together to find a solution for the relief of the distressed. It is an important problem on which the leaders of the country, in conjunction with the Government, should endeavour to do their best. I appreciate that this is a problem above all communal viewpoints, the lot of the poor in the country being the same, whether Hindu or Mohammedan. It is, therefore, necessary that the question should be approached in joint deliberation by the eminent leaders of all communities, and that steps be taken to improve the chances of agriculture and

industry in the country.

This leads me to the basis of our relationship with the other communities. At their meeting held on February 26, 1935, the Council of the All-India Muslim League have passed a resolution that they "accept the Communal Award as far as it goes until a substitute is agreed upon by the various communities concerned," and on that basis they express their "readiness again to co-operate with any community or party with a view to securing such a future Constitution for India as would satisfy the people." That resolution puts our position in a nutshell, and I earnestly hope that, ere long, a settlement satisfactory to all will be reached and Indian unity will become an accomplished fact. What in my opinion is most important is the preservation of cordial relations in daily contact between the communities. The Mohammedan community constitutes an important limb of the great Indian nation, and it is my earnest desire that the Hindu and Muslim communities should disabuse their minds of all distrust and suspicion. In the circumstances in which India is placed to-day, it is likely that there will be points at issue between the communities, but that is no reason to disturb the atmosphere of cordiality which must reign supreme for the common good and welfare of the country at large. I appeal to our Hindu fellow-countrymen to take a large view of our efforts at self-realization. A strong, renovated and self-conscious Muslim community will be better fitted to fulfil its mission as part of the Indian nation than otherwise. Let it be plainly understood that our aim is not to secure more jobs or preferential treatment, but the general uplift of the 70 million Indian Muslims so that the structure of our national unity will be strong and complete. Our communal and separate efforts are justified to the extent of our need for constructive work and progress among the Muslims, so that in regenerating the Muslim community, we are regenerating a vital section of the Indian population. A certain amount of communal effort has therefore become a matter of necessity for the progress of our community, and I dare say our communalism is but a prelude

to the attainment of full-blown nationalism.

I, therefore, appeal to you not to let anything come in the way of the preservation of happy and cordial relations with our countrymen of other faiths, and not to allow anything to interfere with the right approach towards large questions of paramount importance for the common good of the country.

The Muslim Community is a part and parcel of the vast Indian nation, comprising 70 millions human beings thrown in constant daily contact with others in the country, under the same Government, under the same law, enjoying the same privileges and suffering the same disabilities. As such, believe me, my friends, it is impossible for us to stand aloof or attempt to work out a salvation divorced from the rest. Unity is the bed-rock of nationhood, as it is also the essence of all religion. And no Constitution, however advantageous from our point of view, can work well or survive in the absence of inter-communal goodwill and harmony. Unity is therefore the prime need of the hour. Why, even an absolute *Swaraj* Constitution would be worthless for making a happy and peaceful life in the country without the forces of unity. The achievement of unity itself, in the first instance will enable us to frame a Constitution entirely after the choice of all the people inhabiting this country. I make bold to say that even the Constitution awaiting introduction will not do the country the amount of the good possible if the various sections of the people are not agreed to extract from it the measure of advantage and progress it is capable of yielding.

I have heard great men, men of right thinking and large outlook, say that true religion and religious belief do not stand in the way of goodwill and harmony in human relationships. On the other hand, it is the main function of religion to introduce into human conduct the golden virtues of unity and harmony, so that the elements of strife and discord may vanish and leave the people to live in peace and happiness. God is one and indivisible, and the different religions are but different ways of understanding Him. When such is the case, there is

no warrant for any disunion on religious grounds.

For the sake of God, of our country and our community, let us make disagreement and discord a thing of the dead past, and let us invite others also to make it so. Let us approach our people and say that we cannot do without unity; and let us ask the Hindu leaders to say likewise to their people. Let India open a new chapter of life which will be grand in its harmonious conception, and efficient in working out the happiness and prosperity of our people, guided by that sublime and eternal balm — unity, the unfailing panacea of all human ills.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am afraid, I have taken a bit more of your precious time than I expected. I now hasten to leave the field to my successors in the order of our programme.

LIBERTY FOR THE COUNTRY AND THE COMMUNITY*

We are here to decide many big and difficult questions, questions which will not only affect our own community but the whole of India, in fact the world. I say 'the world' because means of communication and transport have developed so rapidly that we cannot completely isolate ourselves from the rest of the people that inhabit the globe. What happens in India to-day is of vital importance to Asia and other continents to-morrow. Events in China, Spain and Palestine have more than national importance. The solution of the problems in these countries will affect us all, especially in Palestine, where our brother Muslims are carrying on an unequal yet gallant struggle against overwhelming odds, against money and machine guns.

The eyes of Islam are watching their first *Kibla*. Indian Muslims are also watching the developments in that country with grave concern. Any further inroads upon the rights of the Arabs of Palestine may start a conflagration which could lead to disastrous results. Not only the Musalmans, but all nations, and people of all nations, who believe in justice disapprove of the gross injustice done to the Arab race.

A delicate political situation has been created in our own country. The majority community refuses to recognize even the existence of the Muslim community as such, and it refuses to work in co-operation with our leaders for national

* Welcome address delivered by the Raja of Mahmudabad at the Lucknow session held in October, 1937.

advancement.

We have been dubbed reactionaries, we have been maligned, and personal attacks have been made against us. But I repeat that there is not one Musalman who sits here to-day who does not want freedom of thought and action, and who does not want to have a free country to live in. They that call us reactionaries must remember that they are talking to Musalmans—Musalmans whose religion teaches them that without liberty they cannot truly live. We want liberty for our country, but we also want liberty for our community. It is an essential part of democracy that minorities should be adequately represented. No real democracy, nothing but a false show of democracy, is possible without it.

We have before us a scheme for the reorganization of our League. I cannot anticipate your decision upon that scheme. But I know that you are aware that, since our last Constitution was framed, the political situation in the country has changed greatly. It is therefore essential for us to make the whole community conscious of its rights in politics, and to unite the Muslims into one living organization.

It is for you to advocate measures of reform. We have already made our position clear in regard to Federation. A programme must be chalked out for the removal of poverty and the betterment of the condition of the masses. Whatsoever programme we agree upon must be workable. The practice of holding out high hopes and not fulfilling them is not one that commends itself to Muslims. We believe in deeds, not words.

STAND AND FIGHT ALONE*

I have great pleasure in extending to you, on behalf of the Reception Committee, a most cordial welcome. We offer you all our most grateful thanks for having taken the trouble to come to our Province to participate in the momentous deliberations of this Special Session of the Muslim League.

Perhaps in the whole history of the Muslim League, never before have such weighty issues awaited the deliberations of the representatives of the Muslim people, as will come up before the present one. Gentlemen, we are passing through times which are extremely critical for the Muslims of India. On one side, we find the Congress with all its might, organization and resources, determined to crush and subdue the Muslims, and on the other side, we find the Hindu Mahasabha, with all its communal bigotry, characteristic intolerance, narrow political outlook, and unholy intentions, devoting its energies to the frustration of Muslim hopes and the suppression of the legitimate rights and liberties of the Muslim community. The Hindu Mahasabha has never made any secret of its intentions. On the contrary, its leaders have repeatedly proved, by speech and action, how deep-rooted in them is their antagonism to Muslim aspirations.

The time has come for us to review what steps the Muslims have taken so far to counteract these sinister forces which aim at the complete enslavement of the Muslim people of India. We must ask ourselves whether we are as yet sufficiently

* Welcome address delivered by Fazlul Huq at the special session held at Calcutta in April, 1938.

organized, united and prepared, or whether we are still divided amongst ourselves and, therefore, unprepared.

If we could lay our hearts and say that we, as a community, are organized and united and that our ranks are sufficiently consolidated to enable us to resist the onslaughts, and to defeat the dangerous machinations of our highly organized political antagonists, then well might we have rested content. But gentlemen, are we convinced of the strength and solidarity of our defences? If not, is it not our supreme duty to marshal all our scattered forces and assemble them under the banner of our one and only representative organization—the All-India Muslim League? Is it not our duty also to prove to the world that the Muslim of India have not yet forgotten the command of their Holy Book which says: “Hold fast by the covenant of Allah all together, and do not create dissensions amongst yourselves.”

The Muslim Position in Bengal

Gentlemen, in the whole of Eastern India, Bengal is rightly regarded as the stronghold of Islam. The population figures perfectly justify Bengal's claim to this position. Let me present before you some facts and figures to show the numerical strength of the Muslims of Bengal, as compared with other countries and other provinces of India. In the whole of British India, the total Muslim population is 67,058,610, of whom 27.5 million have their habitation in Bengal. The Muslim population in Bengal is nearly half of the entire population of Great Britain, and also of France; it is seven times that of Turkey; three times that of Iran; four times that of Arabia; and three times that of Afghanistan and Egypt taken together. Muslims in Bengal alone number four millions more than the total population of the Punjab, eight times the Muslim population of Madras, and four times that of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh. One would have thought that in a land within the confines of which one single community had such numerical superiority, that community would hold absolute sway, and its culture and traditions would.

prevail. But it is a thousand pities that, due to certain circumstances regarding which the world at large has little knowledge, the actual conditions are entirely different. Gentlemen, time and occasion do not permit me to go into a detailed analysis of the causes which have reduced the Muslims of Bengal to the present deplorable state, causes which stand as impediments in the way of their prosperity and progress; but with your permission, I shall briefly mention a few of them.

First of all, let me tell you of that chapter of the political history of Bengal which commenced with the battle of Plassey. Immediately after their success at Plassey, in 1757, East India Company, not only set themselves to advance their commercial interests, but they also had recourse to every possible means calculated to bring this country under their political sway. Of the various policies which they adopted in order to gain this end, the first and foremost was the suppression of the Muslim in every way open to them and to the utmost limit of their power. The heartless methods which the East India Company adopted, and the cruel treatment which they meted out to Muslims in pursuance of this deep-laid policy, have no parallel in the whole history of the civilized world. Steadily but persistently and with grim resolve, the East India Company pursued that policy, the sole aim of which was to reduce the Muslims to greater and greater depths of poverty, illiteracy and emasculation. Up to the beginning of the 19th century this policy continued to operate with unceasing rigour and was fruitful of dire consequences to the Islamic people. Soon the national existence of the Muslims as a distinct race was almost at an end, and the object with which that policy had been initiated was all but fulfilled. But, gentlemen, the cup of Muslim suffering had still in it some dregs which they had yet to drain. Fresh weapons were forged to impoverish, emasculate and even annihilate their national existence. In 1819 a new Regulation was enforced, which is known as the Resumption Regulation. This regulation empowered the East India Company to resume all *lakhiraj* lands which the Mughal Emperors had bestowed or settled

upon their subjects. It must be remembered in this connection that the Company had, in the year 1765, secured from Emperor Shah Alam the right to the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa; and therefore, they were perfectly entitled to fix, in their own right, the rents of big zemindaries and small holdings alike. However, their object was not to systematize the land-tenures in Bengal, but to deprive the Muslims of their supremacy in the country by depriving them of their landed possessions. At the time when the Resumption Regulation was enforced, 95 per cent of the zemindars of Bengal were Muslims; but within 10 years after the completion of proceedings under this Regulation, the position was completely reversed, and the number of Muslim zemindars fell from 95 to a mere 5 per cent. I cannot do better than quote, in this connection, the remarks of Sir William Hunter in his well-known book, *The Indian Musalmans*, where he described the death-blow which the Muslim community received with regard to its position as a political entity, in consequence of the ruthless manner in which the Resumption Regulation was carried out. Sir William Hunter says, "A large part of this sum was derived from rent-free lands by Musalmans or by Modammedan foundations. The panic and hatred which ensued have stamped themselves for ever on the rural records. Hundreds of ancient families were ruined and the educational system of the Musalmans, which was almost entirely maintained by rent-free grants, received its death-blow. The scholastic classes of the Mohammedans emerged from the 18 years of harrying, absolutely ruined. Any impartial student will arrive at the conviction that while the Resumption Laws only enforced rights which we had again and again most emphatically reserved, yet the Resumption Proceedings were harsh in the extreme, and opposed to the general sense of the Indian people. Prescription cannot create rights in the face of express enactments, but 75 years of unbroken possession give rise to strong claims on the tenderness of a Government. Our Resumption officers knew no pity. They calmly enforced the law. The panic of those days is still remembered, and it has left to us a bitter legacy of hatred. Since then the profession

of a Man of Learning, a dignified and lucrative calling under Native Rulers, has ceased to exist in Bengal.

“The Mohammedan foundations suffered most : for with regard to their title deeds, as with regards to all other matters, the former conquerors of India had displayed a haughty indifference, unknown to the provident and astute Hindu. We demanded an amount of proof in support of rent-free tenures, which in the then uncertain state of real property law, they could not have produced in support of their acknowledged private estates. During 75 years we had submitted under protest to a gigantic system of fraud and the accumulated penalty fell upon a single generation. Meanwhile the climate and the white-ants had been making havoc of the grants and title-deeds which might have supported their claims. There can be little doubt that our Resumptions fell short of what had been stolen from us, but there can be no doubt whatever that from those Resumptions, the decay of the Mohammedan system of education dates. The officer now in charge of the Wahabi prosecutions cites them as the second cause of the decline of the Musalman community in Bengal.”

Shortly after this, yet another blow was aimed at the terrible life of the Muslims as community—a blow which laid the community absolutely prostrate and helpless. In 1835 the Court language was suddenly changed from Persian to English, in flagrant violation of the East India Company's treaty with Emperor Shah Alam. This change deprived Muslims of their language of culture and sustenance, and at one blow the entire Muslim people was relegated to a position of backwardness. Muslims of those days, as the East India Company knew very well, disinclined towards English education, not only because of their disgust at the cruel and barbarous treatment to which the English had subjected them, but also because in the whole country there was not a single educational institution where they could acquire such education in an atmosphere of their own culture and civilization. Such schools or colleges as then existed for the imparting of English education had been established by Christian missionaries, and

the teachers were either Christians or Hindus. In this connection, the well-known historian Sir William Hunter has depicted the feelings of the Muslims of those days in these significant words : "The language of our Government schools in Lower Bengal is Hindi, and the masters are Hindus. The higher sort of Musalmans spurned the instructions of idolators through the medium of the language of idolatry."

Gentlemen, my narration of this tale of sorrow has not yet reached its conclusion. During the middle of the 19th century still further blows were struck at the Indian Muslims which completed their downfall. The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, which kindled the fire of revenge in the hearts of the British against Indians in general and the Muslims in particular, had its repercussions in Bengal also. Into the woeful chapter that followed the Mutiny, I shall not enter here. Suffice it to say that things came to such a pass towards the end of the 19th century that the hearts of even a few, justice-loving Britons were moved. Some of them, who were eminent writers and historians, felt impelled to draw the attention of the outside world to the plight to which the Muslims had been reduced. But by then the victim was at his last gasp and the very people who had made India so great and so glorious had been forcibly reduced to the position of helots in their own land.

So much for the historical past. Coming to more recent times, we find that even after the British policy in India had undergone a reorientation, there was considerable unwillingness to concede the Muslims their rights in full, much less to make atonement for the past. Great injustice was done in the matter of allocating seats to Muslims in the Councils under the Montagu-Chelmsford Constitution. The subsequent Communal Award has to some extent made up for that injustice, but we are still the victims of a grave wrong because, although the Muslim population in Bengal is about 56 per cent of the whole, yet not more than 48 per cent of the seats in the Province's Legislative Assembly have been allotted to our

community. The result has been that the Muslims cannot run the administration of a province in which they are in an unquestioned majority without entering into coalition with or depending on the support of other parties. In other provinces, however, where Congress has secured majorities, it can and has formed Ministries of its own without caring to take into account the wishes or the feelings of the Muslim minorities. Therefore, gentlemen, our first problem is to find some means of getting redress for the wrong done to us by the Communal Award, which has reduced Muslim majorities to minorities.

The Folly of Dissident Muslims

Our second problem is to devise ways and means to bring their folly and their guilt home to Muslims who have been deceived by the high-sounding but insincere promises of the Congress, or who have betrayed the Muslim cause by deserting the community and joining hands with its avowed opponents, in order to serve their own selfish ends. Through the conduct of some of our own men are Muslim ranks being thus disintegrated. If it had been a question of fighting the Congress and the Mahasabha only, then surely all their designs and all their tactics would have been of little avail against the united front of Islam, and this humbler servant of yours would have smashed through the network of Congress and Mahasabha wiles as easily as one sweeps away fragile gossamer. But the conduct of these dupes of the Congress and these betrayers well-nigh disheartens me; and I sometimes ask myself if a community which can still produce so many foolish or treacherous men is worth striving for, paying for, and weeping for. Yet, gentlemen, we must not, we cannot and we will not yield to despair. It is of the very essence of the spirit of Islam to persevere all the more in the face of dangers, difficulties and impediments. It is our incumbent duty to bear constantly in mind that in India we hold the integrity and safety of Islam as a sacred trust. We are born into these traditions inherited from generation to generation, and the sacred duty to protect Islam and uphold its traditions devolves upon us as

a heritage from our forefathers. Shall we be found wanting in the fulfilment of the duties of this glorious trusteeship? Shall we allow our cherished national, cultural and social traditions to be thus resolutely and ruthlessly assailed, and yet do nothing to prepare ourselves and marshal all our resources to resist the onslaught and to maintain and preserve our national rights and our cultural heritage?

Speaking particularly of Bengal, let me now ask a few questions of those misguided Muslims who are trying to build a house apart from the united house of Islam and who have, through their action jeopardized the solidarity of Musalmans.

Where is the difference between the published programme of the Seceders in Bengal and the programme which the Coalition Party has worked out with all earnestness and promptitude? What justification, then, had these Seceders to break away from the Coalition Party of Bengal? Do they not see that the Congress, in its own majority provinces, has not admitted any other party into coalition with it, and that, in any case, coalition with it can be only on such terms as amount to the virtual effacement of the Muslims as a separate political entity? Even our Coalition Party, in spite of its numerical strength, has been forced to enter into alliance with certain other groups. The Krishak-Proja Party and the Independent Proja Party together number not more than 30 members in the Bengal Assembly and the Bengal Council. How then, can they hope to form a Ministry in Bengal without the aid of such parties as the Congress? And if they attach themselves to the Congress, how can they for a moment hope to achieve anything that will confer any real benefit upon the Muslims and the masses of Bengal?

Gentlemen, I have already taken up much of your time, but before I resume my seat, I wish to make here and now a revelation to you and to the world at large. The Congress has, during recent months, again made overtures to me offering me the Premiership in a Congress Coalition Cabinet in Bengal. If

I had responded to those overtures, I should have still been the Premier and continued to be, perhaps for an indefinitely long period. But such a Premiership would have been no better and no more real than the Kingship of Shah Alam or the Nizamat of Mir Jafar. Had I thus signed, with my own hands, the death warrant of Islam, with what face would I have stood before my Maker and His Prophet on the day of final reckoning? But let it not be supposed that I am against an honourable agreement with the Congress. I declare that, consistent with the Islamic principles of peace and toleration, I am prepared to agree to work with the Congress on the following terms. First, the Congress should come to an honourable mutual understanding with the Muslim League, and reshuffle its Ministries in the various provinces in coalition with the League Parties in the respective legislatures. Second, the Congress should come to an honourable agreement with the League in the matter of appointments to public services and in matters pertaining to the social and cultural life of the Muslim people. Third, the Congress should mediate in the Shahidganj question between Muslims and Sikhs, and bring about a settlement which will be acceptable to both the communities, and which will ensure peace and the cessation of the present unrest.

But gentlemen, it is useless, in the light of past experience, for Muslims to expect from the Congress anything like fair and equitable treatment. I shall give you one typical example of the callousness of Congressmen towards Muslim sentiments. The other day, when Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan was reciting, in the U.P. Assembly, the tales of oppression on Muslims in different places, and was even giving concrete instances in support of his allegations, what were the Congressmen in the House doing? They were laughing and ridiculing him. Here were, indeed, not one but many Neros all fiddling to express their unholy glee at the burning of Rome. If a hundredth part of such oppression had been visited on the Hindus then, indeed, would the Ganges have been afire from end to end. But the sufferings of Muslims are, to the Congress, matters for mockery and laughter.

A Contrast in the Treatment of Minorities

Let us contrast the plight of the Muslims in the Congress Provinces with the conditions of Hindus living in non-Congress Provinces. In this Province, for instance, there has neither been communal rioting, nor can anyone cite a single instance of oppression on the minority community. In Congress Provinces riots have laid the countryside waste Muslim life, limb and property have been lost and blood has freely flowed, but here in Bengal not one head has been broken nor one drop of blood shed. There the Muslims are leading their lives in constant terror, overawed and oppressed, but here the Hindus are leading perfectly happy and peaceful lives—a circumstance that delights and gratifies us. There mosques are being defiled and the culprits never found, nor is the Muslim worshipper unmolested; but here worship proceeds unhampered in Hindu temples and none dare defile them, because we resolutely set the law in motion against any evil doer who would defile or desecrate any community's place of worship. There you will find many instances where Muslim officers have been unjustly treated or deprived of their legitimate rights; here I defy anyone to cite a single instance where a Hindu officer has been unfairly treated by us. I assure you that our treatment of the minorities in our charge is such that the Congress Ministers may well take a leaf out of our book and emulate our example.

The Congress loudly proclaims itself to be the friend of the tenantry. And yet, what has the Congress Ministry done in Bihar for the Kisans as compared with what we have done for the Projas in Bengal? Let me give you a few salient points of contrast. In Bihar the salami has been retained at 8 per cent, while in this non-Congress Province of Bengal it has been abolished altogether. In Bihar the right of zemindars to realize rent through certificates still obtains; but here it has been done away with. Here in Bengal we have also stopped [the enhancement of rent for a period of 10 years; but in Bihar no such relief has been given to the poor tenants. That is the picture in Bihar, and this is the picture

in Bengal. And yet Congressmen call themselves better friends of the masses than we of the Bengal Coalition and the Muslim League.

The Muslims Must Stand and Fight Alone

Gentlemen. I wish I could conclude, for already I have taxed your patience enough. But before I sit down, I must frankly and freely express my conviction that we, the Muslims of India, must stand on our own legs and fight our battles alone. Let us once and for all abandon all hope of protection through the so-called safeguards in the Constitution. We must shape our own destiny unaided by any outside authority, and in spite of our political opponents. British authority in India has, indeed, ceased to function and the sceptre is slipping fast from British hands. True that the British still hold sway in Delhi and Simla, but that sway increasingly lacks reality, and is becoming more and more like that of the successors of Aurangzeb. After all, the British came to India as traders, and as traders they are now anxious to remain—they would sooner part with power than with trade. They believe that their commercial interests will be best served through an alliance. Their guarantees to the minorities, and particularly to the Muslims of India, have proved to be shallow through and through. The sooner we cease to rely on them the better. We must fight the battle of Islam alone and with all our resources. Let us resolve to fight it to the bitter end, relying on the justice of our cause, undaunted by the gathering forces against us. Let us prepare to fight, if need be, on a double front, with our backs to the wall. If Panipat and Thaneswar must repeat themselves, let the Muslims prepare to give as glorious an account of themselves as did their forbears.

Conclusion

Gentlemen, I apologize for the length of this speech, but I have done no more than to give you a recital of bare facts, which I challenge any one to contradict. I am deeply grateful

to you for the patient hearing you have given me, and I once more bid you welcome to Bengal to deliberate upon the momentous issues that are before our community today. May the All-Merciful God guide these deliberations on the right lines, and may your decisions bring nearer the day of Islam's deliverance in India.

STEERING A MIDDLE PATH*

Syed Abdul Aziz, Chairman of the Reception Committee, traced the historical importance of Bihar and Patna, the City's splendour under the Mauryas, and the zenith of glory it reached during the rule of the Mughals. "The downfall of the Mughal Empire plunged the unfortunate Musalmans of India into a state of helplessness and bewilderment; and for a long time, they could do little but mourn their fate. Subdued and awestruck by the new regime set up by the British, they at first remained distrustfully aloof from all new ideas and movements, and took no steps to reform or improve themselves in accordance with the changed conditions of the times. A new awakening later came over them, and they showed that they were still a force to reckon with. They played a prominent part in the memorable struggle for independence which took place in 1875. In Bengal, Bihar and Mysore, they shed their blood like water to stem the tide of foreign domination. The wars waged by Seraj-ud-Dowlah, Mir Kasim and Tippu Sultan to preserve the independence of the country will always remain enshrined in history as some of the noblest examples of patriotic endeavour."

Mr. Aziz said that in 1916 the Muslim League, keeping pace with the Congress, demanded independence for the country; and as a proof of the sincerity and earnestness of the Musalmans, whom it represented, it signed a pact with the Hindus. It was fully realized by the Musalmans that to attain freedom for the country, it was essential for the Hindus and

* An indirect version of the welcome address delivered by Syed Abdul Aziz at the Patna session held in December, 1938.

Musalmans to be united and welded into one strong nation.

“But the Nehru Report of 1926 shattered the foundation of unity, and destroyed all hopes of concerted action in the cause of freedom. It became apparent to the Musalmans that the demand for independence by the sister community was nothing more than a cloak for gaining political domination to the exclusion and detriment of the other communities living in the country.” Mr. Aziz ascribed the late Maulana Mohammad Ali's opposition to the Nehru Report to this reason, and said that Musalmans all over India became distrustful of Congress professions. He accused the Hindu leaders of side-tracking the issues raised by Mr. M.A. Jinnah and Maulana Mohammad Ali, at the Calcutta Convention, for the amendment of the Nehru Report; and said that at the Round-Table Conferences the Musalmans gave ample proof of their sincerity, but the Hindu leaders did not join them in evolving a satisfactory solution of the communal problem.

In this connection, Mr. Aziz observed that the “fear of the Musalmans that the Congress in reality wanted to establish a Hindu Raj in which the military and external powers of the British would remain intact, while the administration and internal powers were vested in the Hindu majority, who would set about reducing the Musalmans to a state of serfdom, has been amply justified and confirmed.”

At present, there were many conflicting and contradictory ideologies in India—Nationalism, Bolshevism, Fascism, etc.—and these had only served to make India's political, social and cultural problems still more complex by creating new differences and accentuating the existing ones. In these circumstances, Mr. Aziz saw the need for Musalmans to organize themselves for the purpose of self-preservation. Gandhiji and his followers wished to base the future development of India on the cultural background of Hindu history and ideology in the name of nationalism. But recently a new party had come into prominence, which intended to reconstruct a united Indian nation by obliterating all religious differences

and setting up a new civilization, based on Western thought and ideals. Though not an open enemy of religion, the party considered it unnecessary, or of only minor account, and this new creed of Socialism was undoubtedly highly detrimental for the Musalmans.

Mr. Aziz said that the Musalmans' reluctance to participate in the Congress programme was not the result of any lack of love for their country; nor were they oblivious to the need of solving its economic problems. What they objected to were the means and methods proposed by the majority community. He held that Nationalism and Socialism were opposed to Islamic ideals, and said that, apart from the effects of the grant of Provincial Autonomy, the movements he had referred to were some of the other causes which had served to give the Muslim League a new lease of life.

"The Musalmans cannot join hands with the Socialists", said Mr. Aziz, stressing the Musalmans' inability to co-operate with the Congress and the Socialists. The Socialists, he said, had a materialistic view of life, and considered religion a superfluity, and the Musalmans did not agree with the solution of economic problems that they offered. As regards the Congress, he did not consider it to be sensible for the minorities to leave their fate in the hands of the Congress, which he described as a "preponderantly Hindu body, having in its ranks a considerable number of wealthy capitalists and bigoted politicians, determined to serve their own communal and economic interests."

Speaking on the policy of the League, Mr. Aziz said that the League had no wish to quarrel with others on account of their views. It would only identify itself with such movements as accorded with Islamic ideals and principles, and which were directed towards securing the greatest amount of good for all. "It will not allow the kisans to be persecuted and tyrannized over by the zemindars, nor will it try to gain their support by holding out promises to them that were incapable of fulfilment. Similarly, it is prepared to label the land-owning class.

as a set of tyrants and oppressors.” He also said that the League would try to steer a similiar middle path between Labour and Capital, by securing higher wages and better conditions of employment for Labour, without making it unprofitable for capitalists to invest their money in industrial enterprises. He said that the critics of the League did not realize that it was good omen that the Musalmans, hitherto a backward section of the people, were organized. If they had remained disunited, they would not be able to contribute to the progress of the country. Mr. Aziz concluded by enumerating the grievances of the Muslims.

JUSTICE TO THE MINORITY COMMUNITY*

The achievement of the Muslim League, which protected the Muslims, and other minorities, against a calamity which endangered their very existence, would remain a bright chapter in the history of Indian Muslims. The All-India Muslim League was to-day working on such lines as would not only ensure the national life and independence of the Musalmans of India, but at the same time, protect other communities. He was happy that the Musalmans had fully grasped this ideal of their only representative organization, and that they were mustering strong under the flag of the All-India Muslim League. The ideal of free Musalmans in a free India, was an ideal which neither the British Government nor the Congress dare characterize as unreasonable. The All-India Muslim League upheld the cause of India's freedom, but it could not tolerate the usurpation of Muslim rights by the majority community. The Musalmans would reject any scheme of reform that did not safeguard Muslim rights. Speaking on the Act of 1935, Sir Shah Nawaz said that a Western type of government did not suit India and the experience of the past two and a half years' administration in Congress majority provinces had amply proved this. The Musalmans could never tolerate a situation in which they should live in subjection to a community which had no common ground with them in religion, culture and civilization. European communities could

* An indirect version of the welcome address delivered by Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot at the Lahore session held in March, 1940.

not tolerate the domination of another nation, added Sir Shah Nawaz, although they had practically the same religion, culture and civilization. Discussing the communal question, Sir Shah Nawaz said that as many as 25 attempts had been made in the last quarter of the century, but no settlement had yet been arrived at. The reason for the breakdown of negotiations on every occasion had been that the Congress refused to accept the basic principle of separate electorates for the Musalmans; and if they did so, they did it in a form in which the Musalmans could not maintain their identity and independence. Referring to the working of Provincial autonomy, Sir Shah Nawaz said that in order to run a popular Government efficiently, the majority should try to satisfy the minorities and inspire confidence in them in every possible way, but he was sorry to observe that the attitude of the Congress had been to the contrary. Sir Shah Nawaz described how the Punjab Government was doing everything to satisfy the minorities and keep them content. The minorities had been given full representation in the Government in the Punjab and Bengal. During the past three years, the Punjab Government had spent 27.5 million rupees on the famine-stricken villagers of the South-East Punjab, a majority of whom were Hindu Jats. Concluding, Sir Shah Nawaz Khan deplored the fact that some very prominent Muslim leaders had cut adrift from their community and joined the Congress, which was not fighting for the independence of India, but only for the domination of the Congress and the Hindus after the departure of the British.

The special correspondent of the Times of India wrote : "This curtain raiser in Urdu was received with quiet applause; everyone was waiting for the Presidential Address. Mr. Jinnah decided to speak extempore, and no one knew what to expect. Prolonged shouts of 'Zindabad' greeted the slim figure in a black achkan as the President stepped before the microphone. Mr. Jinnah's sallow face reflected the triumph of his reception. He spoke for nearly two hours, his voice now deep and trenchant, now light and ironic. Such was the dominance of his personality that, despite the improbability

of more than a fraction of his audience understanding English, he held his hearers and played with palpable effect on their emotions. The Associated Press of India reported : "As Mr. Jinnah delivered his extempore address lasting for a hundred minutes, which was frequently punctuated by thunderous applause, there were many in that huge gathering of over 100,000 people who remembered the late Sir Mohammed Iqbal, the poet of Islam, the animator of the idea of Pakistan, whose tomb is at present in the process of construction within easy distance of the League Pandal. It was one of the most representative gatherings of the Musalmans of India who listened to the oration of Mr. Jinnah. Ministers of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam and most of the Muslim members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures in India attended. Perhaps a special feature of the Session was the appearance of such a large number of Muslim women in a public function of this sort, and the organization of the Muslim Militia of National Guards who were in charge of all the arrangements, including the control of the huge crowds."

THE DILEMMA OF INCOMPATIBLE OBJECTIVES*

I deem it a unique privilege to welcome you to this great metropolis of South India. I assure you that when I say this, I genuinely echo the sentiments of the members of the Reception Committee and of the Muslims of South India, who deeply appreciate the honour conferred upon this part of the country by the decision of the Quaid-i-Azam to hold the Twenty-eighth Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League here.

It would not be out of place to mention that this Province of ours, which you have selected as the venue of the League's annual session has its own hoary Islamic traditions and associations; for the Western Coast of our Presidency was the first part of Indian to come in contact with Arab culture, long before the Muslims came to India through Sind and the North-Western passess. The regular commerce between the West Coast of India and the South of Arabia facilitated the spread of Islam in Malabar, where hundreds of thousands of the children of the soil were subject to the tyranny and degradation of caste-ridden religions. In fact this part of our Presidency is inhabited by a large number of Muslims, who constitute a third of the total Muslim population of the whole Presidency. Another noteworthy feature of the political history of this part of our country is that Muslims have played a conspicuous part in shaping its destiny during the latter half of the eighteenth century, under the famous and able leadership of Tippu Sultan, whose services in the cause of the civilization

* Welcome address delivered by Abdul Hamid Khan at the Madras session held in April, 1941.

and freedom of this land no historian could possibly underestimate.

Not only the Western Coast, but the very core and heart of our Province, comprising the districts of Madras, Trichinopoly and Arcot, have been important centres of Muslim influence and culture in the South during the reign of the Nawabs of the Carnatic, and they always attracted renowned scholars from various parts of India and outside, thus helping in the dissemination of light and learning. It was due to the patronage of the Nawab Wallajah that that renowned scholar Maulana Abdul Ali, popularly known as Maulana Bahr-ul-Uloom came over from Lucknow to this metropolis, and was responsible for a great intellectual awakening in the South. He died here in the early part of the last century. It was due to the liberal patronage of the Court, and the enthusiasm shown by the Moplah Muslims, that a very large number of madrasahs and libraries lie scattered all over the southern part of this Presidency to-day.

The War

In welcoming you to this Province for the first time in the history of the League, I am conscious of the troublous times through which the world is passing. The ravages and miseries caused by the War are too appalling to be described. The deterioration of the international situation day by day has had repercussions on almost all countries of the West, belligerent, non-belligerent and neutral. Muslims can never be enamoured of Nazi ideals; they are so obnoxious, and the methods adopted to achieve them so brutal, inhuman and revolting to Muslim sentiment, thought and culture, that I find it difficult to express adequately our abhorrence and condemnation of those ideals and methods.

At the same time, I must say that most of the present international trouble is due to economic and territorial maladjustments, besides the friction caused by the irregular groupings of populations. A rearrangement of the map of the world on a just and equitable basis is necessary if real and lasting peace

is ever to be achieved. I am confident that in the wake of the victory of the Allied Powers in this struggle, will inevitably follow the readjustment, both of territory and economic structure, of nations.

One may consider times such as these through which we are passing to be not very opportune for a discussion of the constitutional future of a people, as the future of many a nation to-day is on the anvil. But the circumstances in this unhappy land of ours have compelled us to take stock of events at this moment, so that we may be prepared for greater tests and ordeals than those we had to grapple with and overcome in the past. It is with this avowed object in view that we have all assembled here to-day from distant parts of India.

From Strength to Strength

It is needless to say that at such a momentous phase in the history of our land we have found in Quaid-i Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah the unique personality who could lead us to our cherished goal. I believe that the phrase 'With the hour comes the Man' could never have been used more aptly than in the present instance. We are sure that the future of the 90 million Muslims of India is absolutely safe in the hands of our great Quaid-i-Azam, who is to preside over the deliberations of this historic Session in this city of Madras. I am sure you will feel one with me when I say that the Muslim League under his able guidance has been gaining in strength day by day.

And here may I be permitted to give a brief survey of the origin, growth and development of this organization of ours—the Muslim League, the accredited voice of Muslim India. The necessity of such a body to safeguard the national interests of the Muslims was felt as early as 1901, I believe, when the All-India Muslim Educational Conference was held at Madras, but the question did not go beyond the stage of mere discussion for five years. It was in 1906 that a strong and representative association of Muslims who were politically

mind was formed and a deputation waited on the then Viceroy to represent their legitimate claims. Later, this association came to be known more popularly as the Muslim League, passing through several stages of development. Thanks to the political consciousness engendered by the efforts of the League among the Muslims, the principle of separate electorates received official recognition for the first time in the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. Obviously this claim for separate electorates was based on the minute examination of religious and cultural differences that existed between the Hindus and the Muslims, and which go deep down into the history and ideology of their inalienable past. No other solution in the circumstances could have been acceptable, much less possible, when we come to realize that the principles on which the two social structures of these nations happen to be based are absolutely at variance with each other. The Hindu, with their rigid system of caste, the concept of their Pantheon, and a social organization which denies elementary rights to millions of God's creatures, are not perhaps in a position to appreciate fully the social order based on the democratic principles inherent in Islam, which proclaim the Oneness of God and the brotherhood of man.

Incompatible Objectives

Ideologies so diametrically opposed to each other can hardly be bridged; but yet the League essayed to attempt the impossible, and with its characteristic preparedness to meet difficult situations, met the Congress half-way, and concluded the Lucknow Pact in 1916. For a time it appeared as though the solution of this thorny communal problem was in sight, but the post-war national movement had a strange effect on the minds of the Congress leaders who began to entertain apprehensions and misgivings with regard to the principle of separate electorates. They began to entertain and advocate ideas of replacing separate electorates by joint electorates. In the meanwhile, the dismemberment of the Khilafat roused the feelings of Muslims all over India, and they made common cause with the Congress leaders to avert the imminent catastrophe threatening the solidarity of the Muslim States. The

part played by the Muslims in the non-co-operation movement started under the joint auspices of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee for *Swaraj*—and the Khilafat and their sacrifices are too well known to be recapitulated here. This temporary patching up of differences encouraged the Congress leaders in their old attitude of intransigence. They began to cry down separate electorates, and denounced the principles of the Lucknow Pact that were embodied in the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. They proceeded to utter the slogan that the Reforms were disappointing and demanded further reforms based on joint electorates and adult franchise. The motives underlying these demands, though clothed in a nationalistic garb, were really intended to be a step towards the acquisition of power by the majority community. Muslim leaders, scenting the danger in the new move of the Congress, began gradually to lose faith in the *bonafides* of Mr. Gandhi and his followers and their claim to represent Muslim interests. A series of events now followed which brought the ulterior motives of the Congress to the forefront, which further aggravated the differences between the two nations.

The truth of the above contention was amply borne out by the fact that the scheme of Hindu-Muslim unity—which was formulated by Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyenger, the then President of the Congress, and adopted by it at its session held in Madras in 1927, when the late lamented Maulana Mohammed Ali and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya were found embracing each other—was thrown overboard for reasons best known to the Hindu leaders themselves. This scheme of Hindu-Muslim unity was still-born. The following year, the ushering in of the Nehru Report merely served the purpose of further embittering Muslim feelings. By this time a large section of Muslim Leaders had begun to realize, to their great bewilderment, the hopelessness of the situation, and they eventually decided that a scheme to safeguard Muslim interests should be drawn up. Consequently, in 1928 were formulated the famous 14 points which were considered by the Muslims as offering a basis for a *rapprochement* with the Hindus.

Hindu Communalism

At the All-India Muslim Conference held on January 1, 1929, at Delhi, in view of "India's vast extent and its ethnological, linguistic, administrative and geographical or territorial divisions", it was proposed that a federal system of government with autonomous provinces having residuary powers vested in them should be inaugurated as the most suitable form of government. Thereafter, the report of the Central Committee, with its dissenting minute of the Muslim members, brought into a clear perspective the importance of the Muslim demands. Then followed the two Round-Table Conferences to decide the framework of the new Constitution based on the federal principle. The federal idea underlying the new scheme was stoutly opposed by our Quaid-i-Azam, who with his characteristic clear vision foresaw the danger inherent in it to the peace and independence of India. The moves that took place in these two conferences further revealed the subtle policy of the Congress leaders directed towards the identification of Hinduism with Indian nationalism. If any doubt regarding the intentions of the Congress leaders had still lingered in Muslim minds, it was rudely dispelled by the historic fast of Mr. Gandhi, which was ostensibly undertaken to prevent the perpetuation of social inequality, but in reality was meant to thwart the escape of the Depressed Classes from the clutches of caste domination; for, on this memorable occasion Mr Gandhi himself came out with a statement that he was prepared to give up the question of India's freedom rather than be a spectator of the dismemberment of the Hindu community. Those who have carefully followed the succession of events leading to this astounding declaration must have been not a little shocked to find that the guiding motive behind the Congress policy was actuated by a desire to establish the rule of a communal majority rather than see all the sections of the Indian population have a share in political power and enjoy the benefits of freedom.

It was at this juncture that the leaders of Muslim public
Academy of the Punjab in North America: <http://www.apnaorg.com>

opinion seriously began to revise their views and take stock of the events afresh. The work of the Act of 1935, which inaugurated provincial autonomy with the ultimate object of establishing an All-India Federation, made more clear the intentions of the Congress hierarchy. The elections for the new Legislatures were contested both by the League and the Congress candidates. The Congress having its own doubts about the outcome of these elections was not prepared to declare its aims in an unequivocal manner. But the overwhelming majority which the Congress party secured in 7 out of 11 Provinces in the land made it so sure of its political ascendancy that it declined the co-operation of the Muslim League, and found the opportunity tempting enough to ignore the very existence of that body as the only political organization of the Muslims which could deliver the goods. It now developed the idea of forcing upon the country a unitary type of government based on the homogeneous British Parliamentary model in spite of the fact that the basic beliefs underlying that model have been very conspicuous by their absence in a heterogeneous country. In taking this step, the Congress High Command was actuated by the ambition to perpetuate the rule of a communally minded majority party, and in doing so it looked as though they were translating the wishes Mr. Gandhi expressed during his historic fast. Thus we see that, while Mr. Gandhi has been exerting himself to keep the Hindu community in tact, the Congress was leaving no stone unturned to secure power permanently under the guise of majority rule.

Subsequent events have proved that the Congress demand for assurance of non-interference from the Governors of the various Provinces where it had a majority was only meant to confirm the tyranny of monopolist rule and to suppress the claims of the minority. Here I would like to add that the leaders of the Congress party, unaccustomed as they had been to the exercise of political power, completely lost their balance the moment they got the reins of office into their hands, and displayed a lack of vision and statemanship—so necessary for a stable government—with the result that the gulf between

them and the people over whom they ruled for 27 months became widened. Further, as they had no political past in which gifts of real rulership had an opportunity to play any important part in dealing with people of differing religions and culture, they committed the same parvenu mistakes which nations that had acquired power under similar circumstances were prone to commit, and proceeded with their programmes quite oblivious of the vital interests and religious and cultural susceptibilities of other peoples; so much so that when the Congress Ministries went out of power, not only the Muslim nation, but an overwhelming number of non-Congress sections of the Indian community heaved a sigh of relief at having been delivered from the hands of a Government which was out to suppress all that they considered indispensable for the existence of a self-respecting citizen

Two Social Codes

The lack of confidence created in the minds of Muslims by the temporary rule of the 'Fascist High Command' forced the League, much against its will, to abandon all hope of reconciliation with the Congress and strive for an examination of the question of the Indian Constitution *de novo*, on the basis of a two-nation recognition of facts—a plan which exemplifies the political acumen and foresight of our esteemed Quaid-i-Azam, who has been able to see through the subtle game of Congress politics and appraise it at its true value. The Muslim nation considers its present and its future perfectly safe in the hands of its trusted leader, to whom India's freedom and the political emancipation of his nation have been a spiritual testament.

Talking of a *de novo* Constitution to which I have a while back made a reference, I wish to clarify the position by pointing out that the two great social orders, *viz*, the Hindu and the Muslim, are based on two opposing principles and therefore need two homelands. To brush aside this historic truth with slogans, catch-words and parables calculated to prejudice the issues is tantamount to a refusal to face the realities of the

situation. The social democracy of Islam, based on the monotheistic principle and the brotherhood and equality of man, finds nothing in common with a social order that advocates a rigid caste system based on birth and status. The fact that religion controls all aspects of a Muslim's life is not fully grasped by his Hindu neighbour; and it is apparently due to this lack of appreciation that the latter fails to understand why the Muslim mind is so much agitated at incidents like the singing of the *Bandematram* and the installation of Mr. Gandhi's photo for reverent regard in Muslim schools. And the opposition of the Muslim to the so-called Wardha Scheme and the methods employed to replace Urdu by Hindi, under the guise of Hindustani, is mainly due to their anxiety to preserve their own religion, language and culture.

Considering all these facts in their true perspective, one can easily realize the cogency and the fairness of the demand put forward by the Muslim League as its annual session held in Lahore last year. The resolution passed there, which is popularly known as the Pakistan Resolution, does not in any way aim at injuring the interests of the Hindus or, for the matter of that, of any community inhabiting this vast Subcontinent. The demand for Pakistan, which implies the establishment of independent and separate Muslim States with a confederating outlook, does not run counter to the idea of India's political unity, nor does it mean the vivisection of India, since the basis of Pakistan has existed all the time in this country; and if it has not been emphasized earlier in the present form, this is due to the fact that our revered leader, Quaid-i-Azam, for the last 30 years, and before him, our other accredited leaders have been trying their utmost to find a solution satisfactory to all for the realization of this goal.

But the peculiar conditions that obtained in this country have made their efforts at reconciling the Congress to their scheme of government quite unavailing. Obsessed by ideas of *Ram Rajya*, *Rashtrapatis* and *Rama Senas*, the Congress has been persistently refusing to see eye to eye with the Muslim

League and its demand for a new orientation of India's policy, envisaged in the Pakistan Scheme. Pakistan is only a means to an end, and that a great end—India's freedom, peace and order. The Quaid-i-Azam himself has time and again been emphasizing this aspect to things; for under this scheme alone could there be a possibility of realizing Hindu-Muslim unity.

Let me here quote an extract from the proceedings of the Legislative Assembly on March 29, 1941 :

“Mr. Aney : There was an impression abroad that the Muslim League had always insisted on Pakistan here and now.

Mr. Jinnah: Our position is this. We divide the problem of India into two parts—the present and the future. As far as the future is concerned, we say that when the time comes to change the whole Constitution, we shall then discuss the various schemes. We believe in Pakistan. As far as the present is concerned, our position is that we are willing, only for the successful prosecution of the war, to co-operate in forming a Government within the framework of this Constitution. Our present quarrel with the Government is that the Muslim League is not given a real and substantial share in the Government, both at the Centre and in the Provinces.

Mr. Aney believed that if Mr. Jinnah and the members of the Congress and others could sit together and engage in the common effort to meet the existing situation, probably the demand for Pakistan might not arise.

Mr. Jinnah : Or may be accepted.”

In his memorable speech on the same occasion, Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan summed up our claim in the following words : “Co-operation as Equals, not as Camp Followers. Hindu leaders (whether with any following or without) who seek parleys behind the back of Muslim India should not think that they can get away with it.”

Recently at Bombay they had had a conference of pro-Congress Hindu leaders in non-party disguise, and the statement of its distinguished President, after his interview with the Viceroy, indicates their disposition to deal with a national problem in fragments. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru reveals the scope of his discussions with the Viceroy in the following words :

“Questions relating to the provinces were not touched upon in the course of the discussions, he said. Neither were they considered at the Bombay Conference. Those questions, he suggested, could probably more appropriately be considered when the reconstruction of the Centre was completed.”

Partisan efforts for “the reconstruction of the Centre”, without paying heed to the provinces, do not suggest the existence of a practical outlook, and such manoeuvrings on behalf of the Congress scheme of domination must put Muslim India doubly on its guard.

Misrepresentations

The present demand of the Muslim League is for the preservation of its own rights, and not, as is falsely represented, for the trampling down of the rights of others. The Muslims wish to live as free citizens along with their Hindu brethren, who would be equally free in their own homelands. There is nothing unreasonable or preposterous about this demand. This new policy is to be based on the well-acknowledged principle of equal opportunities for all and on the common maxim of live and let live. It is not born of any kind of ill-feeling towards any community. On the other hand, it is the only possible and permanent solution for the attainment of communal harmony in India. It is very regrettable that the leaders of the Congress who see in this scheme the frustration of their fond hopes of majority rule in India and permanent Hindu dominance have taken every opportunity to distort the ideal, and have spared no argument, however puerile, to misrepresent it. They have subjected it not only

to carping criticism, but also to foul abuse, without caring to examine its implications with free and unbiased minds. During the last year, not only the Congress leaders have been vociferous in the condemnation of the scheme of Pakistan; certain others whose profession is not politics have also entered the list to ridicule it. But I may with confidence voice a universal Muslim sentiment, *viz.*, that no non-Muslim need have any fear in respect of his future in a truly Islamic State such as the Pakistan scheme envisages. A non-Muslim in our midst will have every opportunity to attain the fullest stature of citizenship. So, any fear on the part of non-Muslims is misplaced. If the Pakistan scheme is to give rise to any alarm in respect of the position of any minorities, it is to be entertained by the Muslims, who have had a taste of the Congress Hindu rule in seven of the 11 provinces of British India. And it is therefore to be earnestly hoped that the Quaid-i Azam and the Muslim League in general will thrash out the position of the Muslim minorities in Hindu India in proper detail at the earliest moment.

In conclusion, may I take this opportunity to say that the outlook of the Muslim League has taken hold of the Muslim mind in the South, thanks to the inspiring lead given by the Quaid-i-Azam. In the promotion of this outlook, the different organizations—the Provincial, District and Primary Leagues—deserve to be congratulated for the enthusiasm they have shown. And in this connection it will be appropriate if I should mention the name of Haji Jamal Mohammed Sahib for the service rendered by him while he was, till recently, President of the Madras Presidency Muslim League.

Ladies and Gentlemen, on behalf of the Reception Committee of this Presidency, I welcome you all in our midst and wish you godspeed in the task that lies before you during this Session of the All-India Muslim League.

MUSLIM NATION AND PAKISTAN*

We are passing through cataclysmic times. Kaleidoscopic changes all over the world, due to war and aggression and domination playing havoc with humanity, are too obvious to need any special emphasis. The war has engulfed the whole world. Nation after nation has fallen victim to the evil forces of tyranny and aggression in quick succession. Freedom, equality and all that civilization and culture mean have been put in great jeopardy. All thoughts of democracy, and all that it stands for, have been systematically and methodically trampled upon. The very ideology and principles of democracy have been violently attacked and ridiculed. While this war may be regarded as an economic war, it is undoubtedly also a war of ideologies. It is a fight between right and wrong. It is a fight between the false ideologies of aggression and domination based on hatred, and the ideologies of freedom, equality, justice and fair play for all nations, classes and communities. The question is whether the ideologies of all for one and one for all and the spirit of live and let live will triumph over the dark forces of tyranny, aggression and domination.

There are leaders of thought and philosophers, pseudo and real, who have already begun to make interesting speculations and forecasts of a future world order matching the complexion of their fads and idiosyncrasies or the great philosophy of eternal truth which has stood the test of all times. There are those who are influenced by Socialism and Communism and

* Welcome address delivered by Sir Muhammed Yusuf at the Madras session held in April, 1941.

would like the future shape of the world order to be according to their wishful thinking and desire to see the whole world regimented after the pattern of their own thought. Then there are those who believe in Nazism and Fascism, which are really a reaction against Communism. They again would like the world to be fashioned after their thought. But the fact remains that the whole world instinctively revolts against these ideologies of aggression and domination which are based upon brute force or violently aggressive thought, rather than on reason, a spirit of tolerance and individual freedom. Then again there are those who still believe that Democracy is the only panacea for all the ills and misfortunes of humanity. It is true probably that what the ideology of Democracy stands for is an end in itself, of great virtue and importance in human affairs. Democracy stands for individual freedom, freedom of soul, freedom of body, freedom of thought and freedom of press, subject to just law and order, and recognizes the merits of private enterprise and service and sacrifice on a voluntary basis, and deprecates compulsion and domination, unless it is by the common consent of all the peoples concerned themselves. It also aims at equality of rights, justice and fair play for all classes and communities without thinking in terms of elimination and ruination of nations, classes and communities through methods of brute force.

Pakistan and a United India

Here in India I can make bold to say that our Hindu brethren pride themselves on the ideology of love, justice and fair play and tolerance. If that is so, then bearing in mind the practical aims and ideology of life of the Musalmans, there should be no difficulty for the Hindus and Musalmans in adjusting their differences by methods of confabulation, discussion and reasoning, goodwill and understanding. Musalmans want freedom and equality and the power of self-determination where they happen to be in a majority. Similarly they accord the same right in a spirit of brotherhood and in the interest of unity in India to their Hindu brethren where they happen to be in a majority. The aims and objects

of the All India Muslim League, intrinsically great, have been clearly laid down at the Madras Session of the All-India Muslim League last year; and if people are inclined to examine that creed calmly with a view to understand and grasp the full significance of it, they should have no difficulty in finding out that the Muslim League has honestly, conscientiously and in the best interests of India and every section of the community, formulated a scheme in the shape of Pakistan, which has in itself an immeasurable dynamic and potential value for the creation of a united India on the basis of treaties and engagements in co-operation with the British Government, which is undoubtedly giving a lead in transforming the British Empire into a commonwealth of nations with common ideals and common aims assuring the happiness and prosperity of all nations, big or small, on the basis of freedom, equality and fair play. It is possible that the British Commonwealth of Nations may develop into a world federation, the achievement of which will be no easy task due to ideological clashes and economic conflicts of powerful nations which have attained an artificially high economic level based on the exploitation of weaker nations. No nation can now live an isolated existence. Every nation must throw its lot into a federation of nations on the basis of equality and partnership to save itself from the aggression and domination of those nations that aim at their subjugation and slavery.

A united India will be an asset to any federation or comity of nations, That unity can be achieved only if all the four parties interested in India, namely, the Muslim nation, the Hindu nation, the British nation and the Indian State combine together to so adjust their differences as to draw up a scheme of united independent sovereign States in India which can easily merge themselves into a federation or commonwealth of nations for the purpose of solving India's economic and defence problems, irrespective of what form the political system of our country will take according to its genius and requirements of circumstances and situation. An India dis-united and in a state of civil war cannot hope to be a free, independent and happy land of peace and prosperity, and

cannot be of any consequence to the future world order we all hope to build on sound fundamental principles of unchallenged and unassailable value and significance through all ages. Pakistan is a practical scheme based on reason and common sense, and is a message of peace and goodwill of the Muslim nation to the Hindu nation in a spirit of brotherhood and love.

Strong Central Government

I can understand the weakness and temptation of the Congress to think in terms of the dictatorship of one strong Central Government for the whole of India; but it is clear that the Musalmans as a nation deem it highly detrimental to their vital interests to accept any such Government at the centre based upon the parliamentary democratic form of government, as this would mean that even in those provinces where they happen to be in a majority, they cannot have an independent sovereign State without being subordinate to the Government at the Centre where the Hindus will be in permanent majority and the Muslims will be in permanent minority. The viewpoint of the Musalmans is that if the Hindus want freedom and sovereignty, they must be fair and accord the same position to the Muslim nation where the Muslims happen to be in a majority. Bearing in mind human weaknesses and frailties and the natural temptation to exercise power according to the numerical strength in the Central Government and the Legislature, a strong Central Government at the Centre will degenerate into the tyranny of the majority.

As the question of the very destiny of the Musalmans is involved in it, the Musalmans fear that a strong Central Democratic form of Government would be highly detrimental to their interests, bearing in mind the temptation and the general narrow outlook of regarding India as belonging to the Hindus alone and fancying the Musalmans merely as intruders or invaders of India who simply wanted to dominate India for their own national ends. The Hindus are Aryans, so are the Muslims. Hindus came first into India and Musalmans

came later. The real inhabitants of India are the Dravidians. If the regions where the Musalmans settled down in a majority be treated as Pakistan, the Gangetic plain where the Hindus settled down in very large numbers may be treated as Hindustan. This seems to be a logical and fair demarcation of Pakistan and Hindustan on a geographical basis.

The Musalmans are a Nation

It is moonshine to talk of Pakistan as involving domination by the Musalmans over the Hindus in India and the building of a Muslim corridor from the south to the frontiers of a Muslim country. It aims only at the solidarity and unity of India on the basis of adjustment of interests on a firmer basis of treaties and engagements. We must shake off doubts and fears, and we must recognize the realities of the situation. We have to federate with other countries and nations led by Britain and American, whether we do it with India as one unit or with India divided into two or three units in the form of Hindu, Muslim and Indian States federations, to be directly welded into a commonwealth of nations or a larger British American Federation. We must remember that narrow-mindedness and freedom do not go together. If we want to achieve freedom and independence, then we must have that spirit of tolerance and breadth of vision which is associated with the mentality of ruling nations. Narrow-mindedness and intolerance can only lead to chaos, confusion and misery and one form of slavery or another, as these are the qualities which are associated with subject nations. It will never do for us to give rein to such ignoble passions and mentality. Let the Congress, the Non-Party Leaders and the Hindu Sabha deeply ponder over the whole problem, as wishful thinking and palatable and delectable aims of having a unitary form of Government at the Centre with a permanent Hindu majority is a very gloomy future prospect to hold out to the Musalmans, and they should not with reason expect them to accept it.

It is the Musalmans who see danger for their freedom,

safety and peaceful life from such a strong Central Government on a democratic basis, and not the Hindus, who feel secure in their majority in the whole of India. Thus the attitude of the Musalmans, in view of the above-mentioned dangers, is justifiable, while the denial of freedom and the right of self-determination to the Muslim nation is most unfair on the part of our Hindu brethren, for it is for them to satisfy the minority nation and meet their wishes to the fullest extent possible, so that the two nations may be welded together in the larger interests of the country. The Pakistan scheme, in the absence of anything else meeting its objective as an alternative, holds the field. In India, bearing in mind our ideology of love and truth, equality and fair play, we must solve our problems as two free nations and not as one subordinate to another on the basis of the Hindu majority taking India as a whole.

Reply to Critics of Pakistan

It is meaningless to criticize Pakistan on financial and economic grounds. Political power exercised in partnership with other nations can solve the economic and financial problems of Muslims on the basis of economic interdependence, co-operation, goodwill and engagements. The best policy in the twentieth century world to follow is that of frankness, honesty and straightforwardness. Strategies and tactics and false political propaganda with a view to serve narrow national ends is the bane of humanity, and the sooner the Congress and other organizations give up aggressive nationalism and begin to recognise the fundamental rights of other nations in terms of universal brotherhood and world citizenship, the better it would be for all concerned.

Scheme for a United India

The Pakistan scheme is not an ill assimilated and confused idea or a hotchpotch of ideals and aims which is not broad based and well-conceived as a practical scheme offering a real and permanent solution of the Hindu-Muslim question in the larger interests of India, but is a scheme for welding the peo-

ple into a united India to play an important role in the evolution of a juster and fairer new world order.

Pakistan is the only scheme which could have the right psychological effect on both the nations to make them recognize the importance of each other with due respect and love and a spirit of equality. The steadying and balancing influence of the scheme cannot be denied or exaggerated.

Forming a strong Central Government will have potentialities of internal trouble due to the very probable aggressive attitude of the majority community at the Centre, which may compel the Musalmans to look elsewhere to seek their freedom and security, and this would always be a prolific source of internal struggle and strife between the two nations, with possibilities of its developing into a major war between the Hindu world and the Muslim world, where the Hindu and Muslim powers, due to contiguity of frontiers, must be on the happiest of relations along with the British Government. It ill becomes the Congress and other Hindu parties to resort to manoeuvres and tactics with a view to mislead the British Government into making a declaration which would be highly prejudicial to the vital interests of the Muslim nation. Such diplomacy can only be regarded as short-sighted. I have already pointed out that the Musalmans are not prepared to accept any scheme of unitary government at the Centre, because the advantage which they have on the basis of being a majority in the Muslim provinces would be wiped out, and the balancing influence, moral and spiritual, would be completely lost, and further because the Musalmans are likely to put themselves in great jeopardy under a central government for the whole of India.

Urdu and Hindi

It is a pity that the Quaid-i-Azam and the Muslim League have had to oppose the Sapru demand, as while outwardly it seems to be a reasonable demand, it irrevocably prejudices and prejudices the Pakistan scheme.

Sir Stafford Cripps has come out to India to discuss the tentative terms of the declaration which has to be made by the British Government, based on the recommendations of a committee of distinguished members of Parliament. Let us hope that some solution will be found for a readjustment of the differences between the Hindus and the Musalmans, and some scheme will be evolved which will be in consonance with the two-nation theory of the Hindus and the Musalmans, apart from other nations that exist on this continent. And declaration which seeks to treat the Musalmans as a minority, or jeopardizes the Pakistan scheme, is bound to prove a damp squib from the point of view of an 'all-out war effort.' The declaration must not prejudice the vital interests of the Musalmans, and it should not lead to domination by the Hindus over the Musalmans at the Centre.

Interim arrangements must necessarily be based upon common consent, and should not be imposed from above in a manner that will not enlist the support of the Muslim nation on the basis of equality and fair play. I fervently hope that Sir Stafford Cripps will not be carried away by press and platform propaganda during his visit, or even by personal contacts with the Congress leaders and the leaders of other Hindu parties and will try to clearly understand and appreciate the viewpoints of Quaid-i-Azam Mr. Jinnah and the League, so as to be in a position to see things in proper perspective with the ultimate idea of helping to formulate a solution of the deadlock between the Hindus and the Musalmans, which would lead to an 'all-out united war effort.'

IN DEFENCE OF TWO-NATION THEORY*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my duty to acknowledge a debt of gratitude that I owe to the Muslims of Delhi who have entrusted me with the task of welcoming the All-India Muslim League on their behalf to this historic city. Some of you have come from Assam, some from the North Western Frontier Province, while there are others who have come from Bombay and Madras. In these days of turmoil and war, it is no easy matter to undertake such long journeys. You have travelled all these distances at great personal discomfort and expense to attend this Annual Session of the great Parliament of the Muslims of India. Can there be a better proof of your determination and zeal to show to the world that Muslim India is united for the realization of their sacred goal? Nor can there be a better proof of the fact that the voice of All-India Muslim League is the voice of the 100 million Muslims of India.

This Delhi of ours is the cradle and grave of many empires. Here is the treasury of Islamic art, culture and philosophy; here was the capital of Sher Shah Suri, and here was the capital of the Mughals. Today Delhi is the capital of the British Indian Empire. The symbols of Islamic art and glory are still prominent here. A few miles away from this pandal stands Qutub Minar. This symbol of Islamic art, I am proud to say, is considered one of the Wonders of the World. In the

* Welcome address delivered by Hussain Malik at the Dehli session held in April, 1943.

centre of the city stands Jumma Masjid, whereto the Mughal Emperors came to pay their homage to the King of Kings. From here Qutub-ud-Din Ebak demonstrated to the world that in Islam all men are equal and that even a slave can rise to the heights of a king. Delhi to-day is the metropolis of the British Indian Empire where some of the most prominent leaders of the country assemble from time to time. It is the confluence of the most important currents of public opinion. It is, therefore, Sir, in the fitness of things that this great organization of the Muslims should be holding its Session here today.

The present life of the League can be traced back to 1936, when it decided to send its representatives to the Provincial Legislatures. We were then in a deplorable state. We were unorganized and we had no political organization of our own. Many of the candidates who stood on the League ticket were successful. The Congress realized that the Muslim League was gaining strength, and therefore, some method must be found whereby its progress could be checked. It, therefore, offered to take League candidates within its party, provided they signed the Congress pledge. This was an attempt to disrupt the Muslims. It was obvious that if these candidates had signed the Congress pledge and joined its party, it would have misled the Muslim public and would have thus weakened the strength of the Muslim League. But luckily the Congress was not successful. Having thus failed, the Congress High Command made further attempts to bring the Muslims within its fold. Therefore, the mass contact campaign was launched. But, Sir, thanks to your determination and efforts, the Muslims did not fall prey to the Congress machinations.

The Congress put forward a fatuous claim to represent the whole of India. It alleged that there were only two parties in the country, the British and the Congress, and therefore it voiced the opinion of both the Hindus and the Muslims. It being the only political organization of the country, the British should negotiate with them alone, and no other party had

any recognition or right to be consulted. At this critical juncture, Sir, you with your determination and untiring efforts, organized, the League, and for once in the history of the world in such a short time, brought a nation of 100 million Muslims under one banner. A nation of 100 million cannot be considered a minority. It has its own civilization, its own culture, its own laws and custom, its own language and its own religion. Such a nation has the right to be consulted before any Constitution can be thrust upon it.

The pretensions of the Congress to represent the whole of India and to be the only political organization, were exposed when its High Command began to work openly for Ram Raj. The severity of treatment, the atrocities and the way in which the rights of the Muslims were trampled upon during the short lived regime of the Congress, convinced the Muslims that the High Command was in no way prepared to allow them to practise their culture, philosophy and religion, and that in order to establish Ram Raj, it was determined to crush the Muslims under its heels. The short-sighted policy of the Congress and its professions convinced the Muslims that it meant to establish Ram Raj in India. They could expect from the Congress no quarter, no sympathy and no tolerance. Therefore, Sir, under your guidance, they evolved a formula which would give them the right to establish their homelands in areas where they are in majority. The Pakistan resolution as adopted at Lahore has been condemned by our opponents through the Congress controlled press, but no argument has been advanced to prove that it is in any way detrimental to the cause of the country. It is condemned because it gives the Muslims the right of self-determination and freedom from Ram Raj and Hindu domination. Our opponents have cried themselves hoarse by shouting that Pakistan means vivisection of India. This is mere propaganda. India, Sir, is not a country but a subcontinent composed of various nations. The Hindus and the Muslims are two major nations with different arts, civilizations, cultures, customs, languages, law and religions. Can a subcontinent composed of nations with such

wide differences be called geographically one? The continent of Europe is composed of many different nations. Their civilizations and religions are the same, while their languages are different; nor is there any great difference in their laws and customs. Yet can we, to-day, say that Europe is geographically one?

The recent civil disobedience campaign of the Congress was a serious departure from its creed of non-violence. It was to be a fight to the finish; and our Hindu friends had declared that they would go on with this movement with us or without us. But, Sir, in this country no movement, which does not have the support of the Muslims, can ever be successful. The Muslims kept aloof from this movement, not because they were in any way less determined to free the country from foreign yoke, or because they were in any way less prepared to make sacrifices for the cause of freedom—they kept aloof because it did not have the sanction of the Muslim League. The movement, which had been started to harass the British to come to terms with the Congress over the heads of the Muslims, failed. Therefore, some solution had to be found out of the impasse. Anyone who has studied the correspondence that passed between the Viceroy and Mr. Gandhi could not fail to notice traces of disappointment in the latter's tone. At this moment, the Viceroy made his statement in Calcutta, which offered relief to Mr. Gandhi and gave him the courage to undertake his 21 days fast. The Viceroy's statement that India was geographically one perturbed Muslim India and offered the Congress further encouragement. The tone of Mr. Gandhi's letters changed, and he began to ask the Viceroy to prove that he and the Congress were guilty of the black deeds that were committed in the guise of civil disobedience. His request became a threat in the form of a fast. The mischief had been created by the Viceroy's statement. The enemy was at India's gate and the fullest co-operation of the Muslims was required. British prestige was at stake, and therefore the Viceroy had to show fortitude and steadfastness. All methods of the Congress to coerce the British by threats, false slogans, civil disobedience and fasting were designed with a view to

capture power from the British to the detriment of the Muslims.

In the wake of the Congress has sprung up a body of men whom you yourself, Sir, rightly labelled 'political orphans'. When the Congress begins to weaken, such a body of men is always available who are willing to join the blood-bank to rejuvenate it. These political orphans have no backing, no creed, no party, no policy and no programme. They delight in making speeches in King's English and addressing an audience of their own choosing.

When the present war began, the Muslim League made it clear that it did not wish to embarrass the British, and therefore, it would not insist on any constitutional change during the war. The League offered its hand of co-operation to work a Provisional Government at the Centre, provided all the parties agreed to its demand of self-determination for the Muslims and to carry it to its logical conclusion. The Government, however, did not take its hand of friendship, but instead tried to weaken the position of the Muslims. Its policy all along has been opportunist. It has failed to do justice to the Muslims in the services and other walks of life. A great deal has happened since we last met in Allahabad. Sir Stafford Cripps came to India with certain proposals from the British. As these proposals contained a suggestion to give the Muslims the right of self-determination, they did not suit the temper of our Hindu friends. They were, therefore, rejected, and then immediately withdrawn by Sir Stafford Cripps. Since then, there has been a lot of banging and opening of the door, but there has been no change in the policy of the British. The Secretary of State for India has asserted that there would be no transfer of power till there was a perfect agreement between the two parties. As Congress has been declared an unlawful organization, it has no legal recognition. The question of who the two parties in the country are, has been left unanswered. We still await, Sir, for further elucidation on this point.

We have watched the League making steady progress and rise to its present stature. The recent successes of the League in various Provincial by-elections are evidence enough of the support that it has secured. To-day, Sir, we are proud to say that out of the five Muslim Provinces, in four, League Ministries have been established, while we are looking forward to the time when there will be a League Ministry in the fifth as well. Pakistan has become an article of faith with the Muslims; and for its establishment, they are prepared to make every sacrifice that they may be called upon to offer. You, Sir, have offered to abide by the decision of the Muslim plebiscite. Let the issue be decided by the plebiscite, and let their decision be final. The voice of the electorate is expressed in the Legislature through its representatives. The decision of the Sind Legislative Assembly was the true expression of the opinion of the Muslims of that Province. Can there be any doubt in the mind of anyone that Pakistan is the demand of the 100 million Muslims of India ?

We are living in the presence of history. Destinies of nations are being made and marred overnight. Who knows what fate has in store for us. No power on earth can for long ignore the demand of 100 million Muslims. However, in this transitory period, we must now draw up a programme and decide on the line of action that we propose to take in Pakistan. It is not the function of a political organization to have educational, industrial and social programmes, but, Sir, this organization, as the sole representative of the nation, has many intellectual and spiritual thinkers in its fold. It is for this organization to chalk out a programme dealing with commercial, educational, industrial, political, religious and social problems of the nation. The present system of education is faulty, inasmuch as it separates religious teachings from other forms of learning. The teaching of theology has been left over exclusively to a particular class of men who have no interest in academic education. We must now move with the current of the times and introduce a system of education in keeping with Islamic culture, philosophy and religion.

AN INDEPENDENT SOVEREIGN STATE OF SINDHU NATION*

On behalf of the Reception Committee of the Thirty-first Session of the All-India Muslim League, I welcome you all to the land of Sindhu. By Sindhu I mean that part of the Asian Continent which is situated on the borders of the river Indus and its tributaries. In past ages, Sind and Hind have been considered separate entities; and Sind included Kashmir, the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Baluchistan and the present Province of Sind. But as time went on, the name began to connote a smaller and smaller area until now it is assigned only to that part of the land which is watered by the tail end of this great river. To-day again, fully aware of this fact, we are moving to weld together those different parts into one harmonious whole, and the new proposed name, *Pakistan*, connotes the same old Sindhu land.

Friends, Destiny ordained the past of this land to be glorious, and we hope its future will be as bright. In many ways the history of this land is unique. It is the seat of a very old civilization to which Mohenjodaro and Taxila bear testimony. Many a race have intermixed here. Traces of Dravidian, Aryan, Semitic and Mongol traits can be easily seen at a glance. It is not only the racial comingling—in no part of the world has the fusion of philosophies and religions taken place in such profusion as in this land. The religion of Buddha, though born on the soil of Hind, did thrive nowhere

* English version of the welcome address delivered in Urdu by G.M. Syed at the Karachi session held in December, 1943.

ul-Haq, to whose untiring efforts and hard work we owe this *pandal*. I also thank our Salar-e-Azam, Mirza Mohammed Abdullah, who has organized the National Guard in this Province within a very short time. In the end, I thank my friend Mr. Wahid-ud-Din Ahmad for discharging his duties so magnificently and to the satisfaction of us all.

In this age of industrialization, the world is moving at great speed. We Muslims must keep pace with it. Our Hindu friends are taking full cognizance of the situation, and are making good use of all chances and opportunities, while we Muslims are still living in the present with the glory of the past. We must discard our false plumes and march with the times. In our Pakistan, we have plenty of natural resources and virgin soil. The time has come for us to turn our attention to them. We must make sincere efforts to industrialize these areas. . . .By deliberate false propaganda, it has been hammered into us that we have no capacity for business. This is mere deception and falsehood. There were times when Muslims had their trade connections all over the world. We still have the capacity to work and the ability to organize.

We must also, Sir, give serious thought to the introduction of a programme of social reforms and uplift. We must broaden our outlook on life and must encourage free thought. Until now we have been keeping our women in the background and have treated them as a burden. No nation who keeps half of its population in the background can ever hope to achieve a fair status in the world order. We must give our women education and training on bases of Islamic culture and philosophy to enable them to share our political ideals and aspirations and bring up our future generation free from handicaps and difficulties that we are facing to-day. In this dark hour of our history, Sir, we look up to you to organize us and to guide us to the path of realism and glory.

Ladies and gentlemen, I once again welcome you to this historic city of ours. The Reception Committee has made every endeavour to make your stay as pleasant as possible. I am conscious of the shortcomings in their arrangements, and I must apologise for these. Owing to present-day conditions, they have had to labour under extraordinary difficulties. I therefore request you to overlook their shortcomings. I thank you for your forbearance and indulgence.

I take this opportunity to thank my friend Ghazi Anwar-
Academy of the Punjab in North America: <http://www.apnaorg.com>

better than on this soil. The people of this land have not yet forgotten the lesson of *Nirvana* (the Doctrine of Renunciation) as taught by Gautama Buddha. When Islam reached this land, Buddhism was still prevalent, and Islam added only *Isha' at* (Realization) to its teachings. Nowhere have the Vedantic teachings and *Vahaaniyat* influenced each other more than on this land. On the one hand, *Vahdaniyat* influenced the Hindu Yogi, and worship of idols began to wane; on the other hand, the Muslim Dervishes used *Sanyasi* methods and music to their own advantage, and the Hindu and Muslim beliefs came nearer to each other. The teaching of Guru Nanak is a specific result of this. The Sufi Muslims of this land, topped by the great poet Shah Abdul Latif, always endeavoured to bring about religious unity. The practical proof which the people of this land have given in effecting unity is a well established fact, and the non-touchability that exists elsewhere with a vengeance is nowhere less prominent than in this land.

Centre of Many Civilizations

Nowhere has Nature attempted to weld different civilizations together as it has done here on this soil through the medium of trade and commerce. The port of Daibul was a centre of sea-trade, on the one hand, and on the other, caravans reached Bukhara and Samarkand from here to carry on the international trade. In turn, the fertility of the soil of the River Indus attracted many a race to migrate to Sindhu, and many of these races took up their permanent abode in the land. To this, too, ancient archaeological finds, on the one hand, and the historical records, on the other, bear abundant testimony.

From the political point of view, this land has always been the battlefield of many a people. The fertility of this soil has often tempted virile races to come down to this land of Sindhu; and if a few of them, satisfied with plunder, returned to their homes, many, after their arrival here, were not willing to leave the soil. In this way, new blood has ever been

pouring in its veins. As it is, the political influence of Babylon, Egypt, Iran, Greece, Arabia and Afghanistan are easily traceable here. In comparison to these, the influence of Southern India is almost negligible. I have narrated this short history of this land and its past glory with a view to reminding those who, under the dominant influence of Hind, have forgotten or are prepared to forget the splendour and ascendancy of their homeland. Having related some chapters of the glorious past of this land to refresh your memory, I now shall humbly put before you some ideas about its future, as I conceive it.

The Message from the Arabian Desert

Man from his commencement has advanced towards one ultimate object—that of human unity of thought and action. His different religious, political and economic endeavours and aspirations are merely different attempts to reach that common goal. On every page of history you will clearly see this evolutionary process in progress. In the beginning mankind is divided into small families. In time the families are welded and assume the shape of tribes. The tribes combine and form themselves into nations. The basis of union are various—to mention a few : habitat, language, mode of life and ideas have been some of the factors. In course of time, the materialistic basis for union grew less and less prominent. It was the idea that grew to gain more and more importance; and at this juncture, a new voice from the desert of Arabia was heard, which welded nations into one whole in a way no other attempt up to our times has ever succeeded. It discounted all the old forms of union based on race, colour, mode of life, habits, language, etc.

Although the influence of this voice, in the beginning, was felt by most parts of the ancient world; yet later the world once again began to revert to its old modes of thought. The result of this was that the Unity of *Mllat* was broken and the peoples that represented this idea began to separate and degenerate. This became apparent to many observant minds,

such as Shah Waliullah, Syed Ahmad and Jamal-ud-Din Afghani. They endeavoured to re-animate their co-religionists with the forgotten lesson that Islam had brought. God be praised, to-day the poet of the East, Allama Iqbal has re-echoed the same voice in a new phraseology, by the blessings which we can observe a new vital spirit in this Millat. At the same time, the West, after a lot of bloodshed, has begun to feel that it will not go well with the world unless the foundations of so-called nations are completely altered. 'Ideology' is the fashion of to-day. But defective and outworn ideologies are being retired, and they inevitably fail and lead to great war after war. Partial solutions superficially conceived are being paraded under different names, and these mushroom growths rise and wither within years which count no more than moments in the history of man.

Although the drive towards universal brotherhood has commenced, yet real unity and permanent peace will not be achieved unless a satisfactory solution of the world's present divergent political, economic and religious theories is found. For this, a special environment and intellectual training based on historical traditions is a necessary condition. For the fulfilment of the above mission, the people of Sindhu are better suited than most. Ancient records bear testimony as to how races, civilizations, religious philosophies and political methods of governance have mingled in this country. In the establishment of a new world order, and in uniting the East and the West, Sindhu has to give a special message—and I have already been observing indications thereof. The synthesis must be conceived here. If America and Russia can jointly endeavour to bring nearer a new world order (although their political and economic ideologies are contradictory of each other), there will be no wonder then if Malik Khizar Hayat Khan and Sir Chhoturam could join and submit the above-mentioned message and set an example.

Artificial Unity of India

But it is regrettable that some inhabitants of Hind, with a
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view to bringing about temporary combinations, have been misleading the people of this land; and their nefarious propaganda has already affected some of our Muslim and non-Muslim countrymen who have closed their eyes against history and hard facts. They have been raising slogans of 'One Nation' and 'United India'. Sindhu wants not only to unite India but the whole world. But this objective cannot be achieved by the methods adopted by these people. May God Almighty guide them to the right path. But if they do not extricate themselves from the trammels and allurements of the self-interested politician of Hind, an unnecessary discord will ensue.

The majority of the inhabitants of the land of Sindhu are now awake, and with a view to contributing their share towards the world order, they must be made free from extra-territorial influences.

Muslim Commerce

I again appeal especially to my non-Muslim countrymen that they should join us and help us to free our land and make it independent. Our cry of 'Buy from Muslims' has raised an uproar amongst them. That is one certain proof that a true sense of nationalism is lacking in them. Instead of encouraging the less industrious and poorer countrymen with an effort to bring them to their level and lay the surest foundation of the democratic government and prosperity of their land, they take exception even when Muslims attempt to raise up their Muslim countrymen. They fail to see that their action only connotes a lack of the national sense—a narrow mindedness which is destructive of the very hope of an international concord.

In spite of this, if they insist on their course of action, the only way left to us will be to depend upon God and do our best for ourselves. I must then appeal to the Muslims of Hind that the non-Muslims of this land, in spite of the fact that they share common interests with us, are joining hands with the non-Muslims of Hind and want to make the inhabi-

tants of this land slaves—solely for the reason that the majority of the inhabitants are Muslims. Under the circumstances, it is the duty of every Muslim of Hind to help us to make our native land free and independent. I, of course, greatly appreciate the efforts that the Muslims of Hind have put forth in furtherance of the Pakistan Movement, but I think these are not enough. The independence and progress of a people cannot be achieved by passing resolution and indulging in paper propaganda. For our purposes, the best endeavours and heavy sacrifices are needed. The people of this land are prepared to make sacrifices, and the conditions here are favourable; all we need is sincere workers and capital.

Industrial and Economic Revolution in Pakistan

By sincere workers, I mean those men and women who, for the sake of a great ideal and the Millat, would come to this land to work for the political and social advancement of the Millat and be prepared to strive for our object. By capital, I mean this, that from now on well-to-do Muslims of Hind should please direct their activities in the field of trade and commerce to this land, so that it may, in future, become economically independent and self-supporting. You can help us greatly in meeting these two needs. History bears witness that in the past you have sent such gentlemen as Syed Brelvi and Ismail Shaheed for these purposes. Have you no Ahmad or Ismail among you now? I am sure you have; but possibly their activities in Hind do not permit them to direct their attention elsewhere.

If people from Gujrat and Bombay could go out to the Frontier to establish Hindu dominance there, could we, too, not repose some hope in you friends? Our future is interwoven with your future. Whatever high stations in Hind you may occupy, I am sure, they will not be permanent without the stability of our homeland. Your integrity in India will mainly depend upon the stability of our National State.

Programme for National Organization

In order to prepare the nation to reach its desired goal, the following three things are necessary:

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(1) To organize the dispersed and disorderly elements in the nation and create unity of action.

(2) To improve the economic condition of the land and make it self-sufficient.

(3) To build the future political programme on the equality and fraternity that Islam enunciated.

The first requirement will be fulfilled only when the spirit of independence has been infused in the entire people, and every adult is enlisted in the organization of the National Guard.

In fulfilling the second requirement, you Muslims of India can help us a lot. The inhabitants of this land mostly belong to the agricultural profession, and are very backward in trade and industry. Your money and experience could remove this drawback. We are prepared to afford every facility for this with a view to making your way easier. We have already started the campaign of 'Buy from Muslims', so that Muslims may be encouraged to take to trade. Thanks to Almighty God, this movement has produced good results, and now only experience and capital can perfect this scheme. It is hoped that you would be good enough to extend your helping hand to us in this direction.

Organization of Muslim Labourers and Farmers

The opposition, at the present moment, seeing the *Millat* gather at one place, and with a view to creating a rift, has started to divide and weaken the nation on the issue of setting the poor against the rich. Unfortunately, several simple people have succumbed to that tactic and are working as its agents. Under the guise of sympathy for the poor of the nation, they have been dragging it towards civil war and ruination. It is possible that poor and illiterate people might get entangled in the hidden snare of the hunting opposition. Therefore, it is very necessary that, with a view to solving the problem in a satisfactory manner, immediate steps should be taken in this direction. Sincere workers amongst us should endeavour to bring the poor agriculturist and labourer under the flag of the

Muslim League, making every effort to better their economic and political conditions, so that the insidious and mischief-making activity of the opposition may be nipped in the bud.

Friends, from a historical point of view, great significance attaches to this conference. Until now, the Muslim League has been endeavouring to unite the *Millat* on the theory of an independent, sovereign State of the Sindhu Nation. By the grace of God, Muslims are now united on that issue. Now the nation has reached the stage when steps for action have become necessary. This will be the beginning of the new phase in the political history of the *Millat*.

In the end, I welcome you all and thank you for coming here from long distances to this city to join us in the conference. We have tried our best in our humble way to provide for the requirements of our guests. But nothing human is perfect, and I hope your love and regard will cover our shortcomings—because after all, love is what really counts, and in the best resort is decisive.

THE CREED OF MUSLIM LEAGUE*

Although the Council of the All-India Moslem League had decided, as we had announced, on the suggestion of His Highness the Aga Khan and the Rt. Hon. Mr. Ameer Ali, to hold no session of the League this year, it was subsequently resolved to convene a meeting of the Council of the League on the 31st December 1912, and to permit such members of the League as had previously announced their intention of attending the meeting to do so and to take part in its deliberations, though not in the voting. When the meeting was actually held a further concession was made to the popular demand in permitting non-members also to express their opinions on the subjects under discussion as if they were ordinary members of the League. Whatever may have been the motive of those who agreed to hold no session of the League this year, it is certain that they form a very small minority of the community whose destinies they desire to shape. In this respect the Council of the League has proved no better than other committees of the Mussulmans, which are composed of the holders of different opinions in quite a different proportion to that of the holders of similar views in the community at large, and often provoke a quarrel with the community with results very different from those on which they calculate. In fact, it is coming to be noticed that these bodies have got a psychology and an ethics much the same as the psychology and the ethics of the house of Lords in England, without its justification in an ancient tradition, and it will not take many years before they come to realise that in every quarrel which they provoke with the community they are likely to come off only second best.

* From *The Comrade*, 4 January, 1913.

The meeting of the Council held on the last day of the eventful year 1912 was practically in all respects a much curtailed session of the All-India Moslem League, except that the members of the League who were not permitted to vote returned home with a grievance, while the original purpose of displaying the customary suit of solemn black and maintaining a funeral demeanour was altogether frustrated. Alas for the vanity of human wishes, the meeting was as lively as it well could be imagined, and its temper had become unusually Radical on account of the unnatural restraints which the Conservative majority of the Council at the suggestion of two distinguished leaders of the community had decided to impose upon it. The Council certainly missed a well-prepared Presidential Address redolent of the fragrance of the midnight oil. But some important speeches which came straight from the heart and were racy of the soil compensated the audience for the absence of greater elaboration and cleverer political rope-dancing. It is true there were no new resolutions nor the repetition of some hardly annuals which mostly serve the purpose of advertising the lesser known member of the League as proposers and seconders. But in the political creed of the League, which was formulated anew, this memorable session held within it the significance of a hundred resolutions, for it gave expression to a solid fact which no Viceroy or Secretary of State can unsettle.

Those rash generalisers who show in their actions even more than in their words that evolution is an abstruse expression only to be found in books on science but never in real life have not hesitated to accuse Sir Syed Ahmed Khan of having been opposed for all time to Muslim participation in the politics of the country, to the National Congress and to the Hindu community. Those who knew the man in real life are the only true judges of his feelings towards his Hindu brethren, and we only wish that some of our Hindu and Moslem Nationalists could count as many true friends in what is often regarded as the rival community as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan possessed. In his writing and speeches there is ample enough proof of his genuine desire to treat Hindus justly and co-ope-

rate with them for the creation of an Indian Nation. But his opinion on the Congress needs no intimate knowledge of the man himself, for it is manifest enough from his speeches and writings; and if due allowance is made for many speeches having been made impromptu, and for the occasions on which they were made as well as the ardent temperament of the speaker himself, it would be apparent to all who read them that their author desired at best a temporary separation of the Mussulmans from the Congress rather than their permanent abstention from political discussions or refusal to co-operate with other communities. We deem it a high honour to consider ourselves to be among the disciples of the Sage of Aligarh in political as well as religious and educational ideals, but we felt it no inconsistency in welcoming and even taking our humble part in bringing about the advent of the All-India Moslem League six years ago. And to-day, when that body has formulated self-government suitable for India as its political creed, we have no hesitation in saying that we have assisted in the matter in a way that would have met with the approval of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his cordial and active encouragement had Providence spared him to guide today the policy of his community and his country.

When the officiating Honorary Secretary sent round the agenda of the Council meeting, the chief item of which was the consideration of a new draft of the League's rules and regulations, little did the members imagine that they were asked to consider one of the most vital questions concerning their community. But so it was. Hitherto the League had confined itself to the maintenance and promotion of feelings of loyalty in the Moslem community; to the advancement and protection of the interests of the Mussulmans; and, without detriment to these two objects, the cultivation of harmony and good relations between the Mussulmans and other communities. When these objects of the Moslem League were formulated the community was going through a time of considerable uneasiness caused by the political affairs of the country. The Partition of Bengal had been carried out only a year ago, and had created among the Hindus of Bengal an unrest which had no parallel

in the political life of India. The Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal felt, and rightly felt, that the Partition would do them immense good, and that the Hindu opposition to the Partition was to a large extent based on this very reason. They had, therefore, thrown in their lot with the Administration of the new province, and the Mussulmans of other parts of India felt bound to lend their moral support to their brethren in Eastern Bengal when the Congress took up the cause of the Hindus of Bengal as if it were a national cause and deserved the support of the whole of India. Moreover, soon after his arrival in India, Lord Minto took up the question of a reform of the Legislative Councils, and the Mussulmans knew that the system of representation in legislation, and to some extent in the general administration, would probably be extended. Hitherto they had left their communal interest in the hands of the bureaucracy. But with the weakening of the bureaucracy it became necessary for them to rely on their own efforts, and having had no chance of representing the views of their community in the legislatures of India under the system of election then prevailing, they found it necessary to appeal to Lord Minto's Government, through the famous Simla Deputation, for the modification of the system under which they could never hope to have their interests properly represented until and unless an Indian Nation, which then appeared almost as far as ever, came into being. The recovery of the Mussulmans from their political coma was hastened by the clearly indicated liberal intentions of the Government itself. But the first political acts of the Mussulmans after a long period of suspended animation were bound to be intensely communal, because when the Moslem League came into being one fact was patent, that strong and self asserting communities were claiming rights and privileges in the name of the Nation when they really meant to benefit only a community or even a caste. It was also apparent that at least a certain section of Hindus in Bengal, the Punjab and the Daccan entertained towards Government feelings that can hardly be described as loyal. It was, therefore, necessary for the Mussulmans to express their own feelings of loyalty somewhat ostentatiously, not only with

a view to impress Government with their firm intention of offering it their support, but also in the interests of the younger members of the community some of whom were liable to lose their balance through the intoxication born of the heady wine of politics of which they were taking the first copious draught after a long period of political tectotalism. This accounts for the fact that when the creed of the Moslem League was formulated for the first time six years ago, both loyalty to Government and the protection of the communal interests of the Mussalmans found a prominent place in the Moslem programme. No doubt the promotion of harmony and concord with other communities was mentioned as another object of the League. But it was necessary to add the saving clause that these feelings were to be promoted without prejudice to Moslem loyalty and the advancement of Moslem interests. Such was the creed of the League when it was founded and those among the Mussulmans who may now sneer at what was done six years ago would do well to remember that this creed was formulated by some of them and some of the most prominent men who share their views to-day.

In the matter of the electoral reform of the Legislative Council the Mussulmans succeeded well enough, although they have yet to achieve success in the matter of the electoral reform of local bodies which is extremely essential. But on the 12th December 1911, the Partition was annulled when least expected, and it was annulled without any compensation being offered to the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal. That momentous announcement is destined to have far-reaching results on the political growth of India some of which are no doubt well worth learning for the Mussulmans even at the cost of a majority in a province, although there are some lessons big with mischief which we trust Government will not now be late in persuading the people of this country to unlearn. But the despatch of the Government of India which moved the Home Government to authorities and the changes it proposed would long be memorable for the bold plunge that the Government of India made into the political future of the country. Howsoever hard [and subtly Lord Crewe may now try to explain away

paragraph 3 of that despatch, it is certain that self-government loomed large before the vision of the Government of India, and be it said to their credit that they welcomed it like statesmen and indicated their desire to hasten its approach. In view of the momentous change foreshadowed in that despatch, it has once more become necessary for the Mussulmans to examine their political chart and while avoiding the submerged rocks in the perilous seas around them, they must turn the head of their ship towards the new haven. Eight hundred years of practical administration of a country is bound to create in any community a distaste for mere theorising and a practical instinct which is generally found to be much safer than the faculty of subtle reasoning. It was this instinct of the Mussulmans that led them to work for their educational swaraj before they formulated their claims even to a moderate participation in the administration of the country. But if the period of thirty years which intervened between the foundation of the Calcutta University and the establishment of the National Congress was just long enough for the new generation of Hindus to develop into manhood and strive for rights and privileges of at least political adolescence, the Mahommedans can neither be blamed for tardiness nor for undue haste if they too come forward to take their proper share in politics after the same interval after having established the nucleus of their future university; for exactly 30 years intervened between the foundation of Aligarh and the establishment of the Moslem League. To day, when the Moslem League has placed self government on its programme, it is true it has done so much earlier in the process of the political evolution of the community than the Hindus did. But it must be acknowledged that the Congress has done a good deal of pioneer work for it, and even travelling at the same pace as the Hindu community the Mussulmans were bound to come to the half way house from which their ultimate destination is clearly visible after a lesser interval than those who had to hew down the wood and clear the way.

But even now when the Mussulmans have accepted self-government to be their ultimate destination they have not

done so through a love of meretricious theories. Their practical instinct has once more come to their assistance, and that at a time when it was most necessary. We recognise that it would not do for any community in India to sulk in its tents because the world is moving at a faster pace than it can cope with. It must either induce others to slacken their pace or make efforts to come into line with them. In the creed which has just been formulated by the League we see a welcome indication that Mussulmans are not going to act the part of King Canute and imperiously command the rushing tide to recede.

But they are not negligent of the proper safeguards against the flow of the tide which not only brings rich argosies to the shore, but sometimes deals destruction also. In the first place, we are glad to note that they have no desire to play the sedulous ape in asking for a particular form of self-government because somebody else enjoys it in the British Empire or some one in India has made it the ultimate ideal. The world has considerably changed even for the British Empire since the Allahabad Convention of the Congress when the Colonial form of self government became the creed of the Moderates. Ireland is likely to have self government much sooner than it was considered possible at the time, and other parts of the United Kingdom are not likely to remain always without their own Parliaments. Again, it may be that just as the form of self government suitable for the Colonies has not proved suitable for Ireland, the forms of self-government now familiar to the British Empire may not suit India. Who can say that the same conditions as prevail in other parts of the Empire exist even to-day in this country? To take only one instance, are we to forget the Native States for ever and may not the German Confederacy provide some political lessons for us when we turn our attention from British India, which is an artificial creation to India as a whole which her geographical outlines and historical associations have made a compact integer? It is, therefore, a matter for extreme satisfaction that the words 'suitable for India' qualify the system of self-government which is to be the ideal of the Moslem League.

In the next place, the framer of this important object of the League has gone beyond the commonplace phrase 'through constitutional means' in giving an outline of the methods by which self government is to be attained. It must be remembered that it had become necessary to qualify the methods of attaining self-government in this manner by the Moderates of the Congress because there was such a party as the Extremists who desired no such restrictions to fetter their political liberty. The Mahommedans have no such need to define the character of the methods which they desire to pursue in order to attain their object, for there are no divisions among them like the Moderates and the Extremists, and if true moderation comes to exist among their 'leader' we have every confidence that they would avoid one more pitfall into which the political pioneers of India unfortunately fell. What is, however, necessary not only for the Mussulmans but for all the communities that have new bottles into which the old wine is being poured, is an indication that the goal is yet very distant if not dim, and that the way is long and wearisome. Idealism by all means, but not without patience, is the advice that the young need in every emotional community, and the Mussulmans owe it to the Hon. the Law Member, who in his freer days delivered the most remarkable Presidential Address of the League, that the Honorary Secretary in framing the creed of the League wisely included 'a steady reform of the existing system of administration' as an indication of the slow process of attaining the *summum bonum*. Indian administration is far from perfect to-day, but the progress made during the last seven years has been so rapid, that even if the pace is not accelerated it will not take long for the country to reach its destined goal.

But it is not so much on the reform of the administration by the administrators and those to whom they are responsible, nor even on the relationship that comes to exist between the rulers and the ruled that the attainment of self-government depends. Self-government is the necessary corollary of self-realisation, and India as a whole has not yet realised herself. Once her conflicting interests, warring creeds and rival com-

munities not only conceive that India can be one in her soul as she is in her body, but feel her unity as an individual feels the unity of his individual self in spite of the diversity of the various members and organs of his body, and the varying moods of his intellect and soul, there is no power in the world that can deny her self-government. But we would warn our countrymen against playing the sedulous ape in their methods of nation-making as we have warned them in the matter of choosing their political goal. Every country has within itself both centripetal and centrifugal political forces, but the powers of each of these differ according to the circumstances of each. In India political unity can be achieved not so much by annihilating smaller units that may appear to conflict with the ultimate scheme of units, but by recognising their force and inevitableness. If we could choose a motto for a society of nation-makers in India we could suggest nothing better than that the United States of America have adopted. India is to be *pluribus unum*. Its unity would come out of its differences, but it must be remembered that unlike America the lines of cleavage in India are not territorial but communal, and those who have seen the extra territorial patriotism of the Mussulman during the present crisis will do well to remember that without ceasing to be Mussulmans they cannot merge their communal identity in their territorial patriotism of province or country. All that we hope is that in adopting self-government as their goal with an astonishing unanimity, the Mussulmans of India have not acted like the astronomer who fell into a well because his gaze was too intently fixed on other planets than his own. Disillusion will soon overtake them if they have forgotten their own political situation in this country in remembering too well the sad plight of their co-religionists in Tripoli and Morocco, in Persia and Turkey.

We have not spared the officiating Secretary of the Moslem League when to our mind he has been weak; but to-day we can find it in our heart to forgive him all and to thank him not only on behalf of the Moslem community but of the whole country and of the Nation in being for providing them with a political creed which is destined to affect the beliefs and

convictions of the men of to-day and of generations yet to come.

We also offer him here, as Mr. Mohamed Ali did in the course of discussion at Lucknow, our cordial support in maintaining that loyalty should be placed in the forefront of the objects of every political organisation in the country, and we have no more faith in the diagnosis of those who think that the differences between the Hindus and the Mahommedans are the outcome of what they call the Moslem parade of loyalty and the Gate keeper's claims than we find any justification in their taunts that the Mussulmans have been shouting their loyalty from the housetops. A few calculating men have no doubt harped on loyalty too often just as they have made much personal capital out of the protection of communal interests. But that is no more reason for giving up the profession of loyalty than for discarding the declaration that the League shall advance and protect communal interests. The loyalty of the Mussulmans is a well established fact and we shall not pause to make invidious comparisons, for we have no desire that other communities should lag behind them in this respect. We trust that in course of time the loyalty of the whole of India would become so real and well-grounded that a declaration of loyalty in the political creed of any association will merely pass for a polite convention not unlike the oath of allegiance which the Members of Parliament in England and our own Councillors in India are required to take. So long as the political relationship of India to England is unique among the nations it is necessary to keep the loyalty of India to the British Crown in the forefront of India's political creed, but even when this unique character ceases to exist we trust the dignity of the Indian Nation would not be so delicate as to be unable to bear the weight of the convention of loyalty. And dignity should not be proclaimed from the housetops any more than loyalty. To-day it is necessary to work for the creation of a nation by promoting unity between the various communities of the country and fostering a public spirit which would refuse to tolerate the self aggrandisement even of the community that is most numerous and most

powerful, and it is our firm belief that whatever may be the policy of this or that ruler of India, it is the connection of India with Great Britain which has made it possible for an Indian Nation to come into being. A nation would be the greatest blessing that England would confer on India, and those who work for it and hasten its advent, whether Indian or English, are deserving of our eternal gratitude.

THE AMENDED DRAFT CONSTITUTION
AND RULES OF THE ALL-INDIA
MOSLEM LEAGUE

(1913)

Section 1. This Association shall be called the 'All India Moslem League'.

Objects of the League

Section 2. The objects of the League shall be :

- (a) to maintain and promote among the people of this country feelings of loyalty towards the British Crown;
- (b) to protect and advance the political and other rights and interests of the Indian Mussulmans;
- (c) to promote friendship and union between the Mussulmans and other communities of India;
- (d) without detriment to the foregoing objects, attainment, under the aegis of the British Crown, of a system of self-government suitable to India, through constitutional means by bringing about, amongst others, a steady reform of the existing system of administration, by promoting national unity, by inserting public spirit among the people of India and by co-operating with other communities for the said purposes.

**THE CONSTITUTION AND RULES OF
THE ALL-INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE**

(As Amended up to 1923)

Name

1. This Association shall be called the 'All India Muslim League'.

Objects of the League

2. The objects of the All-India Muslim League shall be :

- (a) the attainment of the Swaraj by the people of India by all peaceful and legitimate means;
- (b) to protect and advance the political, religious and other rights and interests of the Indian Mussulmans;
- (c) to promote friendship and union between the Mussulmans and other communities of India;
- (d) to maintain and strengthen brotherly relations between the Mussulmans of India and those of other countries.

Membership of the League

3. Every candidate for membership of the All-India Muslim League must be :

- (a) A Mussulman and a resident of British India or of any of the feudatory States of India or of any other part of the British Empire provided that in the last case he has not been out of India continuously for five years.
- (b) not less than twenty-one years of age.
- (c) but not a student who is not a graduate.

Provided that a candidate may be exempted from all or any of the above conditions by the Council of the All-India

Muslim League.

4. Every candidate shall apply and shall be proposed by one and seconded by another member of the League in writing for election, and shall declare in his application that he will adhere to the objects and Rules of the League mentioned herein.

5. Such proposal shall be laid before the Council and the decision of the Council shall be final thereon, provided that the applicant shows sufficient cause as to why he is not a member of a Provincial Muslim League.

6. Every member shall pay an admission fee of Rs. 5 and an annual subscription of Rs. 6.

7. If the subscription of a member be in arrears for over a year, the Honorary Secretary shall give him notice to pay and, if he fails to pay within a month after such notice, he shall be liable to have his name removed from the list of members by a resolution to that effect passed by the Council of the League.

8. The organisation of the All-India Muslim League shall consist of :

- (a) The general body of the members of the League elected under the foregoing sections.
- (b) The Council of the All-India Muslim League as constituted under Section 12.
- (c) The Provincial Muslim League as constituted and affiliated to the All-India Muslim League under Section 27.
- (d) District Muslim League as constituted under Section 28.
- (e) The London All-India Muslim League.
- (f) Any Muslim Association affiliated to the All-India Muslim League under Section 29.

Office-Bearers of the All-India Muslim League

9. There shall be office-bearers of the All-India Muslim League as stated below :

President	1
Vice-Presidents from various Proviuices	20 to 50
Honorary Secretary	1
Honorary Joint-Secretaries	2

10 The office-bearers of the League shall be elected at a meeting of the League and shall hold their offices for a term of three years but shall be eligible for re-election, provided that no person shall hold an office of the League for more than two terms consecutively.

11. No person shall be an office-bearer of the League unless he is a member of the All-India Muslim League.

The Council of the All-India Muslim League

12. There shall be a Council of the All-India Muslim League constituted under the following rules:

- (a) The Council shall consist of not more than 300 members chosen from the general body of the members of the League who shall hold office for a term of three years, and shall be eligible for re election.
- (b) The total number of the members of the Council fixed under the preceding rule shall be allotted to the different Provinces as follows :

(i) Province of Delhi	4
(ii) United Provinces of Agra and Oudh	50
(iii) The Punjab	50
(iv) Bombay, including Sindh	28
(v) Madras	18
(vi) North-Western Frontier Province	10
(vii) British Baluchistan	4

(viii) Bengal	60
(ix) Bihar and Orissa	30
(x) Assam	12
(xi) Central India and Ajmer	4
(xii) Central Provinces and Berar	5+3
(xiii) Burma	14
(xiv) Mussulman British subjects residing in Native States or elsewhere outside British India	8

- (c) The members of the Council, allotted to each Province in Rule (2) shall be elected by the Provincial League of that Province, on or before the first March every three years.
- (d) The first Council of the All-India Muslim League to be constituted in accordance with these Rules, shall be formed within three months of their passing in the manner laid down in Rule (3).

The existing Council of the All-India Muslim League will continue to work as such, till the Council is duly formed under these rules.

- (e) In case the Provincial League or Leagues fail to elect within the time limited, the Council of the All-India Muslim League shall have power to elect members subject to rule (2) hereinbefore mentioned.

13. Every member of the Council shall pay an annual subscription of Rs. 12 in two six monthly equal instalments.

If the subscription of a member be in arrears for over a year, the Honorary Secretary shall give him notice to pay, and if he fails to pay within a month after such notice he shall be liable to have his name removed from the list of members by a resolution to that effect passed by the Council of the League.

14. The office-bearers of the All-India Muslim League shall be ex-officio members of the Council of the League.

Meeting of the League

15. An annual meeting of the All-India Muslim League shall, and any other meeting of the League may be held at such suitable time and place as the Council of the League may determine.

16. The Council may convene any other meeting of the League at such suitable time and place as it may determine provided that not less than 30 members of the League or that not less than 15 members of the Council of the League shall call on the Honorary Secretary of the League to hold such a meeting.

17. The quorum at the annual meetings of the League shall be of 75 members, and at other meetings of 30.

Meeting of the Council

18. Meetings of the Council shall ordinarily be held once a month.

19. The Honorary Secretary of the League may call other meetings of the council in case he considers the callings of such a meeting necessary.

20. Ten members shall form the quorum at all meetings of the Council and all matters dealt with at such meetings shall be decided by votes; provided that no resolution, passed or rejected at a meeting of the Council, shall be considered to have been duly passed or rejected, as the case may be, unless 10 per cent, of the absent members of the Council have expressed their opinions in writing as regards the said resolution, provided further that the above proviso and the requirement of a quorum shall not apply to adjourned meetings.

21. Written opinion of the members of the Council will Count as votes at all the meeting of the council.

Powers and Duties of the Council

22. The Council shall have the undermentioned powers and discharge the following duties :

- (a) To elect members for the All-India Muslim League under Section 5.
- (b) To elect members of the Council under Section 12, Rule (5).
- (c) To convene meetings of the All-India Muslim League as provided by Sections 15 and 16.
- (d) To elect a President for the annual Meeting of the League after consulting the League of the Province in which the meeting is to be held.
- (e) To collect all information necessary and useful with reference to the objects of the League.
- (f) To consider and pass resolutions with regard to all matters arising from time to time relating to the objects of the League.
- (g) To take all necessary steps for giving effect to the resolution passed at a meeting of the All-India Muslim League or of the Council of the All-India Muslim League.
- (h) To control and regulate the expenditure of the Funds of the League.
- (i) To appoint Sub-Committees for carrying out its duties and exercising its powers.
- (j) To affiliate and disaffiliate Muslim League and Associations under these rules.
- (k) To frame bye-laws for : (i) Regulating the conduct of the meetings of the All-India Muslim League and of the Council of the League; (ii) regulating the conduct of the Sub-Committees appointed under clause (i); (iii) regulating all matters between the All-India Muslim League and the other Leagues and Associations affiliated to the All-India Muslim League under these rules; (iv) Such other and further matters for

which the Council considers the framing of bye-laws necessary.

Provided that no bye-law framed shall be valid if it is inconsistent with the principles embodied herein.

23. The Council may delegate any one or more of its powers to the Honorary Secretary of the All-India Muslim League with such limitations and conditions as it may deem fit to impose.

Funds of the League

24. A Fund shall be raised and established called 'The Muslim National Fund' of the amount of five lacs of rupees to be invested in authorised securities under the Indian Trust Act, the interest and not the corpus of which shall be utilized by the Council for the objects of the League.

25. All fees received from delegates, members, Councilors, and office-bearers of the All-India Muslim League and from visitors at the Annual and other Meetings of the League and all donations, subscriptions or other contributions which the League or the Council may from time to time receive and collect, as well as the Fund mentioned in Section 24, shall constitute the Funds of the League.

26. The Funds of the League other than the Fund mentioned in Section 24 shall be deposited in the name of the All-India Muslim League, with the Bank of Bengal; but in any place at which the Bank of Bengal may not have a branch, such Funds may be deposited with any other bank at the discretion of the Council.

General Provisions

27. A provincial Muslim League shall be formed and constituted in every Province of British India and it may be affiliated to the All-India Muslim League on a resolution being passed at a general meeting of the said Provincial Muslim League.

28. In every district within British India, shall be formed and constituted a District Muslim League, which shall be deemed to be affiliated to the All-India Muslim League, provided it is affiliated to the League of the Province in which the said District League is formed.

29. The Council of the All-India Muslim League may affiliate any Muslim Association situated either in or out of India, with such limitations and conditions as the Council may deem fit to impose.

30. All Provincial Muslim Leagues, District Muslim Leagues and the London Branch of the All-India Muslim League, which have already been affiliated to the All-India Muslim League, shall be deemed to have been so affiliated within the meaning of these rules.

31. The Council of the All-India Muslim League may disaffiliate any Muslim League or Association, affiliated to it under any one of the foregoing sections.

32. All matters dealt with at a meeting of the All-India Muslim League shall be decided by votes; provided that if a division is asked for, the voting will be recorded in accordance with the number allotted to the Provinces in the constitution of the Council provided by Section 12, Rule (2).

33. All casual vacancies arising in the ranks of the office-bearers or Members of the Council shall be filled up by the Council by election.

34. The Rules of the All-India Muslim League shall not be added to, amended or cancelled, except at the annual meetings, and by a majority of the votes of not less than two-thirds of the members present at the meeting.

Powers and Duties of the Honorary Secretary

35. The Honorary Secretary shall exercise all the powers delegated to the him by the Council of the All-India Muslim League under Section 23.

36. The Honorary Secretary shall exercise all powers and discharge all duties laid down by and incidental to the enforcing of these rules and generally to his office.

37. The Honorary Secretary shall have the power to appoint, punish, dismiss or grant leave of absence with or without pay to the paid servants of the League but in case of dismissal, it shall be subject to appeal to the Council, provided that all appointments carrying a salary of over Rs. 50 a month shall be subject to the sanction of the Council.

38. The Honorary Secretary in case of emergency and relating to matters not affecting the fundamental principles of the constitution and rules of the All-India Muslim League, may call a meeting of the members of the Council present at the headquarters, and they will be competent to take such action on behalf of the Council, as they may deem expedient. The resolution passed at such a meeting shall subsequently be laid before an ordinary meeting of the Council for confirmation.

39. The Honorary Joint Secretaries shall assist the Honorary Secretary in his work and perform their duties under his guidance.

40. The delegates of all affiliated bodies shall be entitled to attend, take part and vote at annual meetings of the League as if they were members, on payment of a fee of Rs. 10 each.

At each Annual Meeting a Subjects Committee to revise and adopt the resolutions to be put forward for their consideration, shall be formed so as to include all the members of the Council, and the representatives elected by the members of League who are not members of the Council and the delegates for each Province jointly provided that the number of such elected representatives for any Province shall not exceed one-half of the maximum number fixed for the Council from that Province.

**THE REUNION OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE AND
ITS NEW CONSTITUTION**

(1934)

The split in the ranks of the All-India Muslim League ended on the 4th March 1934, when at a combined meeting of both sections held at New Delhi under the presidency of Hafiz Hidayat Hussain a resolution was passed that cleavage be made up and Mr. Jinnah elected president of the united body. The following is the text of the resolution to this effect—

'As it is the wish of the community that the cleavage between the two sections of the All-India Muslim League be made up and as in pursuance of that wish the office-bearers of the two sections have resigned from their respective places and that Mian Abdul Aziz has expressly stated that he would also resign in favour of Mr. Jinnah and as Mr. Jinnah has expressed his willingness to accept the presidentship, it is hereby resolved that the two sections amalgamate and that the Councils of the two Leagues do combine and form a united body and that the constitution of the League adopted in 1922 shall remain in force'.

NAME

1. The organisation of the Indian Mussalamans shall be called the All-India Muslim Conference.

OBJECTS

2. The objects of the Conference are—

- (a) To safeguard and promote the rights and interests of the Indian Mussalamans at all stages of constitutional advance towards full responsible governments in India.
- (b) To organise the Indian Mussalamans and to co-ordinate the existing Muslim Organisations having an all-India character for the purpose of giving expression

to Muslim opinion on questions affecting the Mussal-
mans of India, without interfering with the special
features which distinguish such organisations.

3. On payments of the annual subscription in advance,
the following persons shall be members of this organisa-
tion—

(a) Original Members—

- (i) The elected Muslim Members of the Central and provincial Legislatures, who sign the National Muslim Creed as appended herewith.
- (ii) Twenty Members each of the Central Khilafat Committee, Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and the All-India Muslim League (Lahore section), elected respectively by those organisations, who sign the National Muslim Creed, and

(b) Additional Members—

- (i) Not more than twenty members each of such other Muslim organisations of all-India character, willing to accept the Muslim National Creed as aforesaid, to which this right may be extended by the Working Committee of the Conference.
- (ii) Any other prominent Indian Mussalman who subscribes to the National Muslim Creed as aforesaid may be elected as Member of this organisation by the Working Committee.

4. Every Member of the organisation shall pay in advance a subscription of Rs. 3 (three) per annum and shall, on payment of such subscription, be entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership.

5. The Organisation of the Conference shall consist of—

- (a) The general body of the Conference organised in the manner laid down in the preceding rules.

- (b) An All-India Executive Board, constituted at the annual general meeting of the Conference; and
- (c) A working Committee elected by the All-India Executive Board.

ALL-INDIA EXECUTIVE BOARD

6. The All-India Executive Board shall be constituted annually by the Conference at its annual general meeting and shall hold office for the period of one year or until the election of the succeeding Executive Board.

7. The All-India Executive Board shall consist of—

- (a) One half of the Muslim Members of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly who are members of the Organisation under rule 3(a) (i) to be elected by them separately.
- (b) One third of the Muslim Members of each Provincial Legislature, to be elected by Members of these Councils, who are members of the Organisation under Rule 3(a) (i).
- (c) Ten members of each of the All-India Organisations mentioned in Rule 3(a) (ii) to be elected by the Organisation themselves.
- (d) Thirty other Muslims who are members of the Organisation under Rule 3(b), to be elected by the annual general meeting.

8. The quorum of a meeting of the Executive Board shall be 21.

THE WORKING COMMITTEE

9. The Working Committee of the Conference shall be elected annually by the All-India Executive Board and shall hold office for one year or until its next election. It shall be the duty of the Executive Board to elect the Working Committee as soon as the former is constituted as provided in Rule 7.

10. The Working Committee shall consist of 21 members to be so elected as to include representatives from all provinces of India.

The quorum of a meeting of the Working Committee shall be five.

11. The Working Committee shall take steps to organise Provincial Conference with their Executive Boards and Working Committees as well as District Branches of the latter on the same lines as the main organisation itself.

12. All questions arising for decision before the Executive Board and the Working Committee shall be decided by a majority of votes.

THE CONFERENCE SESSION

13 The Conference shall meet once a year at such place and on such dates as the Working Committee may appoint on that behalf for the purpose of transacting such business as may be recommended to it by the Executive Board.

14. An extraordinary session of the Conference may be called by the Working Committee at any time and place whenever occasion may arise for the convening of such session.

15. The resolution at the annual or extraordinary session held under rules 13 and 14 shall be declared to have been carried if three-fifths of the members present in the session vote in support thereof.

OFFICE BEARERS OF THE ORGANISATION

16 The office bearers of the Organisation shall be as follows—

- (a) One President and 25 Vice-Presidents who shall hold office for three years to be elected at the annual general meeting.
- (b) Three General Secretaries, one Financial Secretary, two joint Secretaries and one Assistant Secretary, to

hold office for one year to be elected at the annual general meeting.

- (c) President of the annual session of the Conference to be elected by the Executive Board who shall therefore be the Chairman of the Executive Board for the ensuing year.

17. All gentlemen elected as Vice-Presidents of the organisation shall pay a subscription of Rs. 100/- per annum

GENERAL

18. The Executive Board shall have power to frame Rules and Regulations to carry out the provisions of this Constitution and for the conduct of its own business.

19. The Working Committee shall have power to frame bye laws for the conduct of the business allotted to it by the constitution and the Executive Board.

20. The Provisions embodied in the Constitution shall not be modified except at a General Meeting of the Conference and with the consent of three-fourth of the members present at the meeting.

21. All monies and funds belonging to the Conference shall vest in the Executive Board and shall be kept in a Bank or Banks approved by it.

22. No monies in deposit with the Bank shall be withdrawn except by means of Cheques signed by the Financial Secretary and one of the Three Secretaries.

The election of the following office bearers and members of the Working Committee was made in the meeting of the Executive Board held on the 5th of May 1929 at Lahore under the Chairmanship of Sir Muhammad Shafi.

1. Nawab Muhammad Ismail)
Khan,) Elected on 5th May 1929.
Mustafa Castle, Meerut.)

2. Maulvi Muhammad Shafi)
Daoodi Ittehad office,) Elected on 31st March
Patna.) 1929.
3. Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahma-)
tullah, Ismail Building,)
Hornby Road, Bomay.)

Working Committee Elected on 5th May 1929

1. Sir Muhammad Shafi, Lahore.
2. Sir, Muhammad Iqbal, Lahore.
3. Sheikh Sir Abdul Qadir, Lahore.
4. Hon'ble Malik Feroze Khan Noon, Lahore.
5. Maulana Muhammad Ali, Kucha Chelan, Delhi.
6. Mufti Kafaetullah, Madrasa Aminia, Kashmiri Gate, Delhi.
7. Hakim Jamil Khan, Ballimaran, Delhi.
8. Hon'ble Nawab Muhammad Yusuf, Lucknow.
9. Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Kanpur.
10. Maulvi Muhammad Yakub, Moradabad.
11. Mulana Shaukat Ali, Khilafat House, Bombay.
12. Sir Ibrahim Rahmattullah, Pedder Road, Bombay.
13. Seth Haji Abdul Haroon, Napier Road, Karachi.
14. Mr. Syed Abdul Aziz, Barrister, Dilkusha, Patna.
15. Maulana Syed Murtaza Sahib Bahadur, Trichinopoly.
16. Nawab Sahibzada Sir Abdul Qaiyum, Peshawar.

*Resolution No. 1***THE NATIONAL MUSLIM CREED**

Whereas, in view of India's vast extent and its ethnological, linguistic, administrative and geographical or territorial division, the only form of government suitable to Indian conditions is a federal system with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent states, the Central Govern

ment having control only of such matters of common interest as may be specifically entrusted to it by the Constitution;

And whereas it is essential that no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding inter communal matters be moved, discussed or passed by any legislature, Central or provincial, if a three fourth majority of the members of either the Hindu or the Muslim community affected thereby in the legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment.

And whereas the right of Muslims to elect their representatives on the various Indian Legislatures through separate electorates is now the law of the land and Muslims cannot be deprived of that right without their consent;

And whereas in the conditions existing at present in India and so long as those conditions continue to exist, representation in various Legislatures and other statutory self governing bodies of Muslims through their own separate electorates is essential in order to bring into existence a really representative democratic government;

And whereas so long as Musalmans are not satisfied that their rights and interests or (sic) are adequately safeguarded in the constitution, they will in no way consent to the establishment of joint electorates, whether with or without conditions.

And whereas, for the purposes aforesaid, it is essential that Musalmans should have their due share in the central and provincial cabinets;

And whereas it is essential that representation of Musalmans in the various legislatures and other statutory self-governing bodies should be based on a plan whereby the Muslim majority in those provinces where Musalmans constitute a majority of population shall in no way be affected and in the provinces in which Musalmans constitute a majority they shall have a representation in no case less than that

enjoyed by them under the existing law;

And whereas representative Muslim gatherings in all provinces in India have unanimously resolved that with a view to provide adequate safeguard for the protection of Muslim interests in India as a whole, Musalmans should have the right of 33 per cent representation in the Central Legislature and this Conference entirely endorses that demand;

And whereas on ethnological, linguistic, geographical and administrative grounds the province of Sind has no affinity whatever with the rest of the Bombay Presidency and its unconditional constitution into a separate province possessing its own separate legislative and administrative machinery on the same lines as in other provinces of India, is essential in the interests of its people, the Hindu minority in Sind being given adequate and effective representation in excess of their proportion in the population, as may be given to Musalmans in the provinces in which they constitute a minority of the population.

And whereas the introduction of constitutional reforms in the N-W.F. Province and Baluchistan along such lines as may be adopted in other provinces of India is essential not only in the interest of those provinces but also of the constitutional advance of India as a whole the Hindu minorities in those provinces being given adequate and effective representation in excess of their proportion in the population, as is given to the Muslim community in provinces in which it constitutes a minority of the population;

And whereas it is essential in the interests of Indian administration that provision should be made in the constitution giving Muslims their adequate share along with other Indians in all services of the State and on all statutory self-governing bodies, having due regard to the requirements of efficiency;

And whereas, having regard to the political conditions obtaining in India, it is essential that the Indian constitution

should embody adequate safeguards for protection and promotion of Muslim education, languages, religion, personal law and Muslim charitable institutions, and for their due share in grants-in-aid.

And whereas it is essential that the constitution should provide that no change in the Indian constitution shall, after its inauguration, be made by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of all the states constituting the Indian federation;

This Conference emphatically declares that no constitution, by whomsoever proposed or devised, will be acceptable to Indian Musalmans unless it conforms with the principles embodied in this resolution.

Resolution No. 2

This All-India Muslim Conference earnestly request the Indian Muslims that the time has arrived when Muslims of different schools of thought should unite together and for the welfare of the generality of Muslims should undertake :

1. To arrange, for the primary education of Muslims, for proper teachers and proper curriculum so that Muslim boys and girls may be decorated with the ornament of knowledge and adult Muslims may gain both secular and religious instruction in night schools;

2. To revive Islamic spirit among Muslims by making mosques the centres of Muslim activities and to adopt means whereby Muslims may be saved from following bad customs and bad morals;

3. To induce Muslims towards art, industry and trade and make every Muslim employed; and

4. To start in every province at least one newspaper which may propagate the above scheme of Muslim organisation.

**RULES, POLICY AND PROGRAMME OF THE MUSLIM
LEAGUE CENTRAL PARLIAMENTARY BOARD***Rules*

1. The Board shall elect its own President, Secretary and Treasurer.
2. The Board may appoint a Working Committee and may delegate to the Working Committee such powers and functions as are deemed necessary.
3. The Board shall have power to raise funds and administer and disburse the same for propaganda, publicity and other incidental expenses and keep a proper account.
4. The Board may appoint Sub-Committee to further objects for which Board has been constituted.
5. The President shall preside over all the meetings of the Board and the Working Committee.
6. In the absence of the President the Members present shall elect one of themselves to the Chair.
7. All questions shall be decided by a majority of votes, the President having a second casting vote.
8. At least 15 days' notice shall be given for holding the ordinary meeting of the Board which shall be convened by the Secretary with the previous consent of the President. In case of emergency the President may call the meeting at shorter notice.
9. Every candidate offering to contest the election on behalf of any Provincial Board shall signify his readiness to abide by the decision of the Provincial Board and also shall sign a pledge accepting the programme adopted by the Central and the Provincial Board, and provided further that such candidate shall stand by the Muslim League pledge and no other party pledge.
10. The Provincial Boards shall be autonomous within their respective Provinces and shall select candidates and run election subject to the acceptance of the general policy of the

Central Board and affiliation of the same.

11. The meetings of the Board shall be held at such place and such time as the President may direct.

12. Nine Members shall form a quorum in the Board meeting. If a meeting is adjourned for want of quorum, no quorum will be necessary for the adjourned meeting.

13 Members of the Central Board from respective Provinces shall form Election Boards in their own Provinces subject to recognition and affiliation by the Central Board and if they fail to do so within a reasonable time the Central Board or the Working Committee if so authorised shall constitute or affiliate any Provincial Board.

14. The Provincial Board shall supply the list of candidates adopted by them at least two months before the polling days.

15. The Provincial Boards in each Province will be at liberty to decide by a majority of two-thirds to co-operate with any political group or groups provided their aims and objects and ideals are approximately the same as those of the Muslim League Central and Provincial Boards.

16. The Central Board shall frame at its first meeting Manifesto defining general policy and programme.

17. The Central Board will have powers to suspend or disaffiliate the Provincial Board at any time.

18. No alteration, modification, or addition shall be made in the rules mentioned herein before except by a majority of two-thirds of members present.

Policy and Programme

The advent and the announcement of Minto-Morley Reforms brought home to the leaders of the Mussalmans the necessity of starting a Muslim political organization and thus was founded the All-India Muslim League at Dacca in December 1906.

The League adopted its creed and ideal definitely in

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December 1912 and altered its constitution having for its aims and objects—

- (1) Full responsible government for India with adequate and effective safeguards for Mussalmans.
- (2) To protect and advance the political and religious and other rights and interests of the Indian Mussalmans.
- (3) To promote friendship and union between the Mussalmans and other communities of India.
- (4) To maintain and strengthen brotherly relations between the Mussalmans of India and those of other countries.

The League has been faithfully and loyally acting in accordance with these fundamental principles ever since. During the period of the existence of the Minto-Morley constitution, it continued from time to time and represented and watched the true feelings and opinions of the Mussalmans. As time went on, the co-operation and help of the prominent leaders of India and particularly that great man, the Maharaja of Mahmoodabad, whose selfless devotion, patriotic fervour and single-mindedness of purpose gave the League such a strength and power and support that it reached the zenith of its ascendancy, accomplished what is one of the greatest beacon lights in constitutional history of India, the greatest, the Lucknow Pact, which is known as 'League-Congress Pact' in 1916. The Pact will go down in the Indian history as a landmark in the political evolution of the country as a single proof of identity of purpose and earnestness and co-operation between the two great sections of the people of India, in the task of attainment of responsible government. But the Pact was not the last word on the question of adjustment of political differences between Hindus and Mussalmans, nor was it ever intended or could be considered in the new circumstance that arose and developed since then. The national demand for complete responsible government increased after the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms became more and more insistent and from 1920 onward the Mussalmans stood

shoulder to shoulder with the sister community and did not lag behind in their sacrifice and their patriotic co-operation with the Hindus. But as a minority they maintain the principle that their position in any future political constitutional structure should be protected and safeguarded. Here it might be stated that at first sight it may appear to an amateur politician that such a demand savours of communalism, but, in reality, to those who understand the political and constitutional histories of the world, it must be evident that it is not only natural but it is essential for securing a stable national government by ensuring whole-hearted co-operation of the minorities who are made to feel that they can rely upon the majority with the complete sense of confidence and security. In various steps that followed, the deliberations and collaborations that took place, the League has always stood for full responsible government for India and unflinchingly today stands for the same ideal. It deplures that as a result of the Round Table Conference, the British Parliament has forced upon the people of India a constitution embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935. Its attitude towards the constitution is defined by its resolution passed at the session of the All-India Muslim League on the 11th and 12th of April, 1936 to the following effect :

“While it accepts the Communal Award till a substitute is agreed upon between the communities concerned, it emphatically protests against the constitution embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, being forced upon the people of India against their will and in spite of their repeated disapproval and dissent expressed by various parties and bodies in the country.

“The League considers that, having regard to the conditions prevailing at present in the country, the provincial scheme of Constitution be utilised for what it is worth in spite of the most objectionable features contained, therein, which render the real control and responsibility of ministry and the Legislature over the entire field of Government and the Administration nugatory.

"The League is clearly of the opinion that the All-India Federal Scheme of the Central Government, embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935, is fundamentally bad, it is most reactionary, retrograde, injurious and fatal to the vital interests of British India vis-a-vis the Indian States, and is calculated to thwart and delay indefinitely the realisation of India's most cherished goal of complete responsible government as totally unacceptable.

"The League considers that the British Parliament should still take the earliest opportunity to review the whole situation afresh regarding the Central scheme before it is inaugurated; or else the League feels convinced that the present scheme will not bring peace and contentment to the people, but on the contrary it will lead to disaster if forced upon and persisted and as it is entirely unworkable in the interests of India and her people."

But as it will be observed that as the provincial scheme, embodied in the Government of India Act, is going to be enforced in the course of the next year, the League decided that having regard to the conditions prevailing at present in the country, the provincial scheme of the constitution be utilised for what it is worth. In view of this decision of the League, the League further decided that Central Election Board should be formed with power to constitute and affiliate Provincial Election Boards in various provinces and passed resolution to this effect.

In pursuance of that resolution the Central Board has been now formed and the policy and the programme of the Central Board has to be defined.

The inauguration of the Montague-Chelmsford scheme of constitution and working thereof has developed and brought forth various forces and it appears that such power as was available under that scheme has been captured in the various provinces by reactionary conservative element in combination with a coterie of men whose sole aim and object is to secure offices and places for themselves wherever and whenever

available. This has suited the Government and these two classes have received every encouragement and support, with the result that they have not only been a hindrance and an obstacle in the way of the independent and progressive intelligentsia but the people generally have been exploited. Thus was created a double domination of the reactionary forces and the imperialistic power. Our aim is that this domination must cease.

The present political situation in the country has been described aptly by the President of the last session of the All-India Muslim League in the following words:

'New problems have arisen today. It is only a question of educating the middle class of the Muslims in India on Western lines and providing them with jobs: it is not only a question of infusing in them the ideals of Victorian liberalism, on the contrary the present conditions compel us to go much deeper into the problems of entire social regeneration of seventy millions of Muslims; of extricating them from the terrible poverty, degradation and backwardness into which they have fallen and giving them at least the rudiments of a civilized existence and making them free citizens of a free land. We must realize, as people of other countries have realized, that a change is necessary and that unless such a change is soon made the whole of this social structure must come down with a crash, which will involve the extinction of not only the educated section of our people but also of all privileged classes whether they hold privileges by reason of caste, land or money. The foundations of the super-structure in which we are living today were laid centuries ago and it is but natural that those foundations ceased to be stable now. It is the duty, if it is not only an obligation created by motives of self-interest, of all of us, the educated classes, the capitalists, and the landholders, to combine together to lay the foundation of a new structure. Of course, in order that this effort must fructify sacrifices will have to be made on the part of all. Let me tell you that the building of such a social edifice will be more glorious, more human and more just than the building of an empire.'

But at the same time we must make it clear that the League is opposed to any movement that aims at expropriation of private property.

The main principles on which we expect our representatives in the various legislatures to work will be:

1. That the present Provincial Constitution and the proposed Central Constitution should be replaced immediately by full democratic Self-Government.
2. And that in the meantime the representatives of the Muslim League in the various Legislatures will utilise the Legislatures in order to extract the maximum benefit out of the constitution for the uplift of the people in various spheres of national life

The Muslim League Party must be formed as a corollary so long as separate electorates exist but they would be free to co-operate with any group or groups whose aims and ideals are approximately the same as those of the All-India Muslim League. The League appeals to Musalmans that they should not permit themselves to be exploited on economic or any other ground which will break up the solidarity of the community

The Muslim League Central Parliamentary Board adopts the following programme for ensuing elections :

1. To protect the religious rights of the Muslmans. In all matters of purely religious character, due weight shall be given to the opinions of Jamiat-ul-Ulema-i-Hind and the Mujtabids.
2. To make every effort to secure the repeal of all repressive laws.
3. To resist all measures which are detrimental to the interests of India, which encroach upon the fundamental liberties of the people and lead to economic exploitation of the country.
4. To reduce heavy cost of administrative machinery, central and provincial, and allocate substantial funds

for nation-building departments.

5. To nationalize Indian Army and reduce the military expenditure.
6. To encourage development of industries, including cottage industries.
7. To regulate currency, exchange and prices in the interest of economic development of the country.
8. To stand for the social, educational and economic uplift of the rural population.
9. To sponsor measures for the relief of agricultural indebtedness.
10. To make elementary education free and compulsory.
11. To protect and promote Urdu language and script.
10. To devise measures for the amelioration of the general conditions of Muslims.
13. To make steps to reduce heavy burden of taxation.
14. To create a healthy public opinion and general political consciousness throughout the country.

NEHRU REPORT AND REACTIONS OF THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

A dispassionate observer is compelled to note in the birth and life of this constituent Committee that it was designed from the very beginning to bring forth a preconceived result. It was no hidden secret that the Committee was invariably bound to recommend to do away with the separate election privilege of the Mussulmans and thus to pave way for the Hindu Raj, undivided and absolute. It is a well-known fact the Hindus left no stone unturned to have the separate electorate abolished, but the supreme authorities in India and England having repeatedly declared that unless the Mussulmans themselves give up their right, the Government would not deprive them of the privilege once given, the Hindus turned to other means than appealing to the Government and poisoning the British opinion against separate electorate. They now concentrated their efforts to bring some discontented, ultra-patriot Mussulmans under their influence to serve their purpose.

Owing to the disconcerted condition of the Muslim politics, the effort proved successful beyond expectation and the output was the meeting of some 'prominent Muslim leaders', at Delhi, on the 20th of March 1927. What authority these 'prominent Muslim leaders' had to act in the name of the Mussulmans, *en masse*, has never been made out. However, they proved pliant enough to instantly pronounce against the separate electorate, and in order to give a colour of bona-fides to this suicidal act, they presented the proposal in the form of a 'bargain' which was so *prima-facie* hollow that it could deceive no one but themselves. The emptiness of this bargain

will be shown later, but the immediate aim was achieved that 'prominent Muslim leaders' had denounced the separate electorate. The Congress Working Committee was not slow in singling out this item from the 'bargain', accepting it at once 'and trusting that a satisfactory settlement would be arrived at on the basis of these proposals.' Some two months later, the All-India Congress Committee 'unanimously adopted the same resolution with minor alterations.' The Liberal Federation also readily intimated its agreement to this resolution. But, as a piece of expediency, it was also necessary to show to the world in general and to impress upon the Mussulmans in particular, that the Hindus were brought to accept this 'bargain' at great sacrifice to their own interests, and accordingly the Hindu Maha Sabha repeatedly 'adopted resolutions of strong disagreement with some of the Muslim proposals'. 'Meanwhile a cleverly contrived cleavage was effected in the Muslim League, and in flagrant opposition to all rules and by-laws, a session of the League was held at Calcutta in December 1927, which has henceforth come to be known as the Jinnah Muslim League. Thus being assured of a certain section of the Mussulmans to sacrifice anything at the bidding of the Hindu leaders, a conference under the name of 'All-Parties Conference' was called at Delhi (12th February 1928) Of all the Muslim organizations, invitations were issued to the (Jinnah) Muslim League and the Central Khilafat Committee only. The Muslim League had already been tested and found faithful, while the Khilafat Committee is but another name of our highly popular leader Maulana Shaukat Ali, who is personally held in great esteem even by those diametrically opposed to him in politics. This was all the Muslim representation at the All-Parties Conference. The Conference met twice at Delhi (12th February and 8th March 1928). It wanted to take the Muslim proposals by piece but the 'prominent Muslim Leader' did not feel courage enough to present the issue to the Mussulmans in its bare form. They wanted something to cover the real issue, so the first two attempts proved abortive and the third Conference was held on the 19th of May 1928 at Bombay.

The situation was still not a promising one and 'there being no likelihood of an agreement', a new device was thought out to 'view the communal problem as a whole and in relation to constitution' and thus to bury the joint or separate electorate question under the huge detritus of wider controversies. So the Nehru Committee.

The Personnel

The Committee was to consist of nine members 'to represent different interests', but it was hypothetically presumed that the overwhelming majority among Mussulmans who stood fast by the separate electorate system, had no interest to represent, so the nine members to be chosen were all to be avowed advocates of joint electorate system. They were not required to examine the question of separate or joint electorate on its own merits, but were simply to make a case for joint electorate. Of these nine members, the Mussulmans were only two—Sir Ali Imam and Mr. Shuaib Qureshi. It has all along been known of Sir Ali Imam that he is not one with the general Muslim opinion about many salient points of politics and notably with the separate electorate question, but in fairness to him it should be added that he is not a fresh convert to the joint electorate system, but was so even in 1909. Mr. Shuaib Qureshi also entertains the same opinion and has no sympathy whatever with the other side of the question. Even of these two Muslim representatives, Sir Ali Imam owing to ill-health 'could attend only one sitting at great personal inconvenience', while Mr. Shuaib 'was unable to be present at the last meeting of the Committee when the draft report was considered,' and he signed the draft with some reservation. Of the non-members consulted by the Committee there were eight Mussulmans, but one and all of them were of the same party and of the same opinion. Thus was manufactured the 'All-Parties Committee Report.'

The Conference

The Report was issued on the 15th of August and Conference of All-Parties was convened at Lucknow on the

28th and 29th of August to adopt the Report. The Jinnah Muslim League, the Khilafat Committee, and the Jameat-ul-Ulema considered it to their advantage to represent or misrepresent the Muslim cause at this Conference. How far they were justified in this self imposed duty is a fact which needs no comment, but under what pressure, with what discord-breeding, and with what secret influence, even these devoted adherents of the cause were brought to subscribe to Nehru Report, has been exposed by Maulana Shaukat Ali in a series of articles in the Khilafat, which leaves no doubt that the whole affair was a farce and had no free representative character at all.

By any means, the Report was passed and passed in entirety, but the whole performance has left its lessons behind.

The after effects

No doubt, the Mussulmans were taken by surprise, and under the present chaotic condition of their whole politics, they could not at once muster their forces to denounce the glaring injustice of the recommendations but by and upto the time of writing these lines (the 11th of September), so much uneasiness has been expressed in different quarters that it might fairly be expected that in a few days the unanimous character given to the Report will go to the air and the Report will be seen in its true light of being a piece of tactics of Hindus to bring the Mussulmans under their yoke.

The moral

Those who advocate the boycott of the Simon Commission, have cried themselves hoarse to make the public believe that the Commission was not coming to India with open mind and that Indians had no representation on the Commission. Will these persons serenely contemplate for a moment over their own doings? Did they proceed to the investigation with open mind and if so, does the result of their deliberations prove the authenticity of their intention? The blame hurled against the Commission is still no more than a distrustful guess, and one

may say an unwarranted prejudice, while in the case of the All-Parties leaders, it has become an accomplished fact. The other allegation is also as much proved by facts in their case as the first. Did they include in the Committee any Muslim representative opposed to their own view? Did they consult any such person informally? Did they give a fair chance of discussion at the Conference to all shades of opinion? No and most emphatically no. This is the first instalment of the popular government these leaders want to cater for the people.

The foremost fundamental right the Report wants to establish is that all 'powers are derived from the people', and all efforts are to be concentrated to destroy the bureaucratic rule of the foreigners, and to replace it with the democratic rule of the people, but the protagonists of these democratic principles have utterly failed in their very first attempt in taking the preliminary practical step. The procedures of their Committees and Conferences have unavoidably impressed the minds of all thinking persons that these leaders have more of bureaucracy than the bureaucracy they are so piously eager to destroy. These high handed proceedings have made the Muslims to think that they are far behind the mark in realizing the dangers of a Hindu Raj under the name of national government. Thank God that a good is brought out of evil.

The work

The Committee was charged 'to consider and determine the principles of the constitution for India'. It worked arduously and produced an idealistic constitution for all ages and all lands. The constitution deserves, in all justification, to be registered at the offices of the League of Nations to be supplied on demand to any inter-warring state desirous of purging its land of contradicting and conflicting interests and to turn its country into an Utopia. But as the application of the constitution to our own land requires the sanction of a 'Satanic government' and in all probability it cannot be expected that the government will allow to turn India at once into a paradise of rishis and munis, so we have, to our utter grief, to

submit ourselves to the actualities of the sinful world and see how far the constitution fits itself to the positively existing conditions of India.

A misconception about Mussulmans

Before proceeding to examine the principles and recommendations of the Report, it is befitting to remove a misconception about the position of the Mussulmans. In this Report no less than in other discussions of the future Government of India two quite distinct questions are so badly intermixed as to greatly prejudice the positions of the Mussulmans. No distinction is drawn between the transference of the governmental power and the wielding of that power. So far as the transference of power is concerned, the Mussulmans are not opposed to any bestowal of power to Indians, but they are not generally at one with the other communities with regard to method and time. The Mussulmans, with a few individual exceptions, who can be counted on fingers, are firm believers in the peaceful transference of power, and the Nehru Committee have also found it safe to take the same view 'that India is a dependency of Great Britain cannot be denied. That position can only be altered in one of two ways: force of mutual consent. It is the latter in furtherance of which we are called upon to recommend the principles of a constitution of India.' The Committee have not thrown light upon the possibility or otherwise of the first way, nor have they definitely committed themselves to the one or the other way. But the Muslim Ulemas have unequivocally and repeatedly declared that the Mussulmans in India occupy the position of a contracting party with regard to the British government and so long as that government keeps peace in the country and Mussulmans are allowed to enjoy their religious rights *i.e.* have their personal law applied to them, they are bound to faithfully observe their allegiance to that government. Consequently, the Mussulmans with regard to the method of the transference of power will not lend themselves to anything revolutionary. That is to say, they are on the side of the mutual consent method, not as a piece of tentative or evasive

diplomacy, but as a tenet of their belief. As to time, the Mussulmans, as a political people, do not think that there is no 'intermediate house' between the present constitution of India and the dominion status. Such houses are unavoidably required. Whether they will be many or only few depends upon our own capacity of traversing the field to dominion status (or even to independence) with many or few halts—but halts there will be.

In short, in matter of the transference of power the Mussulmans are not at variance with the other communities; so far as the principles are concerned; they differ only in method and time. But in the matter of wielding this transferred power they are poles asunder from other communities. They cannot acquiesce to any programme which automatically passes over the power from the British to the Hindus, leaving the Mussulmans on the mercy of the most intolerant community in the world. Mussulmans have never concealed their aversion to Hindu autocracy and they have all along openly avowed that they find it more safe to live under the foreign British rule than under the native Hindu domination. These two different questions are vexedly intermingled by the clever Hindus and the conditional attitude of the Mussulmans towards responsible government is wrongly interpreted as being retardy and reactionary and presented to the British public as being unprogressive and devoid of any desire for self government. In plain words, the Mussulmans are stigmatized as flatterers of the government and so are indirectly incited to overlook the main issue of their interest and join hands with the Hindus in setting up (peacefully or forcibly) Hindu Raj under the name of national government. Within the last few years many Mussulmans have been so misled, but now that the mask is thrown off and the Nehru Report has unmasked the aim of the Hindus, it is almost certain that these misguided Mussulmans will seriously consider their position and will rejoin with the Mussulmans in general to make the transference of power peaceful, gradual and with all the good wishes of the British Parliament, so that the Mussulmans can adapt themselves completely to every change and may not risk

their proper place in the future government of India.

How the proposed constitution will come into force

The Committee have nowhere made it clear by what authority their proposed constitution is to come into operation. One is left vaguely in doubt whether the constitution is to be passed by the British Parliament or by the Indian Legislature or simultaneously by both. If by the British Parliament, whether it is to reach that Parliament through the Indian Statutory Commission or independently of it. If through the Commission, the Commission is boycotted; if independently, what hope there may be of the Parliament giving effect to this constitution in contravention to the recommendations of the Royal Commission? Any how, if the constitution is passed by the British Parliament, it will be a grant, pure and simple, of that Parliament and not a piece of inborn right of Indian people, as claimed by the framers of the constitution. However, that may come to happen, at the present juncture no one, including the framers of the constitution themselves, can seriously hope that the British Parliament will pass this constitution in its entirety. With what reservations Parliament will do so cannot be safely predicted, but so far is certain that the 'steel framework' of the Indian administration will not be removed to replace it by peepulwood framework. The other supposition that the constitution will be passed by the Indian Legislature and will receive the royal assent without intervention of the Secretary of State for India and the British Parliament, will always remain a supposition. These and other practical deficiencies which are intentionally ignored in the constitution are bound to make it a complete wreck and the opposition of the Mussulmans will be construed to be instrumental to the failure of this first definite expression of Indian (*i.e.* Hindu) aspirations. Thus the position of the Mussulmans is made greatly difficult but this cannot deter the Mussulmans from claiming their due and proper place in the future constitution of India.

The purpose to be served

Such being the case, a doubt naturally arises. Why so many big men have undergone all these inconveniences and have worked so hard to produce an absurd constitution? The answer is not far to seek. The constitution has a purpose to serve and up to now it has served the purpose apparently well. Any one who has followed the succession of events since the announcement of the personnel of the Indian Statutory Commission and the frantic actions of the nationalist leaders, can very vividly see that the proposed constitution has two purposes to serve.

Firstly, the terms of reference to the Commission required not only to recommend a fresh instalment of the Reforms, but also to investigate into the past working of the Reforms. This the nationalist leaders will not willingly allow to take place. The Hindu majority in the Councils and in the local self-governments have rendered the past working of the Reforms so sadly disgraceful and have made so bad use of their newly conferred power that they cannot dare face any impartial investigation. If the Commission would have contained Indian members it was certain that the majority would have been Hindus and they would have succeeded in white-washing the black spots of the doing of their co-religionists. But this being not so, they raised a cry of boycotting the Commission under the ingenious pretence of insult to Indians. They hoped to gain the support of all the communities of India under this provoking pretence of insult. But these communities—chiefly the Mussulmans and the Depressed Classes—had sufficient experience of the intolerant role of the Hindus for the last seven years and they forthwith declared against the boycott. Thus baffled in their attempt of boycott, these nationalist leaders turned to other tactics. They called their own different sections together under the name of All-Parties Committees and Conferences and eventually brought forth this constitution to divert attention from the real issue. The Constitution, being doggedly opposed to the vital interests of Mussulmans

and other communities, has produced a great commotion and this was the aim sought for. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, speaking at Lucknow, has credited the constitution of having 'dismayed the enemies'. Truly so, but not owing to any merited quality, but owing to its mischief-producing quality. Nevertheless, it has produced some timely embroilment, but the sky is becoming clear, the oppressed communities are coming to realize the real intents and purposes of the constitution and it may be expected with all certainty that the constitution will not serve to divert their attention from the Royal Commission.

Secondly, the nationalist leaders seeing the boycott movement failing, wanted to approach the Commission by an indirect way. They gave the country only two weeks time to consider over a constitution aiming at entirely overhauling the machinery of the government in India and in England and making an unprecedented radical change, reaching almost to revolution, in the destiny of three hundred million people. In rushing through the constitution at the Lucknow Conference, these advocates of freedom gave no chance of free discussion. Why all this haste? Only to overawe the Commission with a titanic demand and so gain something more or at least leave the things where they are and thus continue the oppression of the Muslims and other minor communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF NEHRU REPORT AND MUSLIM INTERESTS

The fundamental rights

The much trumpeted achievement of the Committee is their discovery of fundamental rights. It is these fundamental rights, which have most graciously been bestowed upon the Mussulmans and other minorities and in lieu of which they are required to give up all their present rights and privileges and place themselves entirely in the hands of the Hindus. We shall see what these fundamental rights are and how they have worked in other countries? This safeguard of the fundamental rights has its origin in the Declaration, and subsequently the

Bill of Rights (1689) of the English people. These rights were in fact exacted from William and Mary as the price of their Crown. Since then, more or less similar declarations of rights have been prefixed to other European and notably the American constitutions. In India, against as the writer remembers, the first demand for a declaration of rights publicly made in 1921, after the Punjab troubles and the consequent martial law regime. How far these declarations, taken by themselves, have aided the peoples in enforcing their rights, how far they have proved a check against the tyranny of the governments, bent on evading or even dispensing with them, and of what practical utility they have been to the minorities are questions that require lengthy discussions but three positive examples of different periods and of different peoples, are given below to show that in the face of other powerful forces these declarations of rights have proved of little avail :

- (1) England had a Bill of Rights passed in 1689, but all the same the lot of the Catholics could not be improved. They suffered most persecutive disabilities for nearly a century and a half. For ninety years no one even thought of making a change in their condition. Their emancipation was proposed for the first time in 1778 and 'was passionately refused for fifty years. Between 1805 and 1828 Parliament fourteen times rejected bills for Catholic relief. It was in 1829 that a bill was forced through Parliament 'admitting catholics to Parliament and to nearly all civil and political offices'. This emancipation 'was won by violent agitation, and conceded only when danger had become extreme.'
- (2) The other mainstand of popular rights is America. There, exactly one hundred years after the declaration of rights in England, the British colonies turned themselves into the Republic of the United States of America, (1789), with a written constitution, containing all the millions of negroes remained all the same for over three quarters of a century; and then to give them

only human rights, not civic rights, a five years' fierce civil war (1860-65) had to be fought between the Northern and Southern States, and up to now, notwithstanding a complete system of judiciary and a supreme court 'lynching' is an every-day occurrence in the democratic America.

- (3) Coming to our own time, we find that in 1914 a war was launched to end war for ever and to secure the rights of the weak. A League of Nations was the triumphant outcome of five years of unprecedented and unparalleled human slaughter. Minorities in Europe were assured of their fundamental rights under the vigilant care of this corporate authority of all the civilized nations of the world. But notwithstanding the volumes of paper safeguards, minorities are heavily groaning under the oppressive persecutions of the majorities and the League of Nations from its exalted position at Geneva is helplessly watching their pit able plights.

These experiences are sufficient to teach the Mussulmans how much they can rely upon paper safeguards of fundamental rights. In politics power counts everything. Mussulmans want guarantee, a guarantee sound as well as solid. In the last sections (Of Suggestions) there will be given some hints how this may be achieved to the benefit of both the majority and the minority.

Now, apart from these teachings of history, past and present, there is another drawback full of disquieting consequences. The Nehru Constitution provides no guarantee against these fundamental rights being altered to any extent and at any time by the majority *i.e.*, Hindus. Under the proposed constitution the majority, Hindus, are free to make any change whatsoever in these fundamental rights; and unless the minority, Mussulmans, be given some satisfaction in this direction, these fundamental rights can do them no good. The possibilities of the change of constitution will be discussed

later. Here a special point should be particularly noted. The fundamental rights are securities of the people as a whole against the government and governmental actions; they are not securities of minority against the majority of the same people. For this purpose are required securities other than these fundamental rights (of which will be spoken of later).

Leaving aside these general remarks, we now pass to scrutinize the fundamental rights one by one and see what new and valued guarantees they give to the Mussulmans, not already possessed by them. As mere reference to the numbers of the proposed rights may possibly make the remarks somewhere vague, so the texts are quoted in full, at the sacrifice of space.

(4) (i) All powers of government and all authority, legislative, executive and judicial, are derived from the people and the same shall be exercised in the Commonwealth established by or under, and in accord with, this constitution.

(i) When and How ? Historically it is an anomaly, and in the world of actualities it cannot take place unless the British Parliament gives back or renounces its own authority, howsoever acquired by it. From the democratic point of view one has a right to enquire whether all these powers are derived (away) from the people once and for good or any portion of them remain in the people after the passing of this constitution, as there is no mention of the most modern and most effective popular rights—initiative, plebiscite, referendum and recall—in the whole text of this constitution.

This clause is taken verbatim from the Constitution of the Irish Free State (1922), but the framers of the Constitution for India have, as usual with them, ignored the prevailing conditions and requirements which called for the insertion of this principle into the Constitution of the Irish Constitution, while professing to derive the power and authority of the government from the people, has not denied the ultimate source of that power still resting in the people, that is to say, has retained the principle of popular sovereignty as active even after passing the Constitution, by providing for 'initiative' and 'referendum'.

(i) No person shall be deprived of his liberty, nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, sequestered or confiscated save in accordance with law.

(iii) Freedom of conscience and the free profession and practice or religion are subject to public order or morality, hereby guaranteed to every person.

(iv) The right of free expression of opinion, as well as the right to assemble peaceably and without arms, and to form asso-

(ii) Already enjoyed.

(iii) Already enjoyed. In this and other similar articles; the question of vital importance is who is to fix the bounds of public order, and decide the nature and character of morality? Surely, the Government. So, the promise, in effect, means 'to the extent not prohibited by the Government', and Government in its turn means Hindu Government. The conclusion is self evident.

(iv) Already enjoyed.

ciations or unions is hereby guaranteed for purposes not opposed to public order or morality

(v) All citizens in the Commonwealth of India have the right to free elementary education without any distinction of caste or creed in the matter of admission into any educational institutions, maintained or aided by the state, and such right shall be enforceable as soon as due arrangements shall have been made by competent authority.

(v) The proviso deprives this article of being of the nature of 'fundamental rights'. In effect it means that some special grants given to Anglo-Indian Schools will be withdrawn in future; that depressed-classes will be admitted in all government-aided schools and some special provisions made for Islamic Maktabas in the U.P. or anywhere else will be abolished. It confers no new right but takes away some special rights of the Mussulmans and the Anglo-Indians. At the most, the clause introduces free elementary education, without making it compulsory, which is a disadvantage from Muslim point of view. The movement for free and compulsory elementary education is already in progress and is advancing in proportion, 'the due arrangements' are being made.

(vi) All citizens are equal before the law and possess

(vi) Already enjoyed.

equal civic rights

(vii) There shall be no penal law whether substantive or procedural of a discriminative nature.

(viii) No person shall be punished for any act which was not punishable under the law at the time it was committed.

(xi) No corporal punishment or other punishment involving torture of any kind shall be lawful.

(x) Every citizen shall have the right to a writ of habeas corpus. Such right may be suspended in case of war or rebellion by an Act of the central legislature or, if the legislature is not in session, by the Governor-General-in-Council, and in such case he shall report the suspension to the legislature at the earliest possible opportunity for such action as it may deem fit

(xi) There shall be no state religion for the Commonwealth of India or for any province in the Common-

(vii) The article will slightly affect Europeans, as regards to Indians it has nothing new to grant.

(viii) Already enjoyed.

(ix) The article affects some jail regulations and if the phrase 'involving torture of any kind' does not qualify 'corporal punishment', the flogging is to be abolished. Both these are matters of ordinary law.

(x) Of all the fundamental rights, this is of consequential moment.

(xi) There is no state religion in India at present. Some ecclesiastical establishments for Europeans

wealth, nor shall the state either directly or indirectly endow any religion or give any preference or impose any disability on account of religious belief or religious status.

can in no way be taken identical to any state religion. The origin and maintenance of these institutions are due to other causes than there being any religion of the state in India. From Muslim point of view this innocent looking article is fraught with danger to their cause. Their political importance, existing privileges and future claims are all swept aside by one stroke of pen. So far as the imposition of disabilities on account of religious belief or religious status is concerned, this clause confers no new right upon the people. The existing laws of the country already cover it and that in most emphatic way. (The Charter Act of 1833, the Proclamation of Queen Victoria, 1858, and its re-affirmation by the late King Edward VII, and our present King-Emperor George V, have all firmly established this principle). But, by addition of a single word 'preference' the article deals a fatal blow to the Muslim cause. The Mussulmans do not, in fact, base their claims

on their religious belief. They have other solid grounds to stand upon, but by an elastic interpretation of the word 'preference' any act of the legislature in satisfaction of the due rights of the Mussulmans, may be made a cause for judicial decision and declared ultra-vires. Neither the word 'preference' is so explained as to exclude the special rights of the Mussulmans from the scope of the word nor any proviso is added to the effect that the distribution or redistribution of seats in the local, provincial, and central councils on communal basis, or any arrangement of representation in the educational or other institutions, or appointments to government services—civil, military or of any other kind—on special basis—communal or national, shall not come under the operation of this article.

Without some such explanation or proviso, the article is liable to be turned into an instrument of mischief against the

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Mussulmans and they ought to take it with proper caution.

By the way, it will be noted with great disappointment that these 'no-preference' theorizers could not keep to their theory even on paper. By a note in the end they have given a 'preference' to the Sikhs on pure religious basis although the abuse the Sikhs have made of their already existing privilege is very discouraging. On more than one occasion they have freely used Kirpans against unarmed and innocent Mussulmans.

By the way, it may be added that the realization of the idea of the Commonwealth is still out of sight, but the over-religious Hindus have already begun taking exception to the principle laid down in this article. They are not disposed to have a religion-less Commonwealth and they make no secret of their hearts' desire to make Hinduism the religion of the State in India. The *Swadharma* has no hesitation in declaring

that, ' just as Christianity cannot become, simply because it is the religion of the rulers, the religion of India, so too Islam, Buddhism, Parsism, Jainism, etc., cannot claim to be the national religions of India because they have flourished long, or have had their origin, in India. This fact must be acknowledged when drafting the future Swaraj constitution. We were extremely grieved to learn that the Swaraj constitution of Pandit Nehru has declared that the India of the future will have nothing to do with any religionBut awakened India will never agree to this. Hindustan is the country of the Hindus. . . .And if this country is to be called the land of the Hindus, then Hinduism needs must be acknowledged as the national religion of India.'

(xii) No person attending any school receiving state aid or other public money shall be compelled to attend the religious instruction that may be given in the schools.

(xii) The article seems apparently to be levelled against missionary schools, but the Muslim religious institutes, and the Madarsas as in the Eastern Presidency are not out of its range. If the article

were so qualified as to limit its effect to adverse religious teachings, it would have been more acceptable.

(xiii) No person shall by reason of his religion, caste or creed be prejudiced in any way in regard to public employment office of power or honour and the exercise of any trade or calling.

(xiii) Already enjoyed.

(xiv) All citizens have an equal right of access to, and use of, public roads, public wells and all other places of public resort.

(xiv) The article under the cover of removing some disabilities of the depressed classes is intended to give unbounded houses to the Hindus to use roads for procession etc., to any annoyance to the Muslims. The article is not even qualified with the word 'not opposed to public order or to tranquility', as is provided for in other articles.

(xv) Freedom of combination and association for the maintenance and improvement of labour and economic conditions is guaranteed to everyone and of all occupations. All agreements and measures tending to restrict or obstruct such freedom are illegal.

(xv) The second portion of this article gives a free license to Trade Unionism, places uncalled for restriction on capitalism, and cripples the government in its duty of keeping peace and order, but these considerations do not matter with those who do not

(xvi) No breach of contract of service or abetment thereof shall be made a criminal offence.

(xvii) Parliament shall make suitable laws for the maintenance of health and fitness for work of all citizens, securing of a living wage for every worker, the protection of motherhood welfare of children, and the economic consequences of old age, infirmity and unemployment.

already bear the burden of responsibility.

(xvi) Will the right extend to the army of the Commonwealth? If so, and why not so, India will be so well defended that there will never arise an occasion of a battle being fought on its sacred soil. (It is naturally taken for granted that an all-benevolent communistic commonwealth will not disgrace its statute book with disciplinary or military laws.

(xvii) All modern socialistic attainments of greatly resourceful European nations are admirably summed up in this one article. Good reading. Arachne Aladin lamp and India will instantaneously be transformed from being the poorest country on earth to the richest one under the sky. These beforehand delusional hopes are usual with every revolutionary programme, and are as easily proclaimed before as they are readily dispelled after the revolution. A repeated lesson. No new thing.

(xviii) Every citizen shall have the right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations made in that behalf.

(xviii) This may already be done 'in accordance with regulations made in that behalf' and may be further restricted under the commonwealth — 'in accordance. . . .' A dubious right. With the help of the note, at the end, to partially exempt the Sikhs from the effect of this article, one can easily read between the lines that the framers of the constitution had no mind to relax the already existing restrictions in this connection, or they would not have needed adding this exemption note.

(xix) Men and women shall have equal rights as citizens. . .

(xix) . . . but Muslim women will automatically be debarred from making full use of these rights owing to their pardah system.

Note : Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in article (iv), the Sikhs are entitled to carry kripans to attack on armless, unsuspecting Mussulmans, coming out from any mosque, after their night prayer.

If this is not a contravention of article (xi) and a 'preference' on account of religious belief or religious status, then what else is it ?

By a careful analysis of the component elements, the essence of all these dexterously composed fundamental rights comes out to be a Habeas Corpus Act, which will in practice

render the Bengal Regulation of 1818 inactive. No one is to deny the urgency of the repeal of this Regulation, but if a Mussulman were to take an entirely selfish view he may very well say that the matter does not so much concern him as it does others. However, allowing this right to be a great boon, we shall see what the Mussulmans have to gain from other fundamental rights in their entirety and unamended.

1. Under article (iii), 'subject to public order and morality' cow-sacrifice is liable to be prohibited in all cases. While in case of Hindu processions the proviso will be rendered helpless by the unbounded scope of article (xiv), Prayer call and other Muslim religious assemblies may also come under its effect.

2. Under article (v), free elementary education is to be provided for all citizens, but what language will be the medium of instruction is deliberately avoided here, and in another place it is provided that provincial language will prevail in provinces. It goes without saying that, with this latitude, the medium of instruction will invariably be the provincial language, which will be (with probable exception of the Punjab), and of the three hundred and more dialects but Urdu Education is not made compulsory. The aversion of Mussulmans, of whatever part of India, to any language other than Urdu is an established truth. These premises inevitably establish the conclusion that :

Mussulmans will get little or no benefit from the free elementary education to be provided for by the (Hindu) Commonwealth.

This conclusion read jointly with article (xii), purporting to withhold government aid from religious institutions, the net result comes out to be that :

Under the Commonwealth the Mussulmans will have to pay the taxes but will be disabled to derive any benefit from the vast expenditure proposed to be devoted to educational purposes,

A flimsy hope is held out under section 72 (iv) that 'after the establishment of the Commonwealth', a Commission shall be appointed to consider among innumerable other things some means of 'affording of special educational facilities for backward classes.' There are already a 'Commission' by Royal appointment and the warm receptions the Hindus are extending to it are sufficiently instructive of what reliance the Mussulmans ought to have on a promised commission of future, appointed by a government, if not antagonistic, at least unsympathetic to Muslim interests, Granting that the Commission of the Commonwealth recommend all possible facilities for the backward classes including, of course the Mussulmans. Will these backward classes have any religion or they will all be atheists? If all or any of them believe in any religion and profess to be so, cannot these special facilities be made a cause of disputation by their rivals under section (xi), on the ground of their being 'preference' on account of religion and have them revoked by a judicial court?

3. As has already been pointed out, article (xi) might readily yield to being so misconstrued as to deprive the Mussulmans of all their existing rights and privileges. This is no mere imaginary apprehension. The seven years' working of the Reforms has left no doubt in the mind of any true-believer what fate is waiting him during the happy regime of the Hindu Commonwealth.

To sum up, the fundamental rights are so devised that Mussulmans might easily be hindered in the performance of their religious duties, be put in a hazardously disadvantageous position with regard to education and culture of their mother tongue Urdu and lastly be deprived of the few safeguards granted to them by the British government.

In short, the condition of the Mussulmans in every respect, religious, educational and political, will become intolerably hung round their neck.

A really benevolent Commonwealth for the Mussulmans.

The Nehru Committee, out of generosity proposes to grant us nineteen fundamental rights, we in lieu thereof shall be content with only right, that : 'The Mussulmans will be governed by their own personal law administered and enforced by their own coreligionists and interpreted, amended, or repealed by the Fatwas (decisions) or the Ijma (general concordance) of their own Ulemas. The Government is to provide for the necessary arrangements.'

This is a simple right which every Mussulman will readily understand and will rightly appreciate, and it is the only condition under which a Mussulman can contentedly live in a non-Islamic country.

Parliament

As already indicated this pamphlet does not pretend to pass judgement on the Nehru Report as a whole. It only examines such portions of it as directly affect the rights of the Mussulmans. The constitution is foredoomed. Its absurd demands have sealed its fate. But in view of the clever propaganda in its favour, the Mussulmans are anxious to expose its injustices to their cause, lest, in an endeavour to please the extremist party, Muslim interests be sacrificed at the altar of other unfulfilable demands.

Now, first in order comes Parliament. This Parliament is to be composed of two Chambers—a Senate and a House of Representatives.

The Senate

The Senate shall consist of 200 members to be elected by the Provincial Councils, a specific number of seats being allotted to each province on the basis of population subject to a minimum. The election shall be held by the method of proportional representation with the single transferable vote (Hare System).

The compilers of the Report have not taken the trouble to analyse the vague rule of proportional representation in its

actual working, although they have devoted three pages to its discussion in Chapter III (pp. 35-37). There the system is commended, but not recommended. Only a hope is held out that 'proportional representation will in future be the solution of our problems.' This proportional representation is one of many principles which people are sometimes led to blindly accept without appreciating their true significance. The advocates of this system, says Mr. Horwill, 'want to assure their public that their reasons for preaching P.R. is that they desire the eternal principle of Justice applied to the whole community; yet investigation reveals the true driving force to be the simple egotistical desire for the self-assertion of their group, a driving force which is common to the higher animals and to the most primitive of human beings.'

This is the system which has of late produced much excitement in the ranks of Indian politicians and even some Muslim leaders have been led to believe, or give themselves out to believe, that the advantage of the system will be on the side of the Mussulmans. Let us see what advantages may accrue to the Mussulmans from this system so little understood by the general public in India.

The basis of the Hare System (which is also known as the Hare-Spence-System) is found in the election of members of a legislature or council not from single member district, but in groups. The number of votes necessary to elect a member is found by the simple arithmetical process of dividing up the total number of voters by the seats to be filled. Each voter indicates not merely the first choice among the candidates, but his second, third and so on. In counting the votes any candidate with a sufficient number of first choice votes is forthwith declared elected. The surplus of his first choice votes is divided proportionately among those who figure as second-choice on the ballots on which he was first, and so forth.

Now, take a positive case, (e.g. the United Provinces) for the practical application of this article,

The seats allotted to these provinces, in the Senate, will approximately come up to 33 (on the basis of British India population only), but making allowance for the provinces to be provided with minimum number of seats, the number will not actually be more than 30.

The strength of the Provincial Council will be somewhere about 430 (on the basis of one member for every 100,000 of the population).

The number of Muslim members of the Council will be at the most 63 (on the basis of numerical proportion principle).

For the purpose of electing members to the Senate ($430 \div 30 = 14.33$), 14 will be the unit (decimal eliminated).

So, the Muslim members, with an organisation surpassing all hopes and experience, can secure at the most 4 seats.

This is the most favourable paper calculation, which can never be expected to take place in actual happenings.

On similar calculation, and with the same miraculous organisation, they can secure 2 or 3 seats in the Bombay Presidency (Sindh included), 1 or 2 in Behar and none in Madras and the Central Provinces.

Of the Punjab and Bengal, all Muslim leaders have with almost unanimous voice declared that with seats unreserved Mussulmans will certainly be turned into minorities in the provincial councils, and the Nehru Report itself in more than one place had implicitly admitted this apprehension. Any how, for the sake of argument, we take it for granted that in these two provinces Mussulmans will manage to secure half the seats, and thus get some 15 seats in Bengal and 10 in the Punjab, making up a total, with solitary contributions from other provinces, upto 35. This is a highly indulgent conclusion, reached after taking a thorough calculation of the eight provinces on the most favourable terms to the Mussulmans. The conviction is presented with the firm belief of being unrefutable and it will be gratifying if the inventors of this

fine chicanery prove the reverse on the basis of accurate calculation.

Surely, there can be no gainsaying that the Mussulmans with the utmost exertion and an unexampled party discipline cannot secure more than 35 seats out of 200 in the Nehru Commonwealth Senate, making a percentage of 17.5, that is, less than 18 p.c. if the seats were to be allotted to them on the simple population basis and much less than their present strength in the Senate. (To whom will these members represent is described below).

No polished phraseology and artful wordings of an idealistic constitution can bring the Mussulmans to acquiesce in a change that will make their position worse.

(The effectiveness or otherwise of this meagre share of the Muslim in the would-be Upper House of the Indian Commonwealth, will be dealt with later).

The House of Representatives

The functions and powers of the government have been so divided by the Nehru Constitution between the Central and Provincial governments as to leave a very small share of any real power to the provinces. The provinces will be mere subordinate agents of the Central government. Objections have already been preferred in this connection from different quarters, but as we have decided not to take notice of the general side of the constitution, we shall here simply observe that all the powers of the Commonwealth will be concentrated in the Central Legislature which in practice will mean the House of Representatives. So the position occupied by the Mussulmans in this House will be of singular consequence.

It is, in fact, a question of life and death to them, and it is here that the Nehru Constitution has dealt the most deadly blow to their cause. To clearly understand what place the Mussulmans will occupy in this House of Representatives, we have to strip the proposed arrangements of their legal niceties

and see them in their stern reality.

- (1) The House shall consist of 500 members.
- (2) The elections shall be by 'joint mixed' electorates.
- (3) Adult suffrage system shall be employed.
- (4) There shall be no reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal.
- (5) In other provinces, seats shall be reserved for Mussulmans in strict proportion to their population.
- (6) There shall be similar reservation for the Hindus in the N.W.F. Provinces.

The constitution is silent as to how the seats shall be distributed among different provinces, but it may safely be presumed that the distribution shall be on no other basis than that of population. We have now to see how the Mussulmans will fare in this bargain.

The fate of the Muslims will always be held in balance by their successes or failures in the Punjab and Bengal, but as has already been stated, all thoughtful forecasts are on the side that in a 'joint mixed' election, with seats unreserved, the Mussulmans owing to their defective organisation and economic thralldom will never succeed in securing seats in strict proportion to their population in the Punjab and Bengal. But for a moment, putting aside all consideration of their precarious position in these provinces, we take it for granted that they somehow manage to win the elections in proportion to their population. What will be the result? Mussulmans of all provinces taken together will have 24 per cent of seats in the House, that is to say, there will be 120 Mussulmans in a House of 500 members. By virtue of section 10(4), all questions are to be decided by simple majority. Will these 120 members be able to protect the interests of the Mussulmans, when these be at variance with those of Hindus? An enviable position, no doubt! Ireland for over hundred years occupied almost similar position in the British Parliament, with the unique opportunity of throwing its weight on one side or other in a two

parties-system **parliament**. Yet, with all its patriotic exertions for freedom, its **heroic sacrifices**, its enormous financial support from its **American sympathisers** and above all its highly developed **organization** with exemplary discipline of its representatives **within the Parliament**, it could do nothing for its betterment **inside the Parliament**. What achievement can the politically **bankrupt Mussulmans** attain to better their lots, nay, to **keep their existence**, in face of a compact antagonistic party **permanently outnumbering** them by three to one? No one can be bold enough to uphold that Mussulmans in a **House of Representatives** so constituted, can ever manage—to protect **their special interests** or to have any weight in the decision of **general questions**. But, apart from such science of number of the **philosophy of effectiveness**, the questions of vital constitutional importance are:

Whom will **these Muslim members** represent?

What will **their duty** be in cases of conflict of interests between **Hindus and Mussulmans**?

How will **they be required** if their votes be cast against Hindu interest?

As to the **first question**, it goes without saying that in accordance with **all principles** and usages of representation, these **Muslim members**, with a few exceptions of those coming from some predominantly Muslim districts of the Punjab and Bengal, will **one and all** represent the Hindus and not the Mussulmans. **No unbiased person** can take exception to this logical inference. It is a self-evident dictum which admits of no contention. **But to make** any ordinary reader, not familiar with constitution **makers'** refinements, to thoroughly grasp the situation, it will **not be** out of place to illustrate the matter with a detailed **example** of the practical application of the section 9 (of **the Nehru Constitution**).

The **Punjab and Bengal** excluded from the effect of the section and **Sindh** separated from the Bombay Presidency, the **United Provinces** will **top the list** as regards Muslim popula-

tion and influence.

In these provinces, two or three urban areas exempted, Mussulmans are everywhere in minority with greatly varying ratio, but the average is taken at nearly 15 per cent

If the 500 seats of the House of Representatives be divided among provinces according to their population, the lot of the United Provinces will be something about 85, of which some 12 seats will be reserved for Mussulman.

To elect 12 Muslim members for the House of representatives, the provinces will have to be divided into 12 electoral colleges either on the basis of general population or that of Mussulmans exclusively. Whichever method be adopted, Mussulmans (with fluctuation from 6 per cent) will be in minority in every electoral college.

Now, to clearly apprehend how the election will take place and with what result, take the electorate having the highest percentage of Mussulmans and suppose that all Muslim voters without a single exception unite to have a Mussulman elected of their choice; while the Hindus not approving that Muslim candidate wish to have some one other more suited to their purpose. Suppose further that the Hindus do not agree on any one candidate and they divide themselves in two, three or even four groups. Who will carry the day? This or that Hindu group, but never the Muslim group. Thus, the twelve seats reserved for Mussulmans might easily be filled with Hindu-chosen candidates without any regard to Muslim ayes or noes. This calculation of the working of the Constitution has greater chances of fulfilment especially by the past experience than the presumption of the Nehru Committee that the Mussulmans will secure 65 per cent of seats in the Punjab.

What will in actual working take place will be that only those Mussulmans will be elected who will be willing to submissively lend themselves to be used as their Hindu masters will, in other words, only those Mussulmans will have the chance of being elected who will have the least sympathy with

their own co-religionists.

Thus, however elected and whoever elected, these Muslim members will represent the Hindus and not the Mussulmans.

The next question, what will be the duty of these Muslim members in case of conflict of interests needs no comment. In accordance with all rules and principles of representations they will be honour bound to vote on the side of their constituents, *i.e.*, Hindus. Mr. Saklatvala is a member of the British Parliament. If by chance, there arises any commercial or industrial problem in which the interests of the Parsee Community be at variance with those of the constituents of Mr. Saklatvala, what will be the duty of the Hon'ble member for Bateria? Will he be justified in voting for the Parsee interests? And if he does so, will he not be held responsible for a breach of trust? Mr. Saklatvala may vote for the Parsee and lose his seat at the next election. It will in no way affect the interests of the Parsee Community. But, the position of the Muslim members will be somewhat different. Imagine for a moment that somewhere (say at Katarpur) a Muslim family wants to sacrifice a cow at the Id festival, within the four walls of its own house. The Hindus get scent and object; the Hindu officer-in-charge of the place persuades himself to believe that his duty does not lie in taking preventive measures; feelings rise and a furious Hindu mob burns up a dozen or so Mussulmans. The Hindu Swaraj being not yet so completely established as to purge the country of the profane Englishmen and it so happens that the case comes to be tried by an English judge, who, finding the accused guilty, sentences some of them to be hanged. The Hindu public opinion being in sympathy with the convicts owing to their pious act, an address is moved in the House of Representatives to show clemency to these defenders of the sacred cow. What will be the duty of the Muslim members in such a case? Will they not be bound to solidly throw their votes on the side of the Hindus to save their constituents from the scaffold?

Here lies all the difference between Mr. Saklatvala volun-
 Academy of the Punjab in North America: <http://www.apnaorg.com>

tarily voting against some steel or cotton interests in favour of the Parsees in the British House of Commons and the Muslim members being forced to vote, in the Indian House of Representatives, to let go at large the performers of cremation ceremony of alive Mussulmans.

The Mussulmans do not claim to be an hierarchy of angles. Mussulmans will be found, as are already found, to serve this sinister purpose, but they will be representatives of any body in the world other than true believers.

The third question, how will these Muslim members be dealt with, if they go contrary to the wishes of the Hindus stands in need of no theorizing. What freedom of opinion the Commonwealth-walas will permit in their House of Representatives and what toleration they will show to disagreeing members have been conclusively proved by their treatment of Mr. M.K. Acharya, the other day. This Swarajist member from Madras could not reconcile his conscience to vote against the Public Safety Bill. He was forthwith expelled from the Party and no bullying was spared to make him resign his seat. Under the British-granted constitution, the Swarajists could not turn him out from the Assembly, but with the growth of popular government, the direct power of the people is sure to increase and it is certain that sooner or later the system of 'recall' will come in force, which will deal straight with such refractory members and replace them by more submissive ones.

To be brief, these Muslim members will represent the Hindus and not the Mussulmans and they will be compelled by the sense of their obligation, if not by their self preserved instinct, to vote on the side of the Hindus when there be a conflict of interests, or they will be subjected to the stringent application of the "recall" and will have to make room for others.

Now, when we look at this 'joint mixed' electorate system in the light of its true import as disclosed above, we are irresistably driven to ask ourselves if it is in effect anything else but 'nomination' ? The system as presented by the Nehru

Committee is in reality nothing more nor less than the nomination of so many Muslim members by the then leader of the Hindu Party in power. How will this come to happen is a very simple matter and any one can readily reach the conclusion by properly arranging the facts.

1. (Excepting the Punjab and Bengal) the Mussulmans by any combination, whatever, cannot anywhere influence the elections.

2. Elections will be won or lost by Hindu votes, irrespective of Muslim votes.

3. Party discipline growing, candidates will be nominated by head-quarters, that is, by the prominent members (and virtually by the leader) of the party.

4. The leader of the successful party (which will never be the Muslim party), will be at the helm of the government.

The conclusion follows by itself that the Muslim members will be the nominees of the Hindus' government and not the representatives of their co-religionists.

The defects and drawbacks of nomination have been so loudly and persistently proclaimed by the adversaries of the present government for the last fifty years that there is no need of discussing them here. But under the Nehru System, of disguised nomination the mischief will be multiplied manifold. At present the nominated members are openly stigmatized as 'government men' and any step taken by them against the wishes of the people might be challenged as non-representative and consequently non-obligatory on the people by the strict verdict of legislation by representation, but under the Nehru Constitution, Mussulmans will be forced to accede to the decisions of these virtually nominated members as decisions of their own representatives, sent to Councils by solely Hindu votes to misrepresent the interests of Mussulmans.

Turning aside from the practical applications and effects of these election rules, when we want to know what "principle

this whole fabrication implies, we at once come to see that the principle implied is that : Representatives need not be of the same religion as the electors. That is to say, the Hindus are not bound to elect the Hindus only, they may elect, if they like, any Mussulman, Christian, Jew or Zoroastrian to represent them in the Councils. And as it will be too hard upon the Mussulmans to be abruptly deprived of all representation, which may, in an uncomfortable manner awaken their instinct of self assertion, proving difficult to the Hindus, in the very beginning of their Commonwealth to easily cope with this discontent, it is thought advisable to keep the apprehensions of the Mussulmans allayed for some time and so ten years' reservation of seats. By that time they will be accustomed to Hindu rule and then the Hindus will be at full liberty to elect or not (to elect) any Mussulman

There is no exaggeration in saying that in the eyes of a Mussulman this election of Mussulmans by Hindus is not a privilege of Mussulmans to be elected but a privilege of Hindus not to be hampered in their choice. It is just the same as the late Mr Dadabhoy Naoroji and Sir Muncherjee Bhowmagree were elected by British voters to represent their interests in the Parliament, or as Mr. Saklatvala does to-day. But if the Hindu mentality does not change, and there are no signs of its being changed, ten years after, when the reservation of seats automatically expires, it will be far more difficult for a Mussulman to be elected by Hindu votes than for a Parsee to be elected by British votes.

To be brief, the output of the (Nehru made) Constitution elections will be:

A House of Representatives representing Indians minus Mussulmans.

(What difference there would have been, if the House of Representatives, like the Senate, was to be elected by Proportional Representation, will be illustrated under Provincial Legislatures).

We have considered what the Nehru Constitution proposes

to give to Mussulmans, now we shall see what it wants to take away from them and why?

The Central Legislature (the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly), as composed at present give a clearly predominant majority to the Hindus over the Mussulmans, but not so over the whole House. Mussulmans cannot expect support from other sections in their claims, however, just, yet they can reasonably expect that these sections will not help the Hindus to oppress the Mussulmans at their will. The Nehru constitution wants to take away even this remote chance of protection from the Mussulmans and leave them entirely at the mercy of Hindus. To make the point clear the present composition of the Legislative Assembly, which claims the first importance to itself, is analysed below in some detail, and from this it may easily be gathered that Mussulmans cannot hold their own, but in cases of extreme injustice they may entertain a hope of the aid of other sections.

The Assembly consists of 144 members, of whom 104 are elected members, comprising 48 Hindus, 30 Mussulmans, 2 Sikhs, 9 Europeans and 15 general members. The general members represent landlords (7), Indian Commerce (4), Burmese (3), Delhi (1) and Ajmere-Mewara (1). Of the 40 nominated members 26 are officials and 14 non-officials. The non-official seats are at present so distributed as to consist of 7 Hindus, 3 Mussulmans, 2 Sikhs, 1 European and 1 Parsee. Thus the total number of Hindus and Sikhs (excluding general members) comes up to 59, while that of Mussulmans to 33, of Europeans to 10. Now supposing that all the 15 general members¹ are Hindus, as is not impossible, the total strength of Hindus may reach upto something about 74, but in the presence of 26 officials and 10 Europeans, the Mussulmans will not be out of reason to believe, that though the Officials may not side with them in pushing on any

1. Among these 15 general members only 2 were Mussulmans and these two were representatives of the Punjab and Sindh landlords. The point to be noted is that the possibility of their elections was due to predominant Muslim votes.

measure of special interest to Mussulmans, yet these members will not play the part of mere on-lookers and allow the Hindus to maltreat the Muslims to their hearts' content.

It is to destroy these safety-valves of the Legislature that the Nehru Committee is so anxious to apply an utterly absurd uniformity principle to the franchise of the country, and so deprive the Mussulmans of having the remotest chance of raising an effective voice in the Legislature.

By the way it may be added that the underlying aim of the Committee does not end here. The Committee wants to kill two birds with one stone. The Hindus everywhere represent themselves as forming 65.9 per cent of the total population of India, but the truth is now leaking out that upto now they have traded on a counterfeit license. Of the much boasted of 65.9 per cent more than half are Adi-Hindus, who are now openly claiming that they are a distinct race or community from, and have nothing in common with, the Hindus *i.e.* the Brahminic Hindus. As these Adi-Hindus are now on the road to rapid progress, the apprehensions of the Brahminic-Hindus are not unfounded that on the basis of reservations of seats they are doomed to lose their all-dominant position in near future. They will be reduced to 37 or 38 per cent, and the combined forces of Mussulmans and Adi-Hindus can successfully dispute their sole proprietorship of the governmental machinery of the Commonwealth already in their hands they can easily invent means to keep down the Adi-Hindus and render the scattered Muslim minority ineffective. However, the present situation is that excluding the officials, there are 35 Muslim members in a House of 124 *i.e.*, 28.2 per cent. But this is an entirely misleading conclusion. In any calculation for comparison with the Nehru proposals, special interests and nomination seats should altogether be eliminated, as they have no place in the Nehru Committee recommendations; the comparison should exclusively be confined to members elected as Hindus or Muslims without any reference to any other interest. Such members are 48 Hindus and 30 Mussulmans and this raises the Muslim percentage to

62.5 of the total of 78 members elected by general votes on general tickets of Hindu or Muslim representations.

So the position occupied by the Muslim members in the present Assembly may be taken as following :

In the whole House (of 140) 36 *i.e.* 25.7 p.c.

Excluding officials (of 124) 35 *i.e.* 28.2 p.c.

Excluding special interests and nominated members
(of 78) 30 *i.e.* 62.5 p.c.

In any case, the Muslim percentage is not less than 25.7 and in the real representative sense much higher than that. The Nehru Committee asks them to be content with much less than this and to enjoy at the most 24 per cent for ten years and then to be left entirely at the mercy of the Hindus.

A marvellous trickery !

Now, when we pass to Provincial Legislatures, we find that the Nehru Committee is comparatively liberal in fixing the rules of elections in some details. It is provided that :

'31 (i) There shall be one member of the Provincial Legislative Council for every 100,000 of the population of the said province, provided that in provinces with a population of less than ten millions there may be a maximum of 100 members. (ii) Every member shall be elected by a constituency determined by law. Every person of either sex who has attained the age of 21 and is not disqualified by law shall be entitled to vote.'

The special grace shown to Mussulmans in this connection is provided for by article III (of Communal Representation p. 123) which runs as follows:

(a) There shall be no reservation of seats for any community in the Punjab and Bengal.

(b) In provinces other than the Punjab and Bengal there shall be a reservation of seats for Muslim minorities on

population basis with the right to contest additional seats.

(c) In the N.W.F. Province there shall be similar reservation of seats for non-Muslims with right to contest other seats.

As to the Punjab and Bengal, it has been repeatedly stated that under the universal suffrage the tables will surely be turned against Mussulmans, as they will never drag their women to the polls. The most they can achieve will be that they will not be an insignificant minority in the Councils of these provinces; but in other six major provinces their condition will be simply pitiable. The constituencies 'to be determined by law' might very easily be so arranged as to turn the Muslims into mere negligible minorities everywhere. The constitution of the United States of America also provided for similar wide franchise but the ingenuity of Governor Gerry manipulated it to his own purpose and since then 'gerrymandering' has become a common evil of territorial basis of elections. But even without such manipulation, Mussulmans can nowhere (excepting some urban electorates) form a considerable minority, not to speak of majority. The committee have taken great pains to establish that Mussulmans have fair chances in the Punjab and Bengal but they have not cared the least to see how they will fare in other provinces of India.

Mussulmans have a right to ask whether the conditions are ripe to introduce universal suffrage 'at this stage in India.' The verdict of the Nehru Committee is not warranted by the recent development in India or by the experiences of the extension of franchise in other countries.

The present franchise qualifications in India can in no way be said to be liberal; they rather lean on the side of conservation and are based on proprietorship and literacy. Under the present restrictive method, it may fairly be claimed that the present electorate represent the almost entire intelligentsia of India and form in fact the whole political India. But a glance at the polling records gives no encouraging idea of the interest the electorate show in their newly acquired right. The following schedule speaks for itself:

<i>Legislature</i>	<i>Total Electorate</i>	<i>Percentage of Votes Polled</i>
Legislative Assembly	11,25,602	48.07
Legislative Councils		
Assam	2,49,747	44.17
Bengal	11,84,784	39.25
Behar & Orissa	3,14,818	60.54
Bombay	7,78,321	40.55
C.P. & Berar	1,70,924	61.90
Madras	13,77,466	48.29
Punjab	7,02,835	51.42
U.P.	15,98,673	50.20

The average is not higher than 50 per cent. This lack of interest of the per cent 'qualified' voters obviously proves that the condition of India is not fit for a sudden introduction of universal suffrage.

As to the experience of other nations we have before us the land of the mother of parliaments (England) and the country which first gave practical shape to the republican idea in Europe (France). The latter country within less than a century underwent three, bloody as well as peaceful, revolutions to transform monarchism into republicanism. But even this thrice tried Republic with all its declarations of the 'rights of man' could not see its way to inaugurate the universal suffrage at once. While the cautious steps with which England proceeded to adopt adult suffrage are all well known, within nine decades (1832-1918) not less than nine 'Reforms' were needed to reach the present stage.

It is here that a Mussulman is compelled to see the gravest reason for suspicion. He cannot help thinking why Propor-

tional Representation was not recommended for the House of Representatives and the Provincial Legislatures. The system is not free from defects and complications and its use requires some political training. Nevertheless, the system is universally admitted as being the only method of providing any chance, however difficult in attaining, for the minorities to gain a seat here or there by uniting and organizing their scattered forces, and upto now no other method is discovered to alleviate the grievances of minorities. The suggestion was even put forward by some Muslim leaders and a sub committee of the All-Parties Conference was appointed to consider the adaptability of the method, but the sub committee presented no report. Why not, no one knows. The Nehru Committee itself passed the following judgement on the subject.

'Most of us feel that there are no insuperable difficulties in the way of giving a trial to Proportional Representation in India. There were drawbacks and risks, but no proposal which we have considered is free from objection, and some of these involve a departure from principle, which may bring greater difficulties in its train. Some of our colleagues however are not satisfied that Proportional Representation can be introduced at this stage in India. We therefore refrain from recommending it.'

It should be made clear that the above remarks suggest an apparent contradiction to what has been said under the senate. But such is not the case. The writer is not in favour of 'Proportional Representation' and does not think it will solve the communal problem. The above remarks are only to show that the Nehru Committee has adopted the Proportional Representation in the election of Senate, which will be an indirect election and the Muslim electors will, in fact, be themselves the 'elected' representatives of the Hindus; while in the elections of the House of Representatives and the Provincial Councils, the Committee has gone against the Proportional Representation, Muslim votes will not necessarily be controlled by Hindus and Mussulmans may have a distant chance of electing here

or there some truly Muslim representatives.

This contradictory procedure is a convincing proof of how anxious the Committee was to wipe out all traces of Muslim influence from its future Commonwealth.

The case of women suffrage as recommended by Nehru Committee is still more adventurous. In England franchise to women has been extended only after the Great War. But even now there are countries in Europe which have not conceded suffrage to women. The cradle of all modern representative government (Switzerland) has no women suffrage and such is the case of the pioneer republican state of Europe (France) The heroic Greece, the fascist Italy, the revolutionary Portugal and the League-created Serb-Croat State none have so far advanced as to extend the privilege of suffrage to women. Even the democratic America is not unexcepted. Women have no franchise in Argentine Republic. The last thing that should not have been lost sight of by Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and his Hindu Colleagues is that the most Europeanized nation of Asia, (which Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya is so anxious to bring in league with the Hindus), the Japanese, have not allowed their women to go to the polls. But, Indian women with their strict *purdah* system and ninety-nine per cent of illiteracy are commanded by the Nehru Committee to forthwith march to polling stations without any awkward or risky experiment is cent per cent befitting the present 'stage in India' only because the Muslim majority in the Punjab and Bengal will, by this means, be turned into minority.

In the face of such flagrantly adverse conditions and experiences, this wholesale recommendation of a precipitated rush to universal suffrage cannot escape exciting an uneasy feeling in the minds of Mussulmans. Had the measure been proposed by some hot-headed youngmen, it would have been taken as a piece of rashness, but coming from such cool-headed grey haired persons, as the Nehru Committee was mostly composed of, one cannot help suspecting that they had

some set purpose, and combined with the non-recommendation of Proportional Representation, the purpose which *prima facie* suggested itself to the Mussulmans is that a studied design is laid down against them.

What difference there would have been if this universal suffrage had been accompanied with Proportional Representation, is not far to seek.

The House of Representatives is to consist of 500 members, to be elected by direct vote. This will give one member to every 5,00,000 of population (British India alone). Our provinces (U.P.) under this scheme will have some 85 members and on strict proportion basis of population Mussulmans ought to have 12 seats. If Proportional Representation was adopted, Mussulmans by good organization would have a chance of winning their share. But without this system whatever combination or organization they might accomplish, they will not have the chance of securing even a single seat in these provinces.

The following figures speak for themselves :

<i>Legislative Councils</i>	<i>No. Enrolled In Contested Constituencies</i>	<i>Percentage of Votes Polled</i>
Bombay	37,974	20.1
Madras	1,06,875	18.5
Punjab	13,280	8.9
U.P.	69,797	6.3

The figures establish the facts that :

- (1) Women are generally shy to be enrolled as voters.
- (2) Of those enrolled not more than 13.45 have thought it

worth their while, or have been prevailed upon, to visit the polling booths.

- (3) The more strict the *pardah* system the less the percentage of women voting.

Figures for different communities are not available, but it may safely be assumed that of the 13.45 per cent, the Muslim women form no more than 1 or 2 per cent.

The same is true of Provincial Councils. Take for example our own district, Gorakhpur, which stands in the middle of Muslim percentage in these provinces. The total population of the district is 32,66,830 of which Mussulmans are 3,30,461. So the district will have 32 seats in the Provincial Council. Under Proportional Representation Mussulmans can combine and secure a clear win of 3 seats, but without this system, Mussulmans not only will not have any chance of winning a single seat, but their votes will be rendered entirely ineffective even if the Hindus be divided into eight or nine groups. The chance of success for any Muslim candidate will only be if there be more than 10 Hindu candidates for any one seat, and Hindu votes be almost equally divided among these candidates, while all Muslim voters cast their votes to the last man for one Muslim candidate only. But in the world of actualities this can never take place.

As in the case of Legislative Assembly, so in the case of Provincial Councils we should compare the situation which the Mussulmans occupy in the Councils, as constituted at present, with the one under the Nehru Constitution.

Any statement which shows the percentage of Muslim members of various Provincial Councils in relation to

- (1) Hindu members, elected solely on communal basis.
- (2) Members elected by general (joint) electorate.
- (3) Total strength of the Council.

must speak for itself. And we cannot help drawing attention

to some facts with the sole view to illustrate how deftly the Nehru Committee has laid the plan to deprive the Mussulmans of their existing position, by hook or crook.

1. By the notorious Pact of Lucknow (1916), Mussulmans very unwisely gave up their majority in the Punjab and Bengal to gain an entirely ineffective increase in their proportion of representation in other provinces. This slight increase in the number of their representatives did in no way improve their position in those provinces and it cost them the advantage they would have enjoyed in the Punjab and Bengal. Now, the Nehru Committee by not reserving seats to these two provinces and at the same time extending the franchise to women wants to keep the Muslim representation in minority as usual, and perhaps for ever.

2. By limiting the reservation of seats for those provinces only where minorities be under 15 per cent, the Committee have deprived the Mussulmans of Bombay and Assam of the right of reservation of seats. The population, as distributed in these provinces, leave no chance for Mussulmans excepting some non-urban seats in Sindh, which cannot be more than 10 or 12 for the Bombay Provincial Council and 2 or 3 for the House of Representatives. In Bombay proper, excluding Sindh, they will not get even a single seat and the same will be true of Assam.

3. In other provinces where reservation of seats is allowed, the Muslim strength in the Provincial Councils will comparatively be far less than at present, and as fully explained above, what Muslim members there will be, they will not be representatives of their own co-religionists, but of Hindus, as they will all be elected by Hindu votes irrespective of Muslim votes.

4. The question all the more important from Muslim point of view, is that the Nehru Committee requires to reserve the seats in strict proportion to population, while in all justice, it should have been if not greater, at least equal to the proportion of members elected solely on communal basis in the

present Councils.

5. It is to be noted with special interest that of the 54 members elected by joint election to represent different interest, only 3 are Mussulmans and of these two are elected by the specially designed Muslim electorate. So, in fact, out of 52 members elected by general votes only one solitary Muslim from Bombay has received the signal honour of representing a 'joint electorate'. This is a very bold index of what will take place in future if Nehru Report's 'joint mixed election' is forced upon Mussulmans.

The Summary of Representation Scheme

In analysing the Nehru proposals of representations we followed the order of the recommended Constitution and began with the Senate. Now, in summarizing the deductions we had better begin with the Provincial Councils and end with the Senate so that the deductions may follow in logical order.

1. By non-reservation of seats in the Punjab and Bengal and introducing adult franchise system for both sexes, the Muslim majorities in these provinces are turned into minorities. Where will this minority stop, no one can foretell.

2. Assam (with 28.9 per cent of Muslim population) and Bombay (with 19.7 per cent) being excluded from the operation of reservation of seats, and the population of these provinces being so distributed as to destroy the weight of Mussulmans being felt anywhere, excepting in a few rural districts in Sindh, Mussulmans are foredoomed to be beaten everywhere, in these provinces.

3. In the other four provinces (*i.e.* the U.P., Behar and Orissa, Madras and the C.P. and Berar),¹ reservations of seats

1 On purely communal basis the proportions of Muslim representation in these provinces at present are : U.P (32-6), Behar & Orissa (27-27), C.P. & Berar (14-58), and Madras (20-6). Under Nehru Constitution they will respectively be (14-3), (10-8), (4-6) and (6-7).

will be allowed to Mussulmans in strict proportion to their populations, which will render the strength of Mussulmans in the Nehru Councils much less than they enjoy in the Montford Councils

In short, the position of the Mussulmans will be reduced to mere non-entity in the Provincial Councils of the Commonwealth.

The House of Representatives

1. The Mussulmans of the Punjab and Bengal will have to labour under the same disadvantages in connection with this House as in the case of their Provincial Councils

2. In other provinces Mussulmans will be allotted seats by 'jointt mixed' election in proportion to their populations. The Punjab (with 1,14,44,331 Muslim population) and Bengal (with that of 2,52,10,802), being excluded, the Mussulmans will remain 2,17,78,198 in 11 other provinces jointly, that is, they will form not more than 11 per cent of the total population of these provinces, and will get seats proportionately.

3. These strategical plans are sure to reduce the representation of Mussulmans in the House much lower than their percentage (*i e.* 24.0) in the whole of India.

But, aside from the question of number, when we think what will be the status of these Muslim members, the situation seems still more disappointing. These members whether of the House of Representatives or those of the Provincial Councils (*a*) will be elected by Hindu votes irrespective of Muslim votes, (*b*) will represent Hindu point of view, and (*c*) will have to vote on the side of Hindus in cases of conflicts of interests.

The Senate

Such will quantitatively and qualitatively be the Muslim members of the Provincial Councils who will by proportional Representation System elect 'delegates' to the Senate to guard

the interests of Mussulmans in the Upper House of India.

This is all the representation which Mussulmans will be tolerated to enjoy 'for a fixed period of ten years', and then this most benevolently granted reservation will be withdrawn and Hindus will be set free to make a clear sweep of Mussulmans from the Council of the Hindu Commonwealth. Some gratuity seats allowed to Mussulmans will be conditional on their giving up, even acting against, the interests of their own co-religionists.

Now, when we turn from the legislative to the executive side of the Commonwealth, we find to our utter disappointment that the Report has the same tale to tell.

The Executive

The Central Executive is to consist of not less than seven ministers, while the Provincial ones are to have not more than five. It is not the number of ministers but the manner of their appointment which concerns us most. The unwritten customary usage of the formation of British Ministry is here laid down in black and white. 'The prime minister (of the Central Executive) shall be appointed by the Governor General and the ministers shall also be appointed by him on the advice of the Prime Minister, similarly, in the Provincial Councils 'the Governor shall select the Chief Minister and appoint others only on his advice.'

It goes without saying that whether it be the Governor-General or a Governor, they will, of necessity, have to call the leaders of the majority parties in their respective Councils to form the ministries. The leaders in their turn will choose the ministers from their own parties to fulfil the best aims of their parties. The Nehru Committee having established it for ever that Mussulmans will never be in majority either in the Central or Provincial Councils, it is a beforehand settled fact that Mussulmans will have no place in any ministry—Central or Provincial. By reservation of seats some Muslim figures will here and there be seen in several Councils for ten years, but

they will not form even a minority that may have any remotest influence in the formation of a ministry (with a very problematic chance in the Punjab or Bengal). The number of the Hindu members in these Councils will be so overwhelmingly large that they can very conveniently form among themselves the party in power and the party in opposition without any Muslim side support to either benches. This is no imaginary conjecture. The Central Provinces, which to all intents and purposes have an almost purely Hindu Council, furnish us with a positive and instructive example of what is to be our lot in future. The Hindu Raj is not formally established yet. There is a British Governor in these Provinces and he is directly responsible to the British Parliament. But even this Governor could not find it safe, or more plainly could not venture, to appoint any Muslim minister in his government.

In short, the Executive scheme, read jointly with the representation system of the Nehru Constitution, leaves not the least doubt that the whole plan is so devised as to seal the fate of Mussulmans for ever and pass over the entire executive machinery of the government from the British to the Hindus.

The Judiciary

The Judiciary gives us no less cause of anxiety than the Executive. Apart from the question of the Mussulmans having any representation or not on the benches of the Supreme Court, which will be the highest court of the land, and those of High Courts of the Provinces, the rules regarding the appointment and removal of the judges of these courts are so planned that the judges of these courts will be in perpetual danger of losing their posts if they incur the displeasure of Hindu community. This sounds a little startling, but is it not the logical deduction of the rules laid down in this behalf? In European countries, to make the Judiciary independent of the Executive, various devices have been contemplated and acted upon. The range of these devices is wide enough to cover the appointment by 'lot' of the ancient Greeks and 'by election for fixed term' of some individual Commonwealths of

the United States of America, to fixity of tenure for life in England and some other countries. 'The English judges until the close of the seventeenth century held their offices at the pleasure of the Crown.' The Act of Settlement declared that 'judges commission shall be *quamdiu se bene gesserint* (during good behaviour) and their salaries ascertained and established.' Removal can take place only 'upon the address of both Houses of Parliament.' The Constitution of the United States of America greatly follows the English custom and use and apparently the Nehru Committee here as anywhere else has the American Constitution mostly in view.

This (Nehru) Constitution provides that 'the judges of the Supreme Court shall not be removed from office except by the Governor-General-in-Council on an address from both Houses of Parliament' while those of High Court 'shall not be removed except by the Governor-General-in-Council on an address by the Provincial Legislature.' The conditions are intended to establish the independence of the judges. Both the clauses are in negative, but they can as well be expressed in affirmative, that is to say, the judges shall be removable by Legislatures. There is nothing of construing in this assertion. An authority no less than Anson has interpreted the phrase 'upon the address of both Houses of Parliament' as the tenure of Judges 'as regards the Crown during good behaviour, as regards Parliament at pleasure.' As the Nehru Committee appears to have adopted as their first hypothesis to shut their eyes to the actual conditions prevailing in India, they have not taken the trouble to see how this 'at pleasure' might work in India.

1. The tenure of the judges will 'at pleasure' of the Legislatures.

2. The Legislatures will be so dominated by the Hindu element as to reduce the non-Hindu elements to negligible significance.

3. In provinces there will be only one Chamber and so it will be wanting in the healthy check of a revising chamber.

4. 'As no statute can be so minute in its provisions as to contemplate all possible cases and to admit only of one construction', differences are sure to arise about the practical applications of the safe-guards so generously bestowed upon the minorities and about the Constitutions itself. The differences will not always be limited to non-communal matters. They are sure to produce every now and then acute communal tensions.

5. Judges will be called upon to pronounce on these differences, when the passions in the country will be at the highest.

6. The judges will after all be human beings. No man of common sense can entertain the least doubt that under the circumstances the law will always admit of being readily interpreted against Muslim contention.

I not, a readymade 'address' will be waiting in this or that legislature for the judge. He will surely be a judge, having something superhuman in him who, with the sword of removal by an agitate Legislature hanging on his head, dare adjudicate against the all powerful community, when the communal tension be at its highest pitch.

The Rajpal case is indicative enough that such a thing is not an impossibility. A section of the Indian Penal Code was interpreted by a judge in contravention of the interpretations of other judges—I do not say partially, quite impartially—and it provoked such a commotion in India that had this rule of the removal of judges been in vogue at the time, an 'address' was sure to be moved in the Punjab Legislative Council and passed, if the suffering community had a majority in that Council. A member of the Nehru Committee, himself a prominent doctor of law, in vindicating the above referred judge dictated that judges are not infallible. Has this learned lawyer now made an arrangement with the Providence that under his Platonic Commonwealth judges will always be infallible ?

Those who do not believe in the judges being made party

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tools are requested to study the conditions prevailing in some individual Commonwealths in the United States of America and they will be convinced that judges may also be exposed 'to the influence of political and personal motives in their conduct on the bench.'

In short, the Legislative Councils, being predominantly Hindu Councils, and judges made to depend for their tenures of office on these very Councils, Mussulmans can in all justification assert that they have better reason in placing no credit in the bona-fides of these judges than the boycotters of the Indian Statutory Commission have in suspecting the bona-fides of the Commission. No long time has passed when the persons composing the main strength of this boycotting corps, openly denounced the impartiality of the Supreme Court of England in the Tilak-Chirol case. What right have these very persons to force Mussulmans to blindly declare faith in their would-be Supreme Court and High Courts, which will in all likelihood be composed of, and controlled by, the Hindus.

The truth is that where Hindu-Muslim questions will be involved, these courts, as proposed to be constituted and controlled, will in effect be Arbitral-Courts, composed of arbitrators appointed by one party only. No community or nation can be found on the face of the earth to be foolish enough to submit its case to such a court.

The point deserves to be made a little more clear at the sacrifice of space. The depriving the Crown, i.e. the Executive, of the power of removing the judges at will, is solely meant to prevent the corruption of justice in the interest of a section of the state. This act implies by itself that judges are not immune to corruption when the influence be powerful enough to do so. It does not matter that the power is in the hands of one, few or many. An assembly, representative or preliminary, large or small, may prove and has actually proved in different countries and in different times, to be as prone to corrupting the judiciary as an autocrat or a little group of oligarchs. When the representative assembly has not to face the displea-

sure of its constituents, it may prove as greedy, extravagant, partisan, rash and irresponsible as any despot may be. The safeguard of the judges being removable on the address of the representative assembly is not worth the paper on which it is written, when the assembly feels sure that in the case of a misuse of its power it has not to rue the consequences. England has this safeguard to the fullest extent, but France will not allow any of her dispute with England to be adjudged by the Supreme Court of England on the assurance that in case of 'misbehaviour or incapacity', the judges are subject to be removed upon an address of both Houses of Parliament. The reason is self-apparent. In case of injustice to France, Frenchmen can in no way affect the British Parliament. Under the Nehru Constitution, the position of the Muslims of India in regard to Indian Legislatures will not be dissimilar to the position of French, German or any other nation in regard to the British Parliament. Legally it will not be so, but virtually there will be no great difference. The Nehru Committee by so planning the scheme of representation as to ultimately purge the Indian Councils of non-Hindu elements, have in effect turned the Mussulmans and other non-Hindu communities of India in the position of 'aliens'

By so hopelessly upsetting the already disturbed equilibrium, the Nehru Committee have caused the Mussulmans to place no faith in their proposed judicial courts, and consequently, Mussulmans are compelled to look on these courts, as a kind of one-sided arbitral courts. If any community or nation in the world can be brought to willingly place its case before such a tribunal, Mussulmans will also do so. Otherwise, not.

The Indian Princes were also invited by the Nehru Committee to transfer their allegiance to the paramount Commonwealth on the guarantee of there being created an all-justice Supreme Court by the Commonwealth. But the warm reception extended to the invitation by the Princes, suffices to show that the world is not so credulous as the Committee with imposing simplicity pretends to give out. It is all the more

satisfactory that the first emphatic no confidence voice was raised by a Hindu ruler (the Maharaja of Bikaner) and his Hindu Prime Minister. This gives a strong support to the apprehensions of Mussulmans about the Supreme Court, and its subordinate Provincial High Courts.

The Services : Civil and Military

Sections 79-84, deal with the transference of the entire government, civil and military, from the British to the Indians i. e. the Hindus. The officers having no proclivity to adjust themselves to the requirements of the (Hindu) Commonwealth are allowed to retire within three years' time, and the same right is reserved for the Commonwealth to get rid of the undesirable officers, who will naturally be the Europeans and the Mussalmans. As regards Civil services it is presumed as a self-evident truth that the Indians viz. the Hindus can at once go on without the British and so the Committee has not wasted time to discuss the workability or otherwise of this service with no-British element, but as regards the army it has devoted many pages to silence those who think that 'full dominion status means a dominion army under full control of the dominion government.' It is claimed that 'Indian army has not to be created; it exists there already'. One may add that it has existed there always, but, before the British established peace in the land, its only duty was to meet and escort the guests-at-will from the north—a Scythian, a Greek, a Turkoman or a Mogal—and it is to resume its ancient hospitable function, when soon after the establishment of the Hindu Commonwealth, it is again fully marshalled by veteran Hindu Surmas. All well. No long time will be required to disclose whether the British share or not the anxiety of these constitution-making leaders to so overhaul the entire government services as to let one die a prime minister of India (taking his seat in the Empire Conference in precedence to the premiers of other dominions), another a minister of war (a menace to Afganistan and a dread to Persia), till another a minister for foreign affairs (with over three hundred Indian Chiefs looking towards him with hope and fear). May it be as it be, what concerns

the Mussalmans at the present stage is that in this changing hands of the government, they are left entirely in suspense about their future position in the should-be Government services. All that is provided for is that after establishment of the Commonwealth a Commission will be appointed 'to make recommendations for such reorganisation and readjustment of the departments of the public services as may be necessary', and then a permanent Public Services Commission will be established 'with such powers and duties relating to the recruitment, appointment, discipline and superannuation of public office as a Parliament may determine.'

But, the framers of the Constitution by their own behaviour have so shattered the faith in commission that its rehabilitation will not be a matter of short time—so short as the establishment of the Commonwealth. The Indian Parliament being predominantly Hindu, the Executive being solely Hindu, the Commission is predetermined to be a Hindu Commission. What faith can Mussalmans place in such a Commission is too patent to admit any conjuring. But, faith or no-faith, the anti-Muslim course, pursued by the Hindus in the matter of government services, for the last fifty or sixty years, has undeniably established that they want to make the entire government services their sole monopoly. When by their dogged perseverance they have so overpowered the British authorities that one after another the avenues of government services are being closed against Mussalmans, there is no risking or prediction in saying that under the Nehru Commonwealth, the first and foremost qualification any candidate for the government service, however high or low, will be required to fulfil, will be his satisfying the authorities concerned that he is a non-Muslim.

The share the Mussalmans are to be allotted in the government services forms one of their main demands to be definitely and satisfactorily settled, whether the Bureaucracy continues to rule or a Communism is established to nullify the rule. In this demand there is nothing of hankering after some posts. It is the establishing, rather re-establishing, of our inborn

right which we are unjustly denied and mercilessly deprived of. We clearly appreciate and frankly acknowledge that the development of a people does not depend upon its share in the services of the government, but at the same we perceive with like clearness and declare with equal boldness that the political status of any people is an influential element in its development, and government service is no mean factor in determining that status.

As this question is of vital importance from Muslim point of interest, its different aspects are dealt with in the next section at some length. Here we have only to observe that the Nehru recommendations are no less disappointing in this special branch as in others. If by an irony of fate, these recommendations take practical shape at any time, they will not leave even such a loophole for Mussalmans in government services, as is incidentally left in the legislative branch of the government.

Though we have proposed to defer the discussion of the question (of services) to the next section, still a passing remark about a special point will not be out of place. To discredit the protest of Mussalmans in this connection, it might be said, with some air of authority, that a 'constitution' is not a regulation manual to contain all possible rules, qualifications and classifications of all the services from that of a governor to that of a peon. Constitution is to fix broad principles only. Truly so. We also don't ask to make the constitution a railway freight guide but at the same time we also do not admit of a constitution being limited by some law of nature to the inflexible number of 87 articles only. By an addition of one or two more articles settling in principle the division of services between the English and Indian on the one hand and the Mussalmans and Hindus on the other would not have made the constitution too bulky to stealthily slip into the files of the Indian Statutory Commission. The reason of omission is too apparent to mislead any one to search for it in the sacrarium of principles.