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Voices of Indian Freedom Movement



J. C. JOHARI

VOICES OF INDIAN FREEDOM MOVEMENT

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(VOICE OF MUSLIM ISOLATIONISM AND COMMUNALISM)

VOLUME X

Part Four

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SYED ALI IMAM

[Like the two Nawabs and the two Alis (covered in the previous chapters), the two Imams (Ali and Hasan) have their own place in the annals of Indian freedom movement. While the younger Imam (Syed Hasan) remained associated with the Indian National Congress and presided over its special session held at Bombay in 1918, the elder one (Syed Ali) remained closely associated with the Muslim League ever since its creation in 1906. In 1906 he was taken into the Central Committee of the Muslim League unit of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa and presided over the second annual session of the League held at Amritsar in 1908. He was a member of the Muslim League delegation (with the Agha Khan and Syed Amir Ali) that visited England in 1909 to plead the case of separate electorates for the Muslims. In this way he strongly supported the case of separate electorates for the Muslims. But on account of his close association with Gopal Krishna Gokhale, he revised his stand in favour of mixed electorates for all classes with special reservations for the Muslims alone. Known for being a scholar, a writer, a jurist and a public man, Sir Syed Ali Imam (1869-1932) served in many distinguished capacities. As a barrister-at-law he practised at the High Courts of Calcutta and Patna. He served as an official member of the Bengal Legislative Council from 1909 to 1910 and then joined the Executive Council of the Viceroy as its Law Member as the successor of Sir S.P. Sinha. In 1917 he accepted the offer of the judgeship of the Patna High Court, but in the following year he became a member of the Governor's Executive Council and served there for about two years. When the Muslim League held its annual session at Calcutta in December, 1927, he moved a resolution

for boycotting the Simon Commission. He worked as a member of the Nehru Committee that prepared a model constitution for India in 1928. He was a staunch nationalist in politics and believed in the paramount need for national unity. In most of his public utterances he not only accepted but claimed Indian nationality for the Muslims. In his address to the Indian Union Society, London, on 17 October, 1909 he said : "I am pleased to be described as first and foremost an Indian." Its President (D.C. Ghosh) then described him (Ali) as 'an Indian first and a Muhammedan afterwards.']

CHARTER OF DEMANDS*

As authorised by the All-India Moslem League, I venture to submit this humble representation to Your Excellency on behalf of the Mussulmans of India on a subject that is at present occupying the most anxious thoughts of this community all over the country. That subject is the attitude of the Mahommedan community to the famous despatch of the Secretary of State dealing with the proposed reform of councils. The All-India Moslem League exhaustively dealt with the despatch at the sitting of its annual sessions held last December at Amritsar and is now anxious to place before Your Excellency through this representation, some of the grave considerations that arise out of the despatch, affecting the particular interests of the Mahommedans of India. The League is grateful to Your Excellency and the Secretary of State for the general policy of reform contained in the despatch and is of opinion that the measure of popular element introduced to help the administration of the country, with the safeguards provided in the despatch, will be largely beneficial in fostering the spirit and strengthening the practice of co-operation between the rulers and the ruled. The League has every reason to believe that the responsibility created by the grant of generous concessions and

*Memorial presented by Syed Ali Imam, Chairman of the Special Sub-Committee of the All-India Muslim League, to the Viceroy, *Morley Papers*, 1909.

the inauguration of a policy of liberal regard for popular views, will be of considerable service to prepare Indians to take a proper part in the administration of their countrymen. While the Mahommedans, equally with their non-Moslem country, gratefully acknowledge the liberal and beneficent concessions contained in the despatch, they nonetheless look upon the proposed provision of class representation contained in the said despatch with much dismay and disappointment. In the matter of class representation the Moslems think that Lord Morley when dealing, however tentatively, with their case has overlooked the claims of this community in two weighty particulars. These two are : (1) effectiveness of Mahommedan representation through the machinery his lordship seemed to favour in the despatch. (2) The importance of the Mahommedan community in relation (a) to seats in the Legislative Councils, and (b) in the Executive Councils.

For the sake of convenience I will, with Your Excellency's permission, deal with the two particulars separately. As to the effectiveness of class representation, the League has read with great gratification the principle enunciated in the paragraph 9 of the despatch, and is of opinion that a more statesman-like treatment of Indian conditions was not possible. It welcomes, therefore, heartily and gives its most loyal support to the pronouncement that no system of representation would be satisfactory if it did not provide for the presence in the Councils of sufficient representatives of the communities so important as are the Mahommedans and the landowners. The significance of the words 'sufficient representatives of communities' denotes that the communities mentioned shall have such representatives in the Councils as enjoy the confidence of the communities they represent, and that the sufficiency of their numbers should be judged by the importance of their constituencies. The League, believing in the earnestness and soundness of the principle contained in the said para 9, naturally looked forward to its expression and maintenance in any suggestions that may be tentative, but illustrative of the method and manner in which

these wise provisions were to be carried out, I have to say my lord, that paragraph 12 of the despatch which contains the suggestions relating to class representations does not only suffer from deplorable vagueness of language, but is unhappily susceptible of a construction completely subversive of the just and wise policy which was pronounced in the earlier paragraph. As the League was therefore greatly alarmed at what appeared to be an unaccountable inconsistency, having the germs of much political trouble for the Mahommedans of India, the three important resolutions of the League bearing on the despatch which I had the honour to put from the chair at Amritsar will convey to Your Excellency the intensity of the feeling of the Mahommedans on the subject.

(The resolutions and the speech introducing them are herewith annexed.) Since then the London branch of the Muslim League headed by Mr. Ameer Ali, C.I.E., and Major Syed Hasan Bilgrami, M.D., I.M.S. waited in deputation on the Secretary of State, and the All-India Moslem League notes with a great sense of relief that portion of Lord Morley's speech in reply to the deputation that deals with class representations as it affects the Mussulmans of India. It is the principle of mixed Electoral Colleges that created in the mind of the Mussulmans the apprehension that the elections, as influenced by such a principle, will result in the return of those who would be members of the Mahommedan Community, but by no means their representatives, as they would only be mandatories and nominees of the non-Moslem majority. The pronouncement of the Secretary of State that the principle of mixed Electoral Colleges has been laid down as an unalterable one in the despatch, and that his lordship was not sure that the election might not be held in two stages with exclusive Mahommedan Electoral Colleges, has been read by Mahommedans with much thankfulness as it has helped completely to dispel on this point the gloom that paragraph 12 of the despatch had cast on the prospects of the Mahommedans participating in the benefit that will result from the contemplated changes. The All-India Moslem League in this connection begs to assure Your Excellency that

it has not the least desire that an iron wall should be raised for ever between the Mahomedans and their Hindu countrymen, but what it does desire is that considering the conditions prevailing in India, a real, effective and truly Mahomedan representation is essential in the best interest of the country. Having this all important aspect of class representation in view and guarding it zealously against any encroachment, it will be, a satisfaction to the Mahomedans of India to be associated as much as possible with their non-Moslem countrymen.

Both these objects are looked upon by the Mussulmans as essential for the proper adjustment of the balance of social forces of the country and as such I beg to put before Your Excellency the following method of election as a possible solution of the problem. We suggest that the denominational element must be carried down to the very base, the first voting, and that it must necessarily be carried up to the intermediary agency, the Electoral Co'leges, but that it need not be necessary to apply it to the representative who will be returned to the Council Chamber, whether provincial or imperial. It may be rightly urged, Your Excellency, that the religious faith of the man who sits in Council is not of any consequence to his constitution, but that his political creed is. It seems, therefore, advisable that whereas the constituencies, both original and intermediary, should be strictly denominational, the representatives in the Councils need not be so. As long as they enjoy the confidence of their electors and represent their political views faithfully, I do not see the least objection to leave to a denominational Electoral College the option to choose its representative in Council from any community it likes. In this way it will be possible for a Mussulman electorate to elect a Hindu, Parsi, Christian, or any other, and similarly for a Hindu electorate to choose a Mussulman, Parsi, Christian, or any other, to represent it in the Councils. I fully realise that at first the denominational electorate will naturally hesitate to make the experiment of electing a representative from any community other than their own, but the option will nevertheless create great possibilities of

drawing the different communities closer together, without in the least endangering the independence of action of each. I submit this scheme to Your Excellency's consideration in the hope that, whereas effective class representation of Mahommedans is impossible without giving them separate electorates from the very beginning, to the end, the possibilities of avoiding political isolation between them and their non-Moslem countrymen may not be disregarded. I may be allowed to say in this connection that if the full due of the Mahommedans as to the number of seats in the Councils can be secured to them by means of separate and denominational electorates of which the Mahommedan section of the rural and municipal boards may form a part, the Mahommedans have no desire to court the resentment of their non-Moslem countrymen to vote again in the said Boards for the purpose of returning members to Councils. The Mussulmans think, Your Excellency, that the suggestions I have ventured to put forward above will appreciably dissipate any objection that may have been based on the ground of a double vote.

In dealing with the importance of the Mahommedan community in regard to the claim to seats in the Councils I beg permission to treat subject in two parts: (1) Legislative Councils, and (2) Executive Councils. Now as to the Legislative Councils, the League is of opinion that Lord Morley's despatch underestimates the claim of the Mahommedans by suggesting that their importance, and, as such, their claim to seats on the Councils, should be considered in correspondence to their proportion to the total population of the country. The League submits that the mere test of numbers is misleading and dangerous, as it is limited in its outlook and is not wide enough to embrace the social, traditional, and religious considerations attaching to the Indian Mahommedans as a community. The Indian Mussulmans contribute largely to the defence of the Empire, and considering the population, of the Frontier Province, Kashmir and the Punjab, it is not too much to say that the Mahommedans may rightly claim to have the honour of being the gatekeepers of India. It may also be submitted that

as a community their religious association with the Islamic countries of the world is not without interest to enhance the value of their position in India. The traditional loyalty of the Indian Mahommedan to the British Government, and his religious obligation loyally to support the 'Ul-ul-Amar', the rulers, are, I submit, no small asset in the Imperial economy of India. It is with much gratitude that the Mussulmans of India cherish as their most valued political possession the just pronouncement Your Excellency was pleased to make in reply to the well-known All-India Mahommedan deputation that waited upon Your Excellency at Simla in October 1906. Your Excellency then said to the members of the deputation, 'You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire.' These words have sunk deep into the hearts of the Indian Mahommedans, and any measure to detract from their gravity and importance can only be accompanied with a sense of injustice to which so far the Indian Mahommedans have remained unhabituated at the hands of the British Government. I can hardly convey to Your Excellency the extent to which such a measure is likely to occasion disappointment and consequent dissatisfaction to the Mahommedans of India. The reply of the Secretary of State on this point to the recent Mahommedan deputation in London mentioned above has, I am glad to say, in a measure abated the consuming anxiety of the Mahommedans. His Lordship does not see any harm in that, while numbers should be the main factor in determining the extent of representation, modifying causes might influence the number of representatives. The Mahommedans feel confident that wherever they may be in numerical minority as for instance in the Imperial Council, the Councils of the Government of Madras and Bombay, or any other Provincial Council the particular considerations mentioned above, attached to their community as a distinct people, will always be found to be a sufficient and strong modifying cause to influence the number of the representatives over and above what they are entitled to

on the ground of their numerical strength. It is this gleam of hope that has stopped the spread of the Mahommedan discontent created by paragraph 12 of the despatch, and I do most earnestly beseech Your Excellency to give the weight of your high authority to the fulfilment of hopes that have been so trustfully reposed by a community that has always implicitly believed in the justice and good faith of the British Government.

It is impossible for me to pass on to the consideration of the second part of this subject without submitting to Your Excellency that the despatch of the Government of India on the reform scheme, dated the 1st of October 1908, had carefully considered the claim of the Mahommedans, and had provided for them the means of securing ten seats on the Imperial Council, five by a special electorate, and almost certainly at least five by general electorates out of twenty-eight seats to be filled by elected members. This arrangement was in keeping with the maintenance of the principle of effective Mahommedan representation, and had also the virtue of linking various class interests together in the rural and territorial electorates.

The Mahommedans are under a heavy debt of gratitude to Your Excellency and your Executive Council for the despatch which was characterised not only by far-sighted statesmanship, but had the great virtue of adjusting divergent claims and interests, on a considerate and equitable basis, and unless in some form or other the reform scheme is carried out on the principles, on which Your Excellency's despatch was based, I cannot foretell in grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority, great or small.

As regards the Mahommedan attitude to the Executive Council, I have much pleasure in submitting to Your Excellency that the League supports the suggestions of the creation of such Councils in the larger Provinces with a view to strengthen the hands of Lieutenant-Governors. The League also welcomes

the suggestion of enlarging the Executive Council of Bombay and Madras. The League is aware that the Provincial Executive Councils created or extended will not be in any case large enough in point of number to admit two Indians in each, and as such the League hesitates to ask for such a concession at present, but trusts it will come into existence in its own fulness of time. The League nevertheless has every hope that for the reason of the limited scope of appointment of Indians to the Provincial Executive Council the claim of the Mahommedans will not be overlooked, and that as long as the requisite ability, efficiency, and integrity for the discharge of the duties of such an office will be forthcoming due regard will be paid to the aspirations of the Hindus and Mahommedans equally to serve their country and enjoy the esteem and confidence of the Government. As regards the appointment of Indians to the Executive Council of the Viceroy the League looks upon such a measure as the surest way of creating popular confidence in the administration of the country, and in as much as the most vital and far-reaching measures of administration emanate from the Imperial Executive Council, and also in as much as the policy of the Executive Council guides and directs the Government of the entire country, the League cannot but look upon this measure as a concession of the greatest possible import. I am glad to be in a position to assure Your Excellency that the League looks upon this favour as an imperial gift to the people for which the most grateful thanks of the country are due to the rulers. The question of the appointment of a Mahommedans to a seat on this Council came up before the League at Amritsar, since then it has received much prominence by the reply of Lord Morley to the London deputation, and it appears that the difficulty of the Secretary of State in meeting the Mohammedans' wish lies principally in the fact that he does not see his way to reserve two seats out of six in favour of Indians if he were to appoint a Hindu and a Mahommedan at the same time. He thinks it to be a serious step to make one-third of the Council Indian. The League, however, submits that there is a solution in this difficulty by creating a seventh

membership. An extension in this direction will not be at all unreasonable as we have so far had no membership for education, to which might be added sanitation. Education has become a great, and is likely to become a greater, problem in the administration of India, and the appointment of a Member for this all important work will secure at least two highly appreciable advantages. One will be the removal of a great want and the other will be the opportunity to satisfy both the great communities of India, Hindus and Mahommedans. The League feels very keenly on the question of the appointment of a Mahommedan to the Imperial Executive Council. It will be but the adjustment of political balance to have in the Executive Council of the Viceroy representatives of both the communities. The League begs to assure Your Excellency that there are now amongst the Mahommedans of India men who are not wanting in the requisite qualifications necessary for such a high office. For all that a noble lord may have said in the House of Peers in England the League begs emphatically to assert that both the communities, Hindus and Mahommedans, can furnish men of marked ability to serve on the Executive Council of the Viceroy and as such the crowning glory of the reform will remain dim without Hindus and Mahommedans being given an equal chance of serving their country in close and confidential association with the head of the administration.

In submitting the above representation the League entertains the hope that it will receive from Your Excellency the gracious consideration to which, I humbly submit, it is entitled.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR*

Since I attended the sitting of the Bihar Provincial Conference the other day at Bhagalpore my attention has been drawn to a leading article in the *Observer* in which that paper was given serious attention to the consequences that should

**The Pioneer*, 5 May 1909 relating to the representation of the Muslims in the Indian Councils Bill.

result from my participation in the proceedings of that gathering. Journalistic virulence is not generally successful in arresting my attention, and in this particular instance after I read the article in question, I had no intention of according it any exceptional treatment. Since its perusal, however, I have had letters and telegrams from leaders from various parts of India requesting me to remove misconception that the hasty pronouncement of the *Observer* has engendered. I accordingly proceed to do so and request you to favour me with giving publication to what I have to say in this connection.

The question on which there is some agreement of views between Mr. Gokhale and myself is the character of separation between the two communities, Hindus and Mahommedans, in the matter of election to the Councils under the proposed Reforms. Three main divisions of views are logically possible on this point, each division having in its turn differences of details and shades of variance that may be important but cannot affect the issues in principle. The three divisions are formed of Extreme Separatists, Moderate Separatists and Non-Separatists. Extreme Separatists are those that insist on absolute isolation and desire to raise an iron wall between the Mahommedans and non-Mahommedans of India. Moderate Separatists are those that recognise the justice and fairness of giving so important a minority as the Mahommedans are full and adequate representation by the creation of social Mahommedan electorates and at the same time have the political sagacity to maintain their co-operation and participation in the elections by general electorates. Non-Separatists are those that will not tolerate any class representation by separate electorate at all of any kind whatsoever. These are the three main divisions that the controversy over the question of class representation has somewhat sharply defined.

I may say at the very outset that I have nothing in common with the Non-Separatists. To my mind he has not understood the needs of our country and is hopelessly wedded to maxims without any appreciation of modifying circumstances that so

largely vary conditions of the application of principles. He is too abstract and shuts his eyes to stern realities that will not bend to his philosophic abstraction. He forgets that the Mahommedans of India are a distinct community with distinct religious, social and racial characteristics of their own, and that in a country like India that is only an infant in matters of representative institutions, unfortunately election is too often subordinated to communal consideration rather than to political discrimination of the merits or demerits of individual candidates. I hold to the view that without the reservation of full and adequate number of seats for the Mussulman in the Councils, full and adequate both on grounds of numerical test and their political importance, the proposed reforms will result in deep dissatisfaction among the Mahommedans, will engender in them feelings of dire hostility to and heart-burning against the permanent and everlasting Hindu majority will create in their mind profound distrust of British statesmanship and will rudely shake the implicit faith the Mussulmans have so long placed in the care and solicitude of British Government. Let all communities advance affording them facilities according to their needs and requirements, and do not, in heaven's name allow an all-powerful majority to overshadow and dwarf the growth of a hopeless minority. The aspiration of the All-India Moslem League, as given expression to by me at Amritsar, is 'United India' and this I am convinced is not possible without recognising the wisdom of preferential treatment where such treatment is a necessity in the interest of the general good of India. I have said before and I repeat that dissatisfied Muslims in India will be no small drag on the wheel of national progress and the only way to kindle territorial patriotism in them, the only way to wean them away from Pan-Islamic attractions and the only way to inspire them with Indian nationalism is for the insular, stay-at-home and indigenus community, the Hindus, to bind their Mahommedan countrymen with ties of confidence and obligation which is impossible without extending to the Mussulmans liberal treatment and generous concessions. In the name of India the Hindus must embark upon a course of courageous conciliation and in the sacred name of the land of

their birth the Mahommedans should respond by lessening the rigidity of their sectarianism. Political readjustment of the relations of the two communities alone can save them from the perils of years and years, possibly of generations of bitterly suicidal strife that the present outlook only too palpably foreshadows. From all this the Non-Separatist has to take a lesson. But what of the Extreme-Separatist? He who wants complete isolation and the iron wall? I have no hesitation in saying that he strikes no less a fatal blow at Indian nationalism than the Non-Separatist. They are poles asunder yet close comrades in destruction. There is, however, a difference in method and that is that while the Non-Separatist kills India nationalism just as ruthlessly as the other, he subserves sectarian gain for the Hindu majority and secures for it an aggressive over-lordship keeping the Indian Mussulmans under an everlasting political tutelage. On the other hand, the Extreme-Separatist puts himself out of touch with the political activity of the majority of his countrymen, deprives himself of participation in the opportunities the 'awakening', referred to by Lord Morley in the Indian Civil Service, dinner speech is creating and will go on creating in this country, and retires within the crabbed existence of political isolation. The Extreme Separatist destroys Indian nationalism too, but he does far worse. He at the same time presents the poisoned chalice to his own lips.

I hope I shall not be misunderstood. I do not for a moment discount the vital importance of securing full and adequate Moslem representation by separate Mahommedan electorate but as a Moderate Separatist I value the political necessity of all communities participating in the elections by general electorates. There may be force in the contention that such participation will not probably result in return of Mahommedan members and that under very exceptional circumstances the Mahommedan candidate may possess a slender chance of successful election and that even this perhaps on his subscribing to the views of the majority of the electors who will be necessarily Hindus. It may be urged that even in the East Bengal and the Punjab where the Mahommedans are in

numerical majority the chances of their return are problematical in as much as other factors—education, wealth and organisation—have Hindu preponderance as they have all over India. It may then be asked why I favour co-operation which the uncertainties of securing seats for Mahommedans through election by general electorate are obvious? As to this while I fully admit the difficulties of the Mahommedan position I am not quite sure that in election by general electorates their position is quite lamentably hopeless...

I now turn to the resolution of the Bihar Provincial Conference with which I freely associated myself. That resolution deals with class representation in the Legislative Councils alone and runs as follows: "(1) That this conference is of opinion that while it is necessary in the best interest of the country that all communities should continue as at present to participate without distinction of race or creed in elections by general electorates, it is nevertheless essential in present circumstances to secure full and adequate representation for so important a majority as the Mahommedans are by the creation of special Mahommedan electorates, (2) In the opinion of this conference similar treatment should if necessary be accorded to the Hindus where they are in a minority."

I will deal with the two parts of this resolution separately and in the order in which they stand. The first part expresses the same view that I have held all along. It is only an enunciation of the two principles of class representation affecting Mahommedans, effective representation by special electorates and participation in the general electorates. I believe this is the first resolution of its kind that has been unanimously passed by a conference composed of Hindus and Mahommedans alike. Never before such a body publicly and emphatically recognised the Mahommedan claim for full and adequate representation by the creation of separate Mahommedan Electorates. I will ask the *Observer* to mark the words 'nevertheless', 'important minority', 'essential', 'special Mahommedan electorates' and 'full and adequate'. What is full and adequate is a matter of detail

influenced by various circumstances and the Bihar Conference did not and could not deal with it in the form of a resolution. The Conference concerned itself with the two principles alone and gave expression to its view of the same. I admire the courage and statesmanship of Mr. Gokhale when speaking on the above resolution he told the audience something to this effect : 'The Mohammedans want separate electorate, let them have it, they want more seats than numerically they are entitled to, let them have a few more, but do not allow them and yourselves to be isolated from each other. In the interest of the future of the country co-operation is necessary.' Mr. Satchida Nand Sinha, the President of the Conference, was no less outspoken, fearless and sagacious. The following are quotations from his presidential address :

I am therefore strongly in favour of provision being made for the separate representation of Mussulmans to an extent which will enable them to be adequately represented in the Legislative Councils, regard being had to their numerical proportion, their influence and their position in each province in the country at large.

'Much does not depend on number alone, and so long as the Hindus return to the councils men fully qualified to discharge their responsibilities, it is to my mind immaterial if a few seats go to the Mussulmans in excess of their strict numerical proportion.'

Surely my association with men whose sentiments are such as these is not betrayal of the trust the Mahommedans have reposed in me. Are not these views and sentiments the same that form of basis of Mahommedan claim since Amritsar? Have I done a disservice to the Mahommedans by associating myself with Mr. Gokhale in helping the Bihar Conference to give emphatic expression to and recognition of the Mahommedan claim both as to separate electorate and as to adequacy of seats in full? 'Traitor' is a hard word and I expected of a responsible organ of Mahommedan views like the *Observer* to make use of it with some degree of caution

if not magnanimity. At a time when militant opposition to Mohommedan claim, has surged from the Calcutta Town Hall to the offices of the Punjab Hindu Sabha, I should have thought that the Bihar Conference proceedings would have been received by the *Observer* with some gratification.

The Moderate Separatist accepts the political necessity of the Mahommedans having full and adequate representation by special electorates of their own but insists on the Mussulmans not cutting themselves adrift from participation in the election by general electorates. It is obvious that dealing with the principles alone of the two the Moderate Separatist has advantage over the extreme Separatist. Apart from the consideration of the number of seats obtainable under the systems proposed by the the two the one advocating participation in the general electorates has the merit of higher statesmanship. It seems to me, therefore, that if full and adequate Moslem representation is secured by special Mahommedan electorate, the Extreme Separatist will have little ground either to cherish or maintain his position of isolation. The soundness of this proposition was recognised two days after the Bihar Provincial Conference in a meeting of the standing committee of the All-India Moslem League at Aligarh in which I had the honour to preside. Nawab Viquar-ul-Mulk Bahadur proposed and Colonel Abdul Majeed Khan seconded the following resolution which was unanimously passed :

‘That in the opinion of All-India Moslem League full, adequate and effective representation of Mahommedans cannot be secured without providing for them by special electorates, composed entirely of Mahommedan voters, such a number of seats as may be due to them on the numerical basis also by securing for them by similar electorate, a moiety of the series to which they are entitled on the grounds of their political importance, reserving the other half to be filled in by the participation of the Mahommedans in the elections by general electorates. That this League strongly urges before the Government that the Primary election of the Mahommedans

should be through their special electorate above referred to, and that their participation in the general election should only be for the purpose of supplementing their election in respect of a portion of their claim based on the grounds of political importance.'

It will be noticed that the Aligarh resolution while recognising the importance of participation in the general electorates just as much as the Bihar Conference more definitely lays down the lines on which the special and general electorates should be worked. This is a matter of detail apart from the question of principle and so far as this is concerned, divergence of views not only between Hindus and Mahommedans, but between Mahommedan and Mahommedan, is inevitable as it must always be in the matter of consideration of details. It is open to the Hindu delegates of the Bihar Conference to regard the extent to which the Aligarh resolution restricts Mahommedan representation by general electorates as undesirable or inexpedient. It is equally open to Mahommedan delegates of that Conference to regard it as an excessive concession to the securing of joint action. These differences and divergences in no way affect the soundness of the two principles the Bihar Conference resolution and the Aligarh resolution uphold, and in doing so, both give their consent not to the details of Sir Harvey Adamson's scheme but to the same two principles that underlay it. As I have said before the two principles are full and adequate Moslem representation by special Moslem electorates and Moslem Participation in the general electorates. This is not a new position the all India Moslem League has taken. It has all along given support to these very two principles contained in the despatch of the 1st October 1908, in other words, to the two principles that are the particular features of Sir Harvey Adamson's scheme. True, Lord Morley has pledged himself to grant Mussulman demands in full. This gives us an undoubted right to insist upon our getting seats by our own special electorates not only in proportion to our numerical strength but also on the ground of our political importance. I may say without

any demur that any trifling with the pledges unqualifiedly given by a great British Minister will end in disastrous disrepute of the soundness and integrity of British statesmanship. It will create a distrust in the Mahommedan mind which will be a novel but alarming feature in the Imperial economy of India. I have too much trust in the good faith of the British Government for a moment to doubt the fulfilment of the pledges given to us. Separate electorates from top to bottom and seats in excess of the numerical test have been promised to us, and the Government in honour cannot break promises solemnly given. But is there any reason for all this to limit Moslem political foresight only to the securing of the largest of seats in the Councils? Will the possession of an extravagant number of seats alone serve the Mahommedans? Is this alone such a big prize that all the natural ties of fellow-countrymen-ship must be trampled down under foot? Is not association with the advanced races of India in their political activities of any value? Out of touch, out of sympathy, in our self-inflicted isolation cut off from the aspirations, enterprise and advancement of the rest of India our position and the position of our posterity will be unenviable and possibly even of grave peril. This will be the fruit we shall gather of insistence on Extreme Separation. Surely there is a way of securing for ourselves the full advantages of separation with the reserved right of joint action. This is possible by adhering to the principles laid down in the resolution of All-India Moslem League quoted above.

There is no justification for the Extreme-Separatist to suffer from nervous fear at the very mention of the suggestion of participation in the general electorates. If he does so, it is due to his having failed to grasp the exceedingly favourable political situation Lord Morley's promises and the scheme of Sir Harvey Adamson have combined to produce. The Secretary of State has acknowledged our political importance and pledged his word to secure exclusively Moslem control over seats in Councils on an estimate of the dual claim of importance and numerical proportion. The Home member of the

Viceroy's Executive Council has put forward a scheme (vide Government of India Despatch, dated 1st October 1908) which has in principle the merit of saving Mahommedans from isolation. I hope the political instinct of the Mahommedans will not desert them in this instance. I trust political foresight will tell them that the present moment is full of promise and full of opportunity and that this is not the time to display puerile petulance by attributing bad motive where there is none. Lord Morley, Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Hobhouse in England, and Sir Harvey Adamson, our Non-Moslem sympathiser and our Hindu countrymen in India, all have claim in our patience and good sense. By the rights of the case we hold at present the coign of vantage, and we have only to comfort ourselves with dignity, coolness and determination to maintain harmonious relation with all of them without any real loss of ground. May I in this connection venture to suggest that a slight modification of Sir Harvey Adamson's scheme will solve the problem that is engaging the serious attention of our people? For my purpose I will take up the Imperial Legislative Council alone. I do not propose to deal with the Provincial Councils as the Mahommedan position in relation to them is affected by varying local conditions which must be left to local Mahommedan leaders and the local Mahommedan Associations and Leagues for treatment keeping in view and jealously guarding our right to effectiveness and adequacy of our representation. The importance of the Imperial Council and the position of numerical minority the Mussulmans hold in relation to it are my excuse for the selection.

Now to proceed with my suggestion. The India Council Bill provides 60 members for this Council excluding His Excellency the Viceroy. The Secretary of State in para 22 of his Despatch dated the 27 November 1908, insists on a substantial official majority and thereby removes the Governor-General from the conflict of the division list. Under the circumstances it is unreasonable to suppose that the officials will be anything less than thirty-two, leaving a balance of 28

to be filled in by non-officials. Out of these two can represent small minorities or special interests or be experts and to represent the Chambers of Commerce of Calcutta and Bombay. The remaining twenty-four seats should be thrown open to the people of India who are in the main two communities, Hindus and Mussulmans, to be filled in purely by election to represent various bodies and interests. Considering the Mussulmans make up between one-fifth and one fourth of the entire population, and also considering that the uncivilised portions classified as Hindus for convenience of census return, take away largely from the strength of the real Hindu majority, it is but fair to say that out of these twenty-four seats one-fourth, *i.e.*, six the Mussulmans are entitled to on the basis of the numerical proportion. Giving them four more which is not by any means too large an estimate of their political importance, the full total strength of our claim on the fairest computation will thus be ten places at least out of twenty-four. On the merits of the promises of Lord Morley it is open to the Extreme-Separatist to say that he will have his pound of flesh and give up political relation with his Non-Moslem countrymen and court desolate isolation in lieu of possessing a few extra seats more or less of doubtful utility in a Council of 60. I am sure sober counsel will not favour such a course. I look to my Muslim countrymen to approach this subject with a broad outlook, a spirit of compromise and an attitude of patriotic obligation. I therefore suggest that we should give up two out of the four seats we have a right to on the ground of political importance, and thus press before Government our claim to representation by special Moslem electorate in respect of eight seats only. The surrender of these two seats to the general electorate is legitimate compensation for the opportunities of our participation in the general political activity of the country. This modification of the scheme of Sir Harvey Adamson will, I trust, be acceptable to Government. It is in accord with the Muslim League resolution of Aligarh referred to above. With this modification the distribution of the twenty-four seats can be as follows :

Legislative Councils of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, East Bengal and Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab and Burma	7
The landholders of Madras, Bombay, Bengal, East Bengal, and Assam, the United Pro- vinces, the Punjab and the Central Pro- vinces	7
Indian Commerce	2
Special Moslem electorate of Bengal, Eastern Bengal, and Assam, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Madras, Bombay, N.W. Frontier Province and Central Provinces	8
Total	24

Whatever may have been the chances of Moslem success by general electorates in the past it is much reduced after the hostility that has been so bitterly displayed against Moslem claim in various parts of India. Under the circumstances Moslem participation in the general electorates is not likely to result in the capture of any seats but will serve the important purpose which should be looked upon by the truly patriotic Hindu as the redeeming feature of the 'double vote'.

I now turn to that part of the Bihar conference resolution which I have marked II. I do not believe any Mussulman will object to it. Obviously it has no application to the Imperial Council as the Hindus are in a large majority in India. The words 'if necessary' show how doubtful it is of application to the conditions of election to the Provincial Councils. Even in East Bengal and the Punjab important factors like education, wealth, enterprise and organisation have such Hindu superiority that the necessity to give effect to this resolution will hardly ever arise. At best it is academic and as we are at present circumstanced outside the range of practical politics. Should, however, a good case of our Hindu countrymen of having fallen into a helpless minority be made out, I am sure the sense of justice and fair play of the Mahommedans will give unstinted support to this resolution. The abstract justice of it no one can deny.

MIAN MOHAMMED SHAFI

[While eminent figures like Sri Ali Imam of Patna and Maulana Mohammed Ali of Rampur should be ranked among the nationalist Muslims, Sir Muhammed Shafi of Lahore (1869-1933) belongs to the class of Muslim nationalists. He worked as a very active and enthusiastic leader of the Muslim League and presided at its Lucknow session held in March, 1913. While faithfully subscribing to the line of the Aligarh Movement, he fought for the cause of separate electorates for the Muslims. At the first Round Table Conference (1930) he demanded 33½ percent representation of the Muslims in the Central legislature of British India. In the manner of the Agha Khan, he argued that although the Muslims constituted a little more than 24 percent of the population of British India, yet so far defence of the country was concerned, they bore the major burden and, more than that, it was also warranted by other factors like historical importance of his community. He also strongly argued for Muslim majority representation in Punjab and Bengal if autonomy were granted to the British Indian provinces under the new constitutional dispensation. Though he had once concurred with the view of men like Jinnah and Sapru who (as members of the Reforms Enquiry Committee set up in 1924 under the chairmanship of Sir Alexander Muddiman) had reported on the failure of the Reforms of 1919, he took a distinctly pro-Government line after being a minister of the Punjab Government. This was the reason that while Jinnah advised the members of the League not to commit themselves to the course of boycotting the Simon Commission in response to the call of the Indian National Congress, Shafi and his group took the clear and firm

stand of giving cooperation to it. As a result, there was a split in the Muslim League and while the Jinnah group had its session at Calcutta, the Shafi group had its meet at Lahore in December 1927.]

ON COMMUNAL UNITY*

Broad-based on the solid rock of Hindu-Muslim Unity, India's constitutional edifice will be more beautiful than that loveliest of all monuments of love, the Taj of Agra : built on that sure foundation, it will be more permanent than even the Pyramids of Egypt. Without Hindu-Muslim Unity, Swaraj is bound ever to remain a mere dream, a mirage which, as we seem to approach it, will recede further and further.

But this unity, in order that it may bring about the desired results, must not be founded on common hatred. For common hatred is in itself a thing of evil and its product can never be good. The cause of hatred being removed from the hearts of even one of the parties, such artificial unity itself comes to an end. In order to achieve the end in view, this unity must be the spontaneous outcome of a true-hearted patriotism, of the just recognition of each other's equitable rights and interests and of a sincere conviction that both being children of the same mother each is indispensable to the other.

Only five years ago I saw them embrace each other as if two brothers had met after ages of separation : I saw them even drink *sherbat* out of the same. The spectacle was indeed pleasing to the eye of the superficial observer, but the student of causes and effects foresaw the transitory character of this artificial union. It was based mainly on common hatred : it could not last. Born of a thing of evil, its results manifested themselves in destruction, yea, even in blood-shed, setting the clock of progress back by many years. The *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* among the Hindus have given rise to *Tubligh* and *Tanzim* among the Mohammedans, religious passions were roused to an extent

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unknown in recent Indian history. And the results of this rousing of religious passions were heart-breaking riots, in which scores lost their lives and hundreds were injured; looting in which the householder and the shopkeeper suffered grievous injury; and incendiarism, in which properties of incalculable value were destroyed. Even places of worship did not escape the hands of fury.

The hearts of all true Indian patriots must mourn over this shattering of ardent dreams by this spectacle of fratricidal warfare. Mother India weeps over this mad folly of her children. Seeing some of her children preach fraternal love from the platforms of unity conferences in passionate language and at the very next moment fly hither and thither hatching schemes of communal aggression, her heart is well-nigh broken.

As if the rivalry for power, the fight for loaves and fishes, the manoeuvring for ascendancy were not enough, to this whirl-wind of secular friction is now added the storm of religious animosities. It is this rousing of religious passions on both sides which constitutes the dire feature of the new situation. And unless all sincere patriots, Hindus and Muslims, combine whole-heartedly to put an end to this new phase, destructive of all inter-communal co-operation and goodwill, there is no hope for India's future. All organised effort for conversion and physical culture intended for purposes of supremacy must be abandoned on both sides. So long as religious passions continue to be roused as they have been during the last two years closer union between the two communities by means of a common understanding of things political will be impossible. Let those who believe that without Hindu-Muslim unity India can never attain her dream of Swaraj, concentrate all their efforts and all their energies on this acute phase of the existing situation. Once religious passions, roused by those who are ready to resort to anything calculated to realise for them their dreams of leadership, die away and a genuine consciousness of brotherhood and

of identity of interests is created in the hearts of the Hindus and of the Muslims alike, and equitable settlement of all other controversies will become easy.

Resolutions on paper, passed by gatherings, however seemingly representative, will not accomplish this desired end. What is needed is the translation of sentiments embodied in such resolutions into earnest action by means of practical steps adopted in the different parts of India. Let a network of Arbitration Boards consisting of Hindus and Mussulmans possessing influence among their peoples and imbued with a sincere desire for Hindu-Muslim unity, be established in all provinces and in all districts where the dragon of religious hatred has shown its head. Let these arbitration boards see to it that scenes such as we have recently witnessed in Kohat, Cawnpore, Delhi, Lucknow, Allahabad and other places become impossible of occurrence in the near future. Unless we set to work in right earnest and in a spirit of whole-hearted enthusiasm along these lines, all our political activities for the attainment of Swaraj for India will come to nought. Swaraj in these conditions will be like a house built on sand incapable of withstanding the slightest shock. Once this is accomplished, let us settle once for all, in a spirit of generous recognition of each other's rights and interests, the part which each is to play in the future constitutional development of India. Conceived in this spirit, the Hindu-Muslim Pact, brought into operation in an atmosphere of mutual love and toleration, will constitute the surest foundation upon which, by means of constructive work and scrupulous avoidance of destructive forces India's constitutional edifice can be built with the surest guarantee of its permanency and stability.

ON HINDU-MUSLIM TENSION*

The recent manifestation of inter-communal hatred, resulting in bloodshed and incendiarism, are, beyond doubt, without

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any parallel in British Indian history prior to the year 1922. The appalling spectacles, witnessed during the last twelve months, in Rawalpindi, Calcutta, Lahore and other places cannot but have horrified all advocates of ordered progress and shaken the faith of those who have hitherto been inspired with confidence in India's fitness for constitutional progress towards the goal of full responsible Government. When entire communities start running a mock with the result that perfectly innocent Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs are butchered openly in our streets, not because they are themselves responsible for crimes committed in wanton disregard of all human laws, but simply because they happen to profess their respective faiths, it is childish to talk of full responsible Government or Dominion Status for India. In these circumstances, our first and foremost duty is to purge the Indian humanity of the real disease of inter-communal hatred, which has begun to eat into its very vitals, in order to create that atmosphere of unity and co-operation without which the attainment of Swaraj is an absolute impossibility. And the extinction of this devastating epidemic is itself impossible without first diagnosing correctly the causes which have brought it into existence.

An occasional riot between two groups belonging to different communities may have occurred before 1922. But events like that, happening at intervals of many years and in places hundreds of miles distant from each other, due to particular causes, are nothing extra-ordinary, or surprising in a vast sub-continent like India with its multitudinous population of 310 millions. The last communal riot in Lahore took place over 40 years ago, owing to the Muharram and Dusehra having fallen on the same day, resulting in a few shops being looted and a few persons receiving ordinary injuries. But riot after riot in various parts of the country, some of them resulting in casualties the number of which reminds one of the smaller battles fought during the Great War, acts of incendiarism horrible in their consequences, systematic preaching of religious animosity and communal hatred from the pulpit and the plat-

form and abuse of each other's religion and religious heads, such as we have witnessed during the last five years, were absolutely unknown in this country.

Until the year 1906, Indian Mussulmans had, on the whole, held themselves aloof from the political stage. During the latter half of that year, distant rumblings in the political atmosphere of coming constitutional reforms gave birth to the All-India Muslim League, founded with the avowed objects of promoting India's constitutional advance, defence of legitimate Muslim interests and promotion of inter-communal co-operation and goodwill. Shortly after, was founded the Punjab Hindu Sabha with similar non-aggressive and legitimate ends. And right until the end of 1920, the activities of these two bodies, while bringing about awakening among the two communities, did not have any baneful effect on that inter-communal co-operation and goodwill, which was a pleasing feature of the situation in those days. Indeed towards the end of 1916 the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League came to a settlement regarding Muslim representation in the various Indian Legislatures and other important problems which inspite of its defects, was largely instrumental in promoting the cause of constitutional advance in India, some of its principal features being embodied in the Chelmsford-Mantague Reforms introduced towards the beginning of 1921. The unfortunate happenings in the Punjab and the consequent declaration of Martial Law in April 1919 proved a powerful agency in bringing the two great communities closer together and, in the following year, the over-stringent Turkish Peace Terms, embodied in the Treaty of Sevres, had their repercussions in India which strengthened the bonds of Hindu-Muslim unity to an extent hitherto unknown in this country. This remarkable inter-communal unity was the most pleasing feature of the Indian political situation during the three eventful years from 1919 till the end of 1921.

But in the widespread agitation carried on against the Government in all parts of the country under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi during that very period, the 'nationalist' leaders committed a blunder which, to my mind, is the initial cause

of the aftermath which we are facing at the present moment. It will be remembered that the various boycotts decided upon in the Special Session of the Congress, held in Calcutta during the month of September 1920, failed in their accomplishment among the Indian intelligentsia. Albeit, they were, in the conditions even then prevailing in this vast continent, foredoomed to failure. The leaders of the Non-Cooperation movement thereupon turned their attention to the vast masses of India for the success of their movement. And in order to influence the masses in the direction aimed at, they considered it essential to bring into requisition the powerful agencies of Hindu and Muslim religious circles, Swamies and Maulanas were let loose from their cloisters all over the country, and, for the first time in the history of British India, religion was introduced actively into the field of politics. And, finally, when the Non-Cooperation movement failed absolutely, it became, as it was bound to do, a case of *main to kambal ko chhorta hun, magar kambal mujhe nahin chhorta*. The forces thus let loose have ultimately recoiled on our own heads, producing results which far-sighted statesmanship ought then to have foreseen.

Meanwhile, the new constitutional machinery set up under the Government of India Act, 1919, started working in the beginning of 1921. While the Non-Cooperators absolutely boycotted the reformed Legislatures, the Moderates decided to work the Reforms in order to lay the foundation for India's claim to full Responsible Government, as promised by Parliament in the solemn declaration embodied in the preamble to that Act. Lord Chelmsford was himself one of the two engineers who had invented and built up that machinery and Lord Reading was sent out to India with a mandate not only from the British Parliament but also from His Majesty the King Emperor himself to devote his great knowledge and experience to its successful working. And the successful working of the reformed Councils as well as a revision, on reasonable lines, of the Turkish Peace Terms were necessary also to counteract the Non-Cooperation movement. The Government and the Moderates within the various Indian Legislatures, Central and

Provincial, therefore, co-operated whole-heartedly, during the year 1921, in demonstrating the possibilities of, as well as the power possessed by our Legislatures under the new Constitution. By the end of that year, those who had been watching the new situation with unbiassed minds as well as those who had taken an active part in the successful working of the reformed machinery were, in their heart of hearts, convinced that the foundations of democratic Government in India had been well and truly laid, that real power was coming into the hands of the elected representatives of the people and that the solemn pledge embodied in the preamble to the Act of 1919 being beyond recall, the issue, in regard to the question of Indian Self-Government was now merely one of time. Oriental temperament is, by nature, both imaginative and speculative. Certain Hindu circles began to ask themselves, what will happen when full Responsible Government is granted to India? Democratic Government being, in principle, synonymous with the rule of majority, steps must at once be taken so that when the time arrives the majority may be so overwhelming as to secure the permanent establishment of its rule over Hindustan. And in order to prevent any possibility of a combination of the minority in India and a certain power from across the borders becoming a danger to the majority, its physical regeneration must at once be taken in hand so that when the time arrives, the vast millions in India may be in a position to resist successfully the combination alluded to above. Hence the Shudhi and Sangathan movements were started early in 1922. The Muslim minority, on the other hand, began to ask itself what will its position be when India is granted full Responsible Government? The results of past struggle between the 'Haves' and the 'Have-nots' had already filled their minds with grave misgivings regarding their own future in a self-governing India and the new movements started in the majority camp filled them with positive alarm. The result was the organisation of Tabligh and Tanzim movements in order to counter the activities of the majority. The Chelmsford-Mantague Reforms were thus, in a sense, responsible for the unhappy conditions which began to develop in this unfortunate country and in reality mutual

distrust lay at the root of the new development. Even Lala Lajpat Rai admitted our present communal troubles to be 'political and economic in their origin'.

The situation described in the preceding paragraph was further complicated by that increasing craze for lordship which has been the bane of our country during the last few years. Non-violent Non-Cooperation may possibly be a practical conception when adopted by a comparatively small community, such as the Indians in South Africa, bound together by identity of interests. But in a heterogeneous mass of 310 millions of population spread over a vast sub-continent like India, even the intelligentsia among whom were divided into various schools of political thought—with its perplexing diversity of languages, creeds, social codes and material interests—such a movement was, as observed above, foredoomed to failure. Indeed, in a country like India where the major portion of the population were wallowing in the mire of utter ignorance, it could not long remain even non-violent. On the top of it came the colossal blunder of boycotting His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales visit with the resulting disturbances in different parts of the country. In March 1922, Mr. Gandhi was incarcerated and with his arrest and subsequent conviction the one magnetic personality which had held these really militant elements together in a non-violent movement was removed from the Indian Political Stage. It is a fact furnishing an interesting though painful subject for psychological research that Mr. Gandhi's removal from the political stage synchronized with the foundation of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, the commencement of Shudhi and Sangathan movements and fight for leadership which followed in their wake. An examination of the correlation of these three phenomena, however interesting, is beyond the scope of this article. In the fight for leadership of new movements, it is natural for those taking a leading part therein to vie with each other in drawing word pictures calculated to appeal to the sentiments, and alas ; sometime even to the passions of those whom they seek to bring within their sphere of influence. The application of this undesirable pro-

position is not confined to one community but extends to all alike.

Had Shudhi and Tabligh movements their origin merely in honest religious zeal, had they been started with the patriotic object of uplifting the vast heterogeneous mass of our population known as the depressed classes, resulting in the latter's unostentatious and peaceful absorption among the Hindu and Muslim communities, it would all have been to the good of the country as a whole. But conceived in an aggressive spirit and with the ultimate political end already described, this clash of political forces masquerading in a religious garb could not but produce results too horrible to contemplate. Thousands of Hindu and Muslim missionaries spread about the country attacking each other's religion, countless pamphlets defaming great religious heads held in veneration by their followers and disgraceful literature in the Vernacular Press inflaming baser religious passions absolutely poisoned the Indian atmosphere, creating an unhappy state of things unparalleled in the past history of British India. And the law of the land was apparently powerless to prevent the spread of this deadly poison. For when the writer of a despicable and scurrilous pamphlet such as the 'Rungila Rasul' can go unpunished on the ground that its publication does not fall within the purview of section 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, what hope is there of the Courts stepping in to check the advance of a poisonous gangrene which is destroying the beautiful fruit of religious toleration in a country hitherto famous as a peaceful home of all religions ?

Had a joint scheme of Indian Sanghathan been started for the physical regeneration of the Indian peoples in order to prepare them for the defence of their common motherland when Swaraj is granted to this country, the benefits arising out of such a patriotic movement would have been incalculable. But the Sanghathan movement started by the Hindu Mahasabha was in its very conception anti-Muslim and the speeches delivered in its support during the last five years from hundreds of platforms in all parts of the country, couched in language of

politico-religious fervour, could not but create a similar counter-movement among the Mussulmans. And, strange to say, our foremost leaders, who in the past were stalwart advocates of Indian Nationalism, have been the worst sinners in this respect.

At the very first anniversary of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Gaya on 30 December 1922, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, during the course of his presidential address, observed ; “What was the Hindu Dharma ? It told them to respect other religions, to be tolerant and never to be aggressive. But it also enjoined upon them not to hesitate for a moment to lay down even their lives, if their Dharma was attacked. In the observance of this Dharma alone to its very letter and spirit lay the true solution of Hindu-Muslim Unity.” He was convinced that no unity could be maintained unless both the Hindus and Mussulmans individually felt strong enough to defend themselves against attacks by bad elements of the other. He did not say this in order to prepare the Hindus for aggressive ends, but to remove the only cause of conflict. The breaches in the past were due mainly to the weakness of the Hindus. Bad elements among the Mahomedans, feeling sure that the Hindus were cowards, attacked them. After working for a long time in the service of the public, he had come to only one conclusion on the question of Hindu-Muslim Unity. It was that each should feel that the other was strong enough to ward off successfully any unjust attack by the other and thus alone harmony be maintained— ‘Shorn of mere platitudes and camouflage, this is exactly the doctrine which used to be preached by the leaders of the two European concert countries during the quarter of a century preceding the Great War, *i.e.*, ‘preparation for war is a sure guarantee of peace’, a doctrine which inevitably led to the world-conflict of 1914—1918, destroying the manhood of nations, devastating some of the richest and most beautiful lands on God’s earth and bringing incalculable misery and suffering to millions of homes in all parts of the world. And it is strange that this pronouncement should have been made at a time, when, as has

been shown above, inter-communal co-operation and goodwill was the most pleasing feature of the Indian political situation.

And at the next anniversary, held at Benares, on 19 August 1923, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya indulged in plainer and yet stronger language. He reminded the Hindu community of the 'inhuman, brutal and unparalleled atrocities' which, according to him, 'were perpetrated on Hindus' in 1916 in Eastern Bengal. 'Hindu Women,' said he, 'were outraged by fanatic Mahommedans, and many Hindu women had to take shelter in rivers and tanks to protect their honour.' I do not propose to reproduce at length the other portion of his address, couched in similar violent and exaggerated language, calculated to rouse the baser religious and communal passions of my Hindu countrymen, which the Pandit thought fit to indulge in on that occasion. I consider even their repetition for establishing my position is in the highest degree detrimental to the cause of Indian Nationalism and a sin against inter-communal co-operation and goodwill. A few days after that address was delivered, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya came to see me at Simla in connection with a matter the nature of which it is unnecessary to mention here. On that occasion, I spoke to him earnestly about the new policy which he and his co-workers were adopting and warned him that persistence in rhetoric of this type, calculated to rouse the baser passions of the semi-educated masses, was sure to result in bloodshed. Alas! that this unpatriotic course should have been persisted in with the result that the prophesy then made by me has at last come true.

And let us turn for a moment to another prominent figure in the Hindu Mahasabha movement. Presiding over the annual meeting of the Barra Bazar Hindu Sabha, Calcutta, on 25 July 1926, Dr. Moonje traced the history of lost Hinduism during the last nine hundred years quoting Afghanistan, Kashmir and Malabar as instances in point and also mentioning that India had lost 70 millions of her men to another religion. 'The object of the Hindu movement would be to keep together all Hindus and to extend the Hindu religion so that India might be called

Hindustan, the land of the Hindus...It seemed to him that the Hindus were living under two dominations, the political domination of the English based on its strength of machine-guns and the domination of the Mahommedans based on their aggressive mentality. The mild and docile Hindu was thus a prey to domination of two kinds and he had to see whether, while putting up with the machine-gun domination as an inevitable evil, he was also to put up with the other domination'. The political lesson thus inculcated by Dr. Moonje to his co-religionists has been carried a step further by him in his Presidential address at the Special Session of the Hindu Mahasabha, held at Patna on the 16th and 17th April last. During the course of that address, speaking of Hindu-Muslim unity, he observed as follows :

'This unity is to my mind a volatile commodity appearing very real and worth having till the price is paid, when it assumes the form of inpalpability and intractability.' And having stated that he had never been a believer in pacts and concessions in bringing about Hindu-Muslim unity, he advised his co-religionists that 'they should leave Muslims severely alone in their present mentality and leave them to think and act as they pleased.' As I said only recently, whatever one may think of this astounding pronouncement, one cannot but admire Dr. Moonje's frankness in speaking out in plain language the inner feelings of the circles of which he and his co-workers are the leaders. And it is significant that he has been elected a President of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha for the ensuing year, with my friends Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lala Lajpat Rai, Raja Narendra Nath and Raja Rampal Singh as Vice-Presidents.

As regards Lala Lajpat Rai's utterances since his desertion from the Swarajists' camp and entry into the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, it is sufficient to refer to the address delivered by him recently when presiding over the Sindh Hindu Conference, during the course of which he assured his co-religionists that if they were to put their own house in order, they would have to

be strong enough to cope with the combined forces of the British Government and the Muslim community.

I have cited above only a few of the many pronouncements made by the three great leaders of this communal movement and where the leaders at the top have made such anti—Muslim pronouncements, the utterances of the numerous smaller fry throughout the country as well as the writings in that section of the Press which follows their lead can well be trained. These being the facts, is it then surprising that the resulting inter-communal bitterness and hatred have brought about the unhappy occurrences which have tarnished the fair name of India and have failed the hearts of those who sincerely desire her peaceful constitutional advancement towards full Responsible Government with feelings of deep despondency for her future ?

The only effective solution of the grave problem which we have now to face, is a change of mentality and of hearts on both sides. This once accomplished, the rest will follow as a matter of course. Let mutual suspicions be cast aside as absolutely groundless. Let Hindus and Mahomedans realise that they are but children of one common motherland. In the prosperity of both lies the prosperity of India and on the recognition by each of the legitimate rights of the other rests the hope of that inter-communal co-operation and goodwill which is absolutely essential if India is to attain her appointed goal. Religion, being a matter of individual belief, should be kept out of the political activities essential to the accomplishment of India's advance towards full Responsible Government within the Commonwealth of Nations known as the British Empire and craze after leadership should not make us forgetful of the sacred duty which we owe to our country. Let the Vernacular Press rise above that mentality which places increase of its circulation above the responsibility of giving the right lead to public opinion. Once these great needs of the moment are sincerely taken to heart, India's onward march to her constitutional goal will be accelerated and the desire of all patriotic hearts become certain of realisation.

DOMINION STATUS WITH SAFEGUARDS FOR MUSLIMS*

My Lord Chancellor, When, on his return to India, His Excellency Lord Irwin made the historic announcement of October 1929, giving a more precise definition of the policy of His Majesty's Government towards the ultimate goal of India, than had been done in the declaration of 20th August 1917, and stating that His Majesty's Government intended to invite the representatives of British India and Indian India to a Round Table Conference in London, so that an agreed settlement of the Indian constitutional problem might be arrived at, the two great organisations of the India Mussalmans—the All-India Muslim League and the All-Indian Muslim Conference—welcomed that announcement in the main for two reasons.

In the first place, they realised, that, when the Government and the people of a country are confronted with such difficult and complicated political problems as is the case now in India, a Round Table Conference at which the representatives of the parties concerned may have a full and frank exchange of views in order to bring about an agreed settlement, is the most effective way of realising the end in view.

In the second place, they believed that where the political situation is so grave, as it is at present in India, calling for immediate solution, a Round Table Conference is also the most expeditious way of meeting the situation.

And now that this Round Table Conference has been opened by His Majesty our King-Emperor in person, in a gracious speech, vibrating with the love of India and with sympathy for the legitimate aspiration of her people, I, for one, refuse to believe that, with some of the best brains of England and of India assembled round this table, we shall not arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problems, which both India and England

*Speech delivered at the plenary session of the First Round Table Conference held in London on 18 November, 1930.

have to face, a solution which, while satisfying the legitimate aspiration of the Indian peoples will thereby strengthen the link which binds England and India together.

My Lord Chancellor, ninety-seven years ago, during the debate on the first Government of India Bill in 1833, the late Thomas Babington Macaulay, who had taken a prominent part in the preparation of that Bill, observed as follows :

“The destinies of our Indian Empire are covered with thick darkness. It is difficult to form any conjecture as to the fateful result for a State which resembles no other in history, and which forms by itself a separate class of political phenomena. The laws which regulate its growth and decay are still unknown to us. It may be that the mind of India may expand under our system, till it has outgrown that system, that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that having become instructed in European knowledge they may in some future age, demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come, I know not, but never will I attempt to avert it or retard it. Whenever it comes, it will be the proudest day in English history.”

That was the glorious vision which the late Lord Macaulay saw, when introducing that measure in the House of Commons. The dawn of the day, when that vision may be realised, has now come.

Unfortunately, thereafter, if I may venture so to put it, the British Parliament succumbed to what can only be described as sleeping sickness in its relations with India ; for we find that it was not until 1861, some thirty years after, that a Bill was introduced in the House of Commons for the first time recognising the need for associating Indian representative in the work of legislation in that country. But that association was a very limited one, secured only through nomination. Again, the British Parliament went to sleep, and slept for over 40 years, and it was not until the year 1909, that the elective principle was introduced into the Legislative Councils of India.

Meanwhile, India had gone on advancing rapidly. The influence of Western education, the study of British constitutional history, the study of French and Italian history, had aroused in the minds of educated Indians dreams which Macaulay, at any rate, had contemplated when the Bill of 1833 was introduced.

The result was that the tardy measures taken at such long intervals by the British Parliament, instead of satisfying the aspirations of the Indian peoples, gave further impetus to those aspirations. It is a curious fact in history that political aspirations have a very strange way of growing. What may satisfy a people to-day, if not given in time, will not satisfy them to-morrow. That is what is happening in India.

Shortly after the Act of 1909, a great war broke out, a war which gradually, drew into it almost all the leading nations of the world. During that war, India came forward to prove the devotion to the British connection in that life and death struggle, in which the very existence of the Empire itself was in danger. India came forward to prove her devotion to the British connection by taking her share of the burden spontaneously and by providing for the armies of England over one million recruits—soldiers who vindicated the honour and the name of their country on the various battlefields of Europe, Asia, and Africa.

The part taken by India during this unparalleled world conflagration gained for her legitimate position in the international affairs of the world as a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles and an original member of the League of Nations. But, within the British Commonwealth of Nations, curious as it may appear, she still continued to occupy an inferior position. After the conclusion of peace, until the appointment of the Royal Commission, unfortunately, a succession of events took place in India, which added to the various causes of unrest in that country influencing the Indian mind. When His Majesty's Government was pleased to appoint

the Royal Commission, India was absolutely excluded from that Commission. No representative of India was appointed to it, with the results that the unrest in that country increased tenfold. And now, we have to face a situation, which in all earnestness is indeed grave.

When I see articles in the newspapers stating that all the unrest in India is confined only to the educated classes and that the uneducated masses, or Indians living in rural areas, have no sympathy whatever with the national movement which is going on in India, I am more than surprised. It would be very amusing, if it were not so tragic. Do writers who indulge in that sort of writing realise that hundreds of thousands of India's soldiers who took part in the Great War and who have seen with their own eyes what other people are in their own countries, have returned to India and after demobilisation have dispersed all over the rural areas of the country, living in villages, talking to their fellow villagers? They have told their fellow villagers what they have seen in Europe and in the Near and Middle East. Do these writers realise what a deep and widespread effect the stories, which these demobilised soldiers have told their country-men, have had in the villages and remote corners of rural India—what a deep and wide-spread effect they have had on the minds of Indian villagers?

Just look for a moment at what is going on now in India. This civil disobedience, which we have openly condemned, not only in England, but in India—is that movement limited to the educated classes? No doubt the movement is led by the educated classes; but who are the men who are facing all the trials, all the troubles, which this Civil Disobedience movement has given rise to? They belong to the uneducated masses. To say that the uneducated masses are entirely out of touch with the national movement that is going on in India, is, if I may venture to say so, the action according to the Oriental saying: of a man who closes his eyes when the cat is approaching him, thinking that thereby he is safe.

Fortunately among the British Delegation here, there are at least three statesmen who know that I am a Punjabi, and that we Punjabi are not easily alarmed. Indeed, the greater the difficulty the more firm, the more cool and the more calm Punjabis become. They also know that I have proved, in the last 40 years of my public life in India, the strongest and firmest supporter of the British connection in India – so much so that on occasions I have been called a reactionary by my own countrymen. It is I who say that the situation in India is very grave.

If a solution calculated to satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the Indian peoples and thereby to strengthen the tie which binds England and India together is not attained by this Conference, I tremble to think what the situation will be. Now that we have met in order to try to find that solution, it is my business, as spokesman to-day of my community, of the Muslim group, to tell you what we, the representatives of the Muslim community in this Conference think. Our position is very simple. To repeat what I said in the Viceregal Lodge at Delhi, December, 1924 :

“We want our countrymen in India to rise to that stature to which other people have risen in their own countries. We want India to attain Dominion status as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth of Nations.”

I say, we want India to rise her full stature within the British Commonwealth of Nations for this reason : in the new conditions which have been brought into existence as a result of the wonderful progress which science has made and a result of the world forces, which are now actually in operation as a consequence of the Great War, no country in the world, however, rich or powerful, can afford to lead an isolated life.

The tendency of modern international movements is towards the association of Nations and countries for the purposes of security, of mutual help, and co-ordination of effort. Therefore we, Mussalmans of India, realise that the British Common-

wealth of Nations is there for India to be associated with it and to continue to be associated with it for her own benefit and in her own interest. That is the deep-rooted conviction in our minds, and that is the reason of our traditional loyalty.

As the same time, it is perfectly natural for the seventy-one millions of His Majesty's Mussalman subjects to insist upon this—that in the constitutional and administrative evolution of India they must have their legitimate share, both in the Provincial and in the Central Government.

I do not desire, on the present occasion, to enter into the details of the claims which the Mussalman community has put forward in this connection. That is a matter which will have to be discussed in the committees. Some of our own committees are already considering that matter, and I trust they will be able to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. To my mind, in view of India's vast extent, in view of her territorial divisions well recognised for centuries past, and in view of the other complicated conditions, which obtain in India, there is only one form of government, one basis for the future constitution of India, which alone will suit the circumstances of the case, and that is the federal system. We, therefore welcome the declarations, made by Their Highnesses the Maharajah of Bikaner and the Maharaja of Alwar on behalf of their Princely Order, that the Indian States are willing to come into an All-India Federation.

To me, as a constitutional lawyer, a self-governing India side by side with an India having its relations within the Crown is a hopelessly impossible conception. A Federation of India must include both British India as well as Indian India. In so far as British India is concerned, we must, as it is the case in every other kind of structure, build upward and not downwards.

Therefore, I welcome the recommendation made in certain quarters of granting Provincial Autonomy to the Provinces. These will be the federal units of our All-India Federation in

the future ; but the Mussalman Group have no hesitation in saying that that is not enough—that the responsibility must be introduced in the centre.

How far that responsibility should go is a matter which will be discussed in the committees hereafter. We are willing that for the transitional period, certain vital reservations might be made. That is to the interests of India itself, and in consequence we have no objection to that. But you have seen that the Report of the Royal Commission has been condemned in India by every school of political thought, mainly on the ground that it does not propose to introduce responsibility in the Centre.

To the British Delegation, I have one final appeal to make before I sit down. Believe me, a happy and contented India will be a source of immense strength to the British Commonwealth of Nations. Take your courage in your two hands. The situation is grave. When a situation is grave, far-sighted statesmen should require that it should be handled with wisdom and generosity. Taking your courage in your two hands, do what you did in South Africa shortly after the conclusion of the South African War.

What has been the result? During the sittings of the Imperial Conference, which I had the honour of attending on behalf of my country, nothing struck me more than the way in which the representatives of South Africa, throughout the deliberations of the Conference, upheld the tie which binds South Africa and England together.

Believe me, the legitimate satisfaction of legitimate aspirations brings contentment, and contentment awakens feelings of love and affection for those who have satisfied those legitimate aspirations. If the aspirations of an educated India are satisfied, the result will be that the tie between India and England will be strengthened. Then all your Imperial problems—the problem of Imperial defence, the problem of inter-Imperial trade, even the problem of Empire's unemployment—will be solved within a measurable distance of time.

That is my appeal to the members of the British Delegation. Wisdom and sympathy is what is required on this occasion—that wisdom and sympathy with which Lord Irwin is handling the situation in India to-day. To those who have been attacking Lord Irwin, I would say this ; but for Lord Irwin handling the situation, as he has done in India, to-day the situation would have been ten times worse.

In the name of India, and in the name of the British Commonwealth of Nations, of which India forms an integral part, and hopes to be an equal partner with the other Dominions, I earnestly beg of you representatives of the British Delegation, representatives of the Indian Delegation and representatives of the British Indian Delegation, to realise the gravity of the situation, and to give their undivided attention to a satisfactory solution of the grave problem, with which we are confronted—a solution which, while satisfying the legitimate aspirations of the people of India, will, at the same time, strengthen the link which binds England and India.

MOHAMMED IQBAL

[Among all Muslim freedom fighters of India, Sir Mohammed Iqbal (1873-1938) occupies a unique place by virtue of being the political poet of Indian nationalism as well as the intellectual father of the Muslim state of Pakistan. A celebrated scholar of Persian and Urdu, a poet of patriotism and socialism, a philosopher of the power of the 'self', a barrister-at-law and, above all, a politician, he was a man of many traits. His political career started in the wake of the present century when in England he became an active member of the British branch of the All-India Muslim League launched by Syed Ameer Ali. On his return to India he joined the Muslim League and became active in its deliberations. It is for this reason that like other leaders of the League he advocated the cause of separate electorates for the Muslims provided under the Indian Councils Act of 1909 and in very strong terms deprecated the annulment of the partition of Bengal in 1911. After the bitter failure of the Khilafat Movement, he became a powerful advocate of pan-Islamism. In 1926 he became a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Thus he got an opportunity to fight for the interests of his coreligionists. He supported the idea of reforming the Muslim society and demanded adequate representation of the Muslims in public services. But the most important event of his political career is his Presidential address delivered at the Allahabad session of the Muslim League (1930) in which he faintly mooted the idea of a separate state of the Muslims in the Muslim-majority provinces of north-western India. It was picked up by others and eventually became the foundation of Pakistan. He represented the Muslim League at the Round Table Conferences held in London and thereafter succeeded in changing the mind

of M.A. Jinnah by his power of persuasion. At his powerful insistence, Jinnah came to India in 1934 and assumed the leadership of the political organisation of the Muslims. His protest 'first made in the name of India' continued in the name of Islam'. (V.G. Kiernan) He died leaving behind a loyal and capable successor (Jinnah) who thankfully regarded him as his 'friend, philosopher and guide'.]

ON RIGHT GUIDANCE OF THE MUSLIMS*

In the course of his presidential speech Sir Muhammad Iqbal said : "Politics have their roots in the spiritual life of man. It is my belief that Islam is not a matter of private opinion. It is a society, or, if you like, a civic church. It is because present-day political ideals, as they appear to be shaping themselves in India, may affect its original structure and character that I find myself interested in politics. I am opposed to nationalism, as it is understood in Europe, not because, if it is allowed to develop in India, it is likely to bring less material gain to Muslims. I am opposed to it because I see in it the germs of atheistic materialism which I look upon as the greatest danger to modern humanity. Patriotism is a perfectly natural virtue and has a place in the moral life of man. Yet that which really matters is a man's faith, his culture, his historical tradition. These are the things which in my eyes are worth living for and dying for, and not the piece of earth with which the spirit of man happens to be temporarily associated. In view of the visible and invisible points of contact between the various communities of India I do believe in the possibility of constructing a harmonious whole, whose unity cannot be disturbed by the rich diversity which it must carry within its own bosom. The problem of ancient Indian thought was how the one became many without sacrificing its oneness. Today this problem has come down from its ethereal heights to the grosser plane of our political life, and we have-

*Presidential Address delivered by Iqbal at the All-India Muslim Conference held in Lahore on 24 March, 1932.

to solve it in its reserved form, *i.e.*, how the many can become one without sacrificing its plural character. In so far then as the fundamentals of our policy are concerned I have got nothing fresh to offer. In the present address I propose, among other things, to help you in the first place in arriving at a correct view of the situation as it emerged from a rather hesitating behaviour of our deliberations of the Round-Table Conference. In the second place, I shall try, according to my lights, to show how far it is desirable to construct a fresh policy now that the Premier's announcement at the last London Conference has again necessitated a careful survey of the whole situation."

After giving a brief history of the work of the Muslim delegation, the President observed :

Provincial Autonomy

It is obvious that our delegates did their best to arrive at a communal settlement. The only thing which is a mystery to me, and which will perhaps ever remain a mystery, is the declaration made on the 26th November by our spokesmen in the Federal Structure Committee to the effect that they agreed to the simultaneous introduction of provincial autonomy and central responsibility. Whether this was due to their anxiety for conciliation and political advance of the country or to some conflicting influences which operated on their minds, I cannot say. On the 15th of November—the day on which I dissociated from our delegation—Muslim delegates had decided not to participate in the discussions of the Federal Structure Committee. Why did they participate then in these discussions contrary to their own decision? Where our spokesmen on the Federal Structure Committee authorised to make the declaration of 26th November? I am not in a position to answer these questions. All that I can say is that the Muslim community considers the declaration a very grave error, and I have no doubt that this conference will give an emphatic expression to their views on this important matter. In my address to the

All-India Muslim League I raised my voice against the idea of an all-India federation. Subsequent events have shown that it is working only as a drag on the political advancement of India. If the introduction of central responsibility is dependent on the completion of an All-India federation which, I fear, will take a fairly long time, then the Government should immediately introduce responsible government in the British Indian provinces, so that the foundation thus delineated may till the coming of central responsibility fully prepare itself, by experience, to bear the weight of the federal superstructure. A great deal of spadework is needed before we have a really modern federal state. I have reasons to believe, and had suspected this some days before I dissociated myself from our delegation, that our spokesmen were badly advised by certain English politicians in rejecting the immediate introduction of responsible government in the provinces of British India. Recently Lieutenant-Commander Kenworthy has expressed the same view. He says: "I understand that the moderate leaders in London were badly advised on this matter by certain English politicians, that they listened too readily to their advise and rejected the great instalment of provincial autonomy. And the curious thing is that the Mahatma was apparently ready to consider this instalment sympathetically." Who are the moderate leaders alluded to by the Lieutenant-Commander? In view of the attitude taken up by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in London and now in the Consultative Committee regarding the immediate introduction of provincial autonomy, it is obvious that the writer of the passage quoted could not have meant Hindu Liberals. I think he probably means Muslim moderate leaders whose declaration in the Federal Structure Committee on the 26th November seems to me to be really responsible for central and provincial responsibility. And since immediate introduction of responsible government in the provinces would have involved a definite announcement regarding the demands of our community as to majority rights in the Punjab and Bengal, we must not forget, while judging the present situation, that the conduct of our own leaders is mainly responsible for the British Premier's silence which has raised all

sorts of suspicions in the mind of the Muslim community.

Muslim Suspicions

The next question is to explore the possibilities of shaping, if necessary, a new policy after the disappointing announcement made by the British Premier at the close of the last London Conference. Muslims have naturally grown apprehensive of Government's attitude towards the problem of communal settlement. They suspect that the Government will purchase Congress cooperation at any cost, and that its delay in conceding Muslim demands is only a cover for the possibility of finding some basis for negotiations with that body. The policy of trusting the Government in regard to political issue seems to be rapidly losing its hold on the mind of the community. The Franchise Committee has postponed consideration of matters relating to the formation of constituencies. As for the promised provisional settlement it is obvious that no communal settlement, provisional or permanent, can satisfy the Muslim community, which does not recognize as its basic principle the right of the community to enjoy majority rights in provinces where it happens to be in actual majority. The continuance of separate electorates and the status of the Frontier Provinces are no doubt assured, but complete provincial autonomy, transfer of power from Parliament to Indian provinces, equality of federal units, classification of subjects, not into federal, central or provincial, but federal and provincial only, majority rights in the Punjab and Bengal, unconditional separation of Sindh, and one-third share in the centre, constitute no less essential elements of our demand. The Premier's silence on these points has only resulted in the unsound policy of war with the Congress and no peace with the rest of the country. Shall we then join the Congress in their present campaign? My answer without a moment's hesitation is, No. A careful reading of the underlying motives of this movement will make it perfectly clear.

The Congress Movement

To my mind this movement has its roots in fear and resentment. The Congress leaders claim that they are the sole repre-

representatives of the peoples of India. The last Round-Table Conference made it abundantly clear that they were not. This they naturally resent. They know that the British people and the rest of the world now fully realize the importance of communal settlement in India. They further know that the minorities of India have arrived at a pact, and that the British Government have given a notice to enforce a provisional settlement of their own, in case the Indians themselves failed to arrive at one. The Congress leaders fear that the British Government in their provisional settlement of the communal problem may concede to the minorities what they demand. They have, therefore, started the present campaign to bolster up a claim which has no foundation in fact, to defeat a pact which they fear may find a place in the coming constitution, and to force the Government to settle the matter of minorities with the Congress alone. How can then a minority join a campaign which is directed as much against itself as against Government ?

In the circumstances, therefore, to join the Congress in their present campaign is simply out of the question. But there is no denying that at the moment you are called upon to make important decisions. I am sure you are fully aware of the present state of the community's mind. Government's delay in conceding Muslim demands, and the treatment meted out to our brave Frontier brethren on the eve of constitutional reform, in their province, are making Indian Muslims suspicious of British methods ; and most people are already asking the question whether the power of a third party in India does constitute a real safeguard for the Muslim minority against a politically hostile and economically exploiting majority in India. Lack of imagination is a virtue rather than a fault in a modern politician. And owing to this lack of imagination which is incapable of synthesizing permanence and change in a higher political concept, modern politics is driven to live from hand to mouth. In the case of a subject country like India, therefore, cooperating communities are naturally led to think that the firmness of their political attitude in different times for the

Government may be of little or no value in the eyes of this or that political party which may come to power at any time in England. Whatever may be the character and ideals of political parties in England, you must base your policy on enlightened self-interest, and conceive it in a spirit calculated to impress the whole British nation. It is folly to fight a battle in which there is likelihood of the fruits of victory going to those who are either hostile to or have no sympathy with our legitimate political aspirations. The present circumstances are such that in thinking out a line of policy with a view to get over the immediate difficulties of the community, it is your duty to see that the likelihood I apprehend is eliminated, and the benefit to the action advised by you finally accrues to your community.

British Government's Attitude

Let me state the position as plainly as possible. The British undertook to give a provisional decision of the communal problem in case the communities of India did not arrive at a mutual settlement after representatives had returned from the Second Round-Table Conference. This undertaking was thoroughly consistent with the claim and policy of the British as a third party, holding the balance between the contending communities of India. The British Government's present attitude, however, would show that they do not mean to function as an impartial holder of balance in India and are indirectly driving the Indian communities which are mainly Hindus and Muslims to a kind of civil war. We tried the majority community and found them unwilling to recognize the safeguards which we can forego only at the risk of complete extinction as a nation determined to live its own life. The alternative was to hope for justice from the British who, ever since they took the country from the Muslims have claimed, as I have said above, to function as an impartial holder of balance in India.

A Constantly Shifting Policy

In their case, too, we find that the old British courage and straightforwardness are replaced by a constantly shifting policy

which can inspire no confidence, and seems to be calculated only to facilitate their own position in India. The Muslim community is thus brought to face the question whether it is the interest of the community that their present policy has so far obviated British difficulties and brought no gain to the community shall continue for any further period of time. This is a question for the open Conference to decide. All that I can say at the present stage is that if you decide to discontinue this policy, your immediate duty is to prepare the whole community for the kind of self-sacrifice without which no self-respecting people can live an honourable life. The most critical moment in the history of the Indian Muslims has arrived. Do your duty or cease to exist.

Frontier Province

It is indeed gratifying to see that Government have at least conceded our demand regarding the political status of North-West Frontier Province, though it remains to be seen what this status means in the actual administration of that province. Newspaper reports show that in the matter of franchise, Government rules have been more liberal than in other provinces. The reform machinery will, it is understood, be set in full working order from the next month. What, however, has taken grace out of the whole affairs is the simultaneous launching of a campaign of repression which is not essentially different from Martial Law. The consideration shown in the matter of constitutional issue has been more than neutralized by the severity and short-sightedness shown in the case of the administrative issue. Government may have reasons for counteracting extremist activities of certain people in that part of the country, but it has surely not been able to defend a policy of wholesale repression. During this struggle in other parts of India Britain's dealing with the situation has not been entirely devoid of restraint. In the Frontier Province alone repression has assumed forms unworthy of a civilised government. If oral reports are true then the heart of the British official in the Frontier Province stands in need of a reform far greater in

importance for the British Empire than the constitutional reform sought to be introduced into that province. It is for the Government to consider whether the incongruent policies of concession and repression will result in the pacification of a proud race like the Afghans. Abdul Ghaffar Khan certainly commands a good deal of influence among the young border Afghans, but what has extended the sphere of his influence to the furthest ends of the territory and to the ignorant folk of the Frontier villages, is the present thoughtless policy of repression. Government cannot be unaware of the fact that the All-India policy of the Indian Muslims was, at this juncture, effectively keeping in check the tendencies of the Muslims of that province to join hands with those who were for an unconditional alliance with the Congress. Perhaps there have been difficulties from the Government point of view ; yet I think a little different handling of the administrative action could have saved the whole situation. The sooner the Government withdraw all repressive measures from the province the better for the province and Government itself.

Kashmir

As to Kashmir it is hardly necessary for me to describe the historical background of events which have recently happened in that country. The apparently sudden resurrection of a people in whom the ego-flame had been almost extinguished ought to be, in spite of suffering which it has necessarily involved, a matter of rejoicing to all those who possess an insight into the inner struggle of modern Asiatic peoples. The cause of the people of Kashmir is absolutely just, and I have no doubt that the rebirth of this sense of the reality of their own personality in an intelligent and skilful people will eventually prove a source of strength not only to the State, but also to the people of India as a whole. What, however, is most deplorable is that the communal ill-feeling existing in India, and the perfectly natural sympathy of the Indian Muslims with their Kashmir brethren, led to a kind of counter-agitation among the Hindus, which, in its despair, sought to protect a barbarous administra-

tion by attributing its inevitable consequences to such wild fancies as Pan-Islamic plots and conspiracies for British occupation of Kashmir. Such agitation and communal colour thereby given to the Kashmir question could have led only to one thing—resort to violent repression leading to prolonged lawlessness in the State. Nor can commissions of enquiry be of any help in such a state of things. The Middleton Report which admits important facts and fails to draw legitimate conclusions therefrom has already failed to satisfy Muslims. The truth is that the matter has passed the stage in which enquiries can lead to effective results. The growing sense of self-consciousness in the people all over the world is now demanding recognition in the shape of a desire for an increasing share in the administration which governs them. Political tutelage is good for a primitive people ; but it is in the best interests of an administration itself not to shirk from things which have probably arisen from the peculiar conditions obtaining in Kashmir, the people of that country demand some kind of a popular assembly. Let us hope that the ruler of the State and the Government of India will consider the people's demands as favourably as they possibly can. There may be difficulties in the way of constitutional reform in Kashmir as in the case of our own country ; but the interests of permanent peace and order demand that these difficulties must be speedily overcome.

The present struggle in India is sometimes described as India's revolt against the West : for the people of India are demanding the very institutions which the West stands for. Educated urban India demands democracy. The minorities feeling themselves as distinct cultural units, and fearing that their very existence is at stake, demand safeguards, which the majority community, for obvious reasons, refuses to concede. The majority community pretends to believe in a nationalism theoretically correct if we start from western promises, belied by facts if we look to India. Thus the real parties to the present struggle in India are not England and India, but the majority community and the minorities of India which can ill-afford to accept the principle of western democracy until it is properly modified to suit the actual condition of life in India.

Nor do Mahatma Gandhi's political methods signify a revolt in the psychological sense. These methods arise out of a contact of two opposing types of world-consciousness—Western and Eastern. The Western man's mental texture is chrononlogical in character. He lives, moves and has his being in time. The Eastern man's world-consciousness is non-historical. To the Western man things gradually become ; they have a past, present and future. To the Eastern man they are immediately round off, timeless, purely present. That is why Islam which sees in the time-movement a symbol of reality appeared as an intruder in the static world-picture of Asia. The British as a western people cannot but conceive political reform in India as a systematic process of gradual evolution. Mahatma Gandhi as an eastern man sees in this attitude nothing more than an ill-concealed unwillingness to part with power, and tries all sorts of destructive negations to achieve immediate attainment. Both are elementally incapable of understanding each other. The result is the appearance of a revolt.

These phenomena, however, are merely premonitions of a coming storm, which is likely to sweep over the whole of India and the rest of Asia. This is the inevitable outcome of wholly political civilization which has looked upon man as a *thing* to be exploited and not as a *personality* to be developed and enlarged by purely cultural forces. The peoples of Asia are bound to rise against that acquisitive economy which the west has developed and imposed on the nations of the East. Asia cannot comprehend modern western capitalism with its undisciplined individualism. The Faith which you represent recognizes the worth of the individual, and disciplines him to give away his all to the service of God and man. It can still create a new world where the social rank of man is not determined by his caste or colour, or the amount of dividend he earns, but by the kind of life he lives ; where the poor tax the rich ; where human society is founded not on the equality of stomachs but on the equality of spirits ; where an untouchable can marry the daughter of a king ; where private ownership is a trust, and where capital cannot be allowed to accumulate so as to dominate the real

producer of wealth. This superb idealism of your faith, however, needs emancipation from the medical fancies of theologians and legists. Spiritually we are living in a prison-house of thoughts and emotions which during the course of centuries we have weaved round ourselves. And be it further said to the shame of us, men of older generation, that we have failed to equip the younger generation for the economic, political and even religious crises that the present age is likely to bring. The whole community needs a complete overhauling of its present mentality in order that it may again become capable of feeling the urge of fresh desires and ideals. The Indian Muslim has long ceased to explore the depths of his own inner life.

The lesson that past experience has brought you must be taken to heart. Expect nothing from any side. Concentrate your whole ego on yourself alone, and ripen your clay into real manhood if you wish to see your aspirations realized. Be hard and work hard. This is the whole secret of individual and collective life. What then shall be our future programme ? I am inclined to think that it should be partly political, partly cultural. I venture to offer few suggestions for your consideration :

(1) We must frankly admit that there is yet a sort of chaos in the political thought of those who are supposed to guide the activities of the Indian Muslims in the present day political struggle. The community, however, is not to blame for this state of things. The Muslim masses are not at all lacking in the spirit of self-sacrifice when the question of their ultimate destiny in this country is involved. Recent history bears ample testimony to what I say. The fault is ours not theirs. The guidance offered to the community is not always independently conceived, and the result is ruptures, sometimes in critical moments, within our political organizations. Thus these organizations cannot properly develop the kind of discipline which is so absolutely essential to the life and power of political bodies. To remedy this evil I suggest that the Indian Muslims should have only one political organization with provincial and district branches all over the country.

(2) Secondly, I suggest that this central organization should immediately raise a national fund of at least 50 lakhs of rupees. No doubt we are living in hard times, but we may rest assured that the Muslims of India will not fail to respond to your call if a genuine effort is made to impress upon them the gravity of the present situation.

(3) Thirdly, I suggested the formation of youth leagues and well-equipped volunteer corps throughout the country under the control and guidance of the central organization. They must specially devote themselves to social service, custom reform, commercial organization of the community and economic propaganda in towns and villages, especially in the Punjab where the enormous indebtedness of Muslim agriculturists cannot be allowed to wait for the drastic remedies provided by agrarian upheavals.

(4) Fourthly, I suggest the establishment of male and female cultural institutes in the big towns of India. These institutes as such should have nothing to do with politics. Their chief function should be to mobilize the dormant spiritual energy of the younger generation by giving them a clear grasp of what Islam has already achieved, and what it has still to achieve in the religious and cultural history of mankind.

(5) Fifthly, I suggest the formation of an assembly of Ulema which must include Muslim lawyers who have received education in modern jurisprudence. The idea is to protect, expand, and if necessary to reinterpret the law of Islam in the light of modern conditions while keeping close to the spirit embodied in its fundamental principles. This body must receive constitutional recognition so that no bill affecting the personal law of Muslims may be put on the legislative anvil before it has passed through the crucible of this assembly.

STATEMENT ON THE RUMOURED RIFT IN THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

(25 July, 1932)

There is no real split as far as the present Muslim attitude towards the announcement of the communal decision is concer-

ned. The leaders of the new party were in Lahore a few days ago and had long talks with me about the past work of the Conference and future possibilities. They finally agreed to my view that since the British Government had undertaken to decide the communal problem—practically at the request of the Indian communities—we must wait till that decision and hold the postponed meeting of the Executive Board of the Conference at a suitable place shortly after its announcement.

I am glad that the good sense of our community has saved us from mutual dissension on this issue. I am sure that on account of the experience acquired by it during the last ten years, the community as a whole fully understands the many sides of the present political problem in the country ; and I have every hope that its strong common-sense will not fail it when it is again called upon to appraise the value of political alternative which the future may disclose.

STATEMENT ON THE COMMUNAL AWARD (24 August, 1932)

The decision of His Majesty's Government has invoked divergent criticism characteristic of this land of minorities. This in itself ought to be instructive to those fact-shy politicians who take an easy view of the complexity of the Indian constitutional problem and think that India possesses, or is capable of possessing, on the whole a single national point of view. And all this unhappy fire-work of phrases comes from people who openly confessed their inability to solve their own problems in requesting a third party to give them a decision which, be it remembered, does not close the door for an agreed settlement.

Amidst this welter of indiscriminate criticism, however, a disinterested student of Indian politics will find great relief in regarding the views of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru—the acute politician who combines a clear vision of present actualities with a penetrating glance into the future and shows infinite

patience in working out the minute details of a complex situation.

I may also recall the amusing observation made in this connection by a gentleman of Bombay who said that the British Government's decision might as well have been written by myself. I assure him that if I had been called upon to give a decision on the Indian communal problem, I should not have done such glaring injustice to Muslims as the present decision does.

I honestly believe that no community has a more genuine grievance against the decision than Muslims. Indeed I cannot explain to myself how the British conscience has tolerated this injustice.

The outcry that the decision has given a majority representation to Punjab Muslims has absolutely no justification. A Muslim majority, whatever its character, in this province ought not to form a ground of grievance for any community. Besides, in the present case this majority has been made dependent on Muslims winning a number of seats through joint electorates.

The views of the Indian Muslims on the British Government's decision are embodied in the resolution adopted by the Executive Board of the All-India Muslim Conference at Delhi the other day. I need not repeat them. But it appears from a careful study of the decision that it attempts to indicate two political principles, *i.e.* no majority should be reduced to a minority and the interests of the minorities should be protected by giving them suitable weightage. In the application of both these principles it is the Muslims who suffer.

The position of Muslims in Bengal proves the violation of the first principle to the detriment of the Muslims and the figures relating to the weightage given to minorities in various provinces prove that the second principle has been applied more generously to Hindus in the Frontier Province than to

Muslims in any other province. In the Punjab the Sikh minority has been given weightage to an extent which reduces the probable Muslim majority to the narrowest possible margin.

The Muslims of Bengal who have been given 48.4 instead of 61 per cent needed only another 2 per cent to ensure an odd majority for them. But His Majesty's Government have thought fit to observe the terms of the Minorities Pact as far as it is related to Europeans and to ignore it as far as it related to Bengal Muslims. Is it because blood is thicker than water or because this injustice to Muslims serves the double object of helping the Europeans and pleasing the Hindus ?

The important question for Muslims, however, is what is to be done ? I believe that a perfectly constitutional method is open to Muslims to adopt in this connection. Bengal is one of those provinces which have demanded two Houses of Legislature. The constitution of an Upper House for it is yet to be framed and what the relations between the two Houses will be and whether the Government will be responsible to the Lower House only or to both Houses put together, are questions which are yet to be settled. If representation on a population basis is secured for Muslims in the Upper House and if Government is made responsible to both Houses put together, Muslims may still have a majority in that province. In view of the fact that special interest has received full attention in the Lower House the above method will only do bare justice to Bengal Muslims.

I must add that the mere allotment of seats to various communities is in itself of no great consequence. What is vital is the amount of power which may be transferred to the province of India. If real power comes to the provinces, there is no doubt that the minorities of India, Muslims and non-Muslims, will have an opportunity of improving their political position in the country and that in working out the coming constitution Muslims in their majority provinces will, in view of their past history and traditions, prove themselves free from

all pettiness of mind and narrowness of outlook. Their one duty, to my mind, is a war against illiteracy and economic slavery.

**STATEMENT ON THE CONSTITUTION EMERGING
OUT OF THE DELIBERATIONS OF ROUND
TABLE CONFERENCES
(26th February, 1933)**

As far as the Indian Muslims are concerned, it is their duty to organise themselves for the coming elections and scrupulously avoid all causes of action which may lead to sectional differences among themselves. The proposed constitution clearly recognises the principle of protection of minorities. This is the only way of giving the minorities a national outlook. It is now for the minorities themselves, who were parties to the Minorities' Pact made in London, to take full advantage of the opportunities given to them.

Whatever else one may say about the results of the Round Table Conferences, nobody can deny that they have given birth to a people who are at once new and ancient. I believe it to be one of the most remarkable facts of modern history. Not even a farsighted historian can realize the full consequences of the birth of this 'new—ancient' people. I only hope that their leaders will remain alert and not allow the growth of self-consciousness among their people to be arrested by external forces, social or political.

**STATEMENT ON PAN-ISLAMISM AS PROPOUNDED
BY SIR FAZL-I-HUSAIN
(19 February, 1933)**

Sir Fazl-i-Husain is perfectly correct when he says that political Pan-Islamism never existed. It has existed, if at all, only in the imagination of those who invented the phrase or possibly as a diplomatic weapon in the hands of Sultan Abdul Hamid Khan of Turkey. Even Jamalud-Din Afghani, whose name is closely associated with what is called Pan-Islamic:

movement, never dreamed of a unification of Muslims into a political State.

It is significant that in no Islamic language—Arabic, Persian or Turkish—does there exist a phrase corresponding to Pan Islamism.

It is, however, true that Islam as a society or as a practical scheme for the combination not only of races and nations but also of religions does not recognise the barriers of race and nationality or geographical frontiers. In the sense of this humanitarian ideal Pan-Islamism, if one prefers to use this unnecessarily long phrase to the simple expression 'Islam'—does and will always exist.

Sir Fazl-i-Husain's advice to Indian Muslims to stand on their own legs as an Indian nation is perfectly sound and I have no doubt that Muslims fully understand and appreciate it. Indian Muslims, who happen to be a more numerous people than the Muslims of all Asiatic countries put together, ought to consider themselves the greatest asset of Islam and should sink in their deeper self like other Muslim nations of Asia in order to gather their scattered sources of life and according to Sir Fazli's advice 'stand on their own legs.'

I cannot impress too strongly upon the Musalmans of India that the present is the most critical time in our history and if we are not well-equipped, vigilant or active, there might be a setback for us from which we may never recover. I am confident that my appeal will not fail.

Islam expects every Musalman to do his duty by his people and by his nation.

**ON THE ATTITUDE OF MUSLIM DELEGATES TO
THE ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES
(6 December 1933)**

I have never had the pleasure of meeting Pandit Jawaharlal, though I have always admired his sincerity and outspokenness.

His latest statement in reply to his Mahasabhaite critics has a ring of sincerity which is rare in the pronouncements of present-day politicians in India. It seems, however, that he is not in full possession of the facts regarding the behaviour of Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conferences held in London during the past three years.

He has been led to believe that Mr. Gandhi offered personally to accept all of the Muslim demands on condition that Muslims assured him of their full support in the political struggle for freedom and that reactionaryism rather than communalism prevented Muslims from accepting this condition. This is a perfectly wrong statement of what happened in London.

Pandit Jawaharlal has described His Highness the Agha Khan as the greatest inspirer of political reactionaryism among Muslims. The truth, however, is that it was the Agha Khan himself who assured Mr. Gandhi in the presence of several Indian delegates, including myself, that if the Hindus or the Congress agreed to Muslim demands, the entire Muslim community would be ready to serve as his (Mr. Gandhi's) camp-followers in the political struggle.

Mr. Gandhi weighed the Agha Khan's words and his offer to accept Muslim demands came later and was hedged round with conditions. The first condition was that Mr. Gandhi would accept the Muslim demands in his personal capacity and would try to secure, but not guarantee, the acceptance of his position of the Congress. I asked him to wire to the Congress Executive and secure its consent to his offer. He said he knew that the Congress would not make him their plenipotentiary on the question.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru can easily refer to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, who sat near me at the time as to her observations which she shared with me on Mr. Gandhi's attitude. Mr. Gandhi was then asked to secure at least the Hindu and Sikh delegates' consent to his offer. He did make something

like an attempt to do so but failed and privately expressed his disappointment with their attitude.

Mr. Gandhi's second most unrighteous condition was that Muslims should not support the special claims of Untouchables, particularly their claim to special representation. It was pointed out to him that it did not lie in the mouth of Muslims to oppose those very claims on the part of the Untouchables which they were advancing for themselves and that if Mr. Gandhi could arrive at a mutual understanding with the Untouchables, the Muslims would certainly not stand in their way. Mr. Gandhi, however, insisted on the condition. I should like to know how far Pandit Jawaharlal with his well-known socialist views can sympathise with such an inhuman condition.

This is the inner history of the negotiations between Mr. Gandhi and Muslim delegates. I would leave it to Pandit Jawaharlal to judge whether the alleged political reactionaryism among Muslim delegates or the narrow political outlook of others was responsible for the result of negotiations.

The offer which His Highness the Agha Khan made to Mr. Gandhi two years ago still holds good. If under Pandit Nehru's leadership the Hindus or the Congress agree to the safeguards which Muslims believe to be necessary for protection as an all-India minority, the Muslims are still ready to serve, in the Agha Khan's words, as camp-followers of the majority in the country's political struggle. If, however, he is unable to accept this offer let him at least not accuse Muslims of political reactionaryism but leave those who understand the motive and purposes of Hindu communalism to draw the conclusion that he is in essential agreement with the Mahasabha in the latter's campaign against the Communal Award.

Another accusation which Pandit Jawaharlal brings against Muslims is that some of them are definitely anti-national. If by 'nationalism' he means a fusion of the communities in a biological sense, I should personally plead guilty to the charge of nationalism. The building up of nation in this sense is, in

my opinion, neither possible nor perhaps desirable in the peculiar circumstances of India. In this sense perhaps the greatest anti-national leader in India of today is Mr. Gandhi who has made it a life-mission to prevent the fusion of Untouchables with other communities and to retain in the fold of Hinduism without any real fusion even between them and the caste Hindus. As far as I can judge it, his message to the Untouchables amounts to this: 'Do not leave Hinduism. Remain in it without being of it'.

A man who opposes nationalism in the sense of a fusion of the communities is, however, not necessarily anti-national. It is obvious that there are interests common to the various communities of India. In so far as these interests are concerned an understanding among the communities is possible. According to my belief it is bound to come. The present situation is only a necessary stage in the country's political evolution. A United India will have to be built on the foundation of concrete facts, *i.e.*, the country. The sooner Indian leaders of political thought get rid of the idea of a unitary Indian Nation based on something like a biological fusion of the communities, the better for all concerned.

Pandit Jawaharlal further seems to think that Muslims, while believing in democracy as a religious institution, are afraid of democracy in practice. He overlooks the fact that the communal electorates and other safeguards on which Muslims insist are only intended to prevent 80 million members of a comparatively poor and backward community from being ousted from all real advantages of democracy but because he has reason to be afraid of communal oligarchy in the garb of democracy in India. He wants to ensure the substance of democracy even at the expense of its conventional form.

As for his reference to the speeches made by His Highness the Agha Khan, Dr. Shafaat Ahmed and myself before a gathering of members of the House of Commons, I have only to say that the kind of statements attributed to us were never made. It is unfair to cite the impressions of a Press correspon-

dent instead of an authorised text of our speeches in such an argument. No Indian can believe for a moment that it is impossible to govern India except through a British agency.

In conclusion, I must put a straight question to Pandit Jawaharlal. How is India's problem to be solved if the majority community will neither concede the minimum safeguards necessary for the protection of a minority of 80 million people nor accept the award of a third party ; but continue to talk of a kind of nationalism which works out only to its own benefit ? This position can admit of only two alternatives. Either the Indian majority community will have to accept for itself the permanent position of an agent of British Imperialism in the East, or the country will have to be redistributed on the basis of religious, historical and cultural affinities so as to do away with the question of electorates and the communal problem in its present form.

LETTERS TO M.A. JINNAH

Confidential

Lahore,

My dear Mr. Jinnah,

28th May, 1937.

Thank you so much for your letter which reached me in due course. I am glad to hear that you will bear in mind that I wrote to you about the changes in the constitution and programme of the League. I have no doubt that you fully realise the gravity of the situation as far as Muslim India is concerned. The League will have to finally decide whether it will remain a body representing the upper classes of Indian Muslims or Muslim masses who have so far, with good reason, taken no interest in it. Personally I believe that a political organisation which gives no promise of improving the lot of the average Muslim cannot attract our masses.

Under the new constitution the higher posts go to the sons of upper classes ; the smaller ones go to the friends or relatives of the ministers. In other matter too our political institutions

have never thought of improving the lot of Muslims generally. The problem of bread is becoming more and more acute. The Muslim has begun to feel that he has been going down and down during the last 200 years. Ordinarily he believes that his poverty is due to Hindu money-lending or capitalism. The perception that it is equally due to foreign rule has not yet fully come to him. But it is bound to come. The atheistic socialism of Jawaharlal is not likely to receive much response from the Muslim. The question therefore is : how is it possible to solve the problem of Muslim poverty ? And the whole future of the League depends on the League's activity to solve this question. If the League can give no such promise I am sure the Muslim masses will remain indifferent to it as before. Happily there is a solution in the enforcement of the Law of Islam and its further development in the light of modern ideas. After a long and careful study of Islamic Law I have come to the conclusion that if this system of Law is properly understood and applied, at last the right to subsistence is secured to everybody. But the enforcement and development of the Shariat of Islam is impossible in this country without a free Muslim state or states. This has been my honest conviction for many years and I still believe this to be the only way to solve the problem of bread for Muslims as well as to secure a peaceful India. If such a thing is impossible in India the only other alternative is a civil war which, as a matter of fact, has been going on for some time in the shape of Hindu-Muslim riots. I fear that in certain parts of the country, e.g. N.W. India, Palestine may be repeated. Also the insertion of Jawaharlal's socialism into the body-politic of Hinduism is likely to cause much bloodshed among the Hindus themselves. The issue between social democracy and Brahmanism is not dissimilar to the one between Brahmanism and Buddhism. Whether that fate of socialism will be the same as the fate of Buddhism in India I cannot say. But it is clear to my mind that if Hinduism accepts social democracy it must necessarily cease to be Hinduisim. For Islam the acceptance of social democracy in some suitable form and consistent with the legal principles of Islam is not a revolution but a return to the original purity of Islam. The modern

problems, therefore, are far more easy to solve for the Muslims than for the Hindus. But as I have said above in order to make it possible for Muslim India to solve the problems, it is necessary to redistribute the country and to provide one or more Muslim states with absolute majorities. Don't you think that the time for such a demand has already arrived ? Perhaps this is the best reply you can give to the atheistic socialism of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Anyhow I have given you my own thoughts in the hope that you will give them serious consideration either in your address or in the discussion of the coming session of the League. Muslim India hopes that at this serious juncture your genius will discover some way out of our present difficulties.

Yours sincerely,
Mohammad Iqbal.

Lahore,
June 21st, 1937.

Private and Confidential

My dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you so much for your letter which I received yesterday. I know you are a busy man ; but I do hope you won't mind my writing to you so often, as you are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look up for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India, and perhaps to the whole of India. I tell you that we are actually living in a state of civil war which, but for the police and military, would become universal in no time. During the last few months there has been a series of Hindu-Muslim riots in India. In North-West India alone there have been at least three riots during the last three months and at least four cases of vilification of the prophet by Hindus and Sikhs. In each of these four cases, the vilifier has been murdered. There have also been cases of burning of the Koran in Sind. I have carefully studied the whole situation and believe that the real cause of these events is neither religious nor

economic. It is purely political, i.e. the desire of the Sikhs and Hindus to intimidate Muslims even in the Muslim majority provinces. And the new constitution is such that even in the Muslim majority provinces, the Muslims are made entirely dependent on non-Muslims. The result is that the Muslim Ministry can take no proper action and are even driven to do injustice to Muslims partly to please those on whom they depend, and partly to show that they are absolutely impartial. Thus it is clear that we have our specific reasons to reject this constitution. It seems to me that the new constitution is devised only to placate the Hindus. In the Hindu majority provinces, the Hindus have of course absolute majorities, and can ignore Muslims altogether. In Muslim majority provinces, the Muslims are made entirely dependent on Hindus. I have no doubt in my mind that this constitution is calculated to do infinite harm to the Indian Muslims. Apart from this, it is no solution of the economic problem which is so acute among Muslims.

The only thing that the communal award grants to Muslims is the recognition of their political existence in India. But such a recognition granted to a people whom this constitution does not and cannot help in solving their problem of poverty can be of no value to them. The Congress President has denied the political existence of Muslims in no unmistakable terms. The other Hindu political body, i.e. the Mahasabha, whom I regard as the real representative of the masses of the Hindus, has declared more than once that a united Hindu-Muslim nation is impossible in India. In these circumstances it is obvious that the only way to peaceful India is a redistribution of the country on the lines of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. Many British statesmen also realise this, and the Hindu-Muslim riots which are rapidly coming in the wake of this constitution are sure further to open their eyes to the real situation in the country. I remember, Lord Lothian told me before I left England that my scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles of India, but that it would take 25 years to come. Some Muslims in the Punjab are already suggesting the holding

of a North-West India Muslim Conference, and the idea is rapidly spreading. I agree with you, however, that our community is not yet sufficiently organised and disciplined and perhaps the time for holding such a conference is not yet ripe. But I feel that it would be highly advisable for you to indicate in your address at least the line of action that the Muslims of North-West India would be finally driven to take.

To my mind the new constitution with its idea of a single Indian federation is completely hopeless. A separate federation of Muslim provinces, reformed on the lines I have suggested above, is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are ?

Personally I think that the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal ought, at present, to ignore Muslim minority provinces. This is the best course to adopt in the interests of both Muslim majority and minority provinces. It will therefore be better to hold the coming session of the League in the Punjab, and not in a Muslim minority province. The month of August is bad in Lahore. I think you should seriously consider the advisability of holding the coming session at Lahore in the middle of October when the weather is quite good in Lahore. The interest in the All-India Muslim League is rapidly growing in the Punjab, and the holding of the coming session in Lahore is likely to give a fresh political awakening to the Punjab Muslims.

Yours sincerely,
Mohammad Iqbal
(Bar-at-Law).

MOHAMMED ALI JINNAH

[In the history of eminent Muslim freedom fighters peerless is role of M.A. Jinnah (1876-1948) who, once proudly known as the 'ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity', became the Quaid-e-Azam and the founder of a separate and sovereign state of the Muslims. Obviously, his political career has two distinct phases—as a great nationalist until 1920 and from the Indian point of view a great anti-nationalist after 1930. During the first phase he championed the cause of 'Swaraj within the Empire', during the second one he fought for Swaraj out of the Empire in the form of India's division into two Dominions. In 1928 he offered his proposals (Delhi Proposals) and on that basis desired revision of the recommendations of the Nehru Report. In the following year he presented his 14-points which became the sheet-anchor of the ideology of the Muslim League. He represented the Muslim League at the Round Table Conferences held in London. The great persuasion of Iqbal had its effect on changing the mind of Jinnah. So he came to India in 1934 and assumed the leadership of the Muslim League. He strongly condemned the Government of India Act of 1935 as 'something forced on us'. But the defeat of the Muslim League in the elections of 1937 forced him to come forward with allegations of 'Congress Fascism' and 'Hindu Tyranny'. When the Congress provincial ministries resigned in protest against the British War policy in October, 1939, at his instance the League celebrated 'Deliverance Day' on 22 December, 1939. The situation took an astounding turn when he presented his theory of two nations at the Lahore session of the League in 1940. He defined Hindus and Muslims not as two communities but as two separate and distinct nations and on that basis

demanding division of the country. He rejected the Cripps Scheme of 1942 and stood as a barrier as a result of which the Simla Conference held in June-July 1945 broke down. He at first rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan of May, 1946, but could not catch its implications after some time. He permitted the League members to join the interim government lately with a view to sabotaging it from within. The League took to the path of violence as a result of which communal riots broke out in many parts of the country and thereby it could produce conditions which led to the fulfilment of what the Quaid-i-Azam claimed on the basis of his doctrine of two nations in India.]

SEARCH FOR CONSENSUS*

Education, agitation and organisation are the essential prerequisites for the successful prosecution of any national programme that will materially advance the cause of Swarajya. The suspension of the policy and programme of Non-co-operation by the Belgaum Congress, the crystallisation of the Swarajists' policy into one of resistance of bureaucracy as it impedes progress to Swarajya and Das's speech at Faridpur eliminates the main obstacle to the reunion of all Nationalists on a common platform on the basis of a common programme. The only alternative to a thorough-going programme of non-co-operation is a programme of 'honourable co-operation.' An analysis of the declaration of policy of the Swarajists, Independents and Liberals reveals the existence of much common ground between all the parties in regard to the main principles which will govern national policy. The Congress had

*On 22nd May, 1925 Jinnah wrote to M.R. Jayakar stating that there was an increase of the consensus of opinion that the time was ripe for a common understanding between the different political parties with a view to united action and that he had informal discussions with several friends on the subject and there was a strong feeling in favour of co-ordinating their common efforts. He had called a meeting of different leaders at his bungalow to which Jayakar was invited. In the letter was enclosed the following draft statement embodying his suggestions which had been tentatively made in this connection.

no political programme other than that of the Swaraj Party, while its constructive programme is not open to objection on principle on the part of any of the political parties. Self-reliance is the only basis, on which national activities can be organised. Co-ordination of activities within the Legislature and other public bodies and activities in the country is essential of the national will. There is agreement between the different parties on the need for self-reliant basis in the formation of any programme and for the co-ordination of all common activities. Opinions however differ in the translation of these principles into action, but these differences are not fundamental in character. National interest demands the enunciation of a common policy that will offer a basis for all nationalists irrespective of their party label. The education and organisation of the electorates, the organisation of an intensive and educative political campaign in India and abroad and the prosecution of broadbased constructive programme are matters in which all parties are effectively co-operated. A common policy is needed to render united action possible. Suggestions have been made that the Nationalists should join either the Swaraj Party or the Liberal Party as a step towards unity. In the view of many, the Congress alone as the greater body, offers a suitable medium for the union of all parties on a common platform. This can, however, be done only by the Congress participating directly in political activities, which function it has now delegated to the Swaraj Party. The yarn franchise also raises difficulties. In the circumstances, the immediate feasible course appears to be for the different parties to retain their individuality and to co-operate with one another to the extent a common programme permits united action, while continuing to make efforts to reunite all progressive sections of the people on the Congress platform. This can be done by the Executive Committees of the different parties acting together or by the creation of a temporary organization in which the progressive elements of all parties can come together.

Conditions in Bombay are favourable for a party co-operation between Nationalists, irrespective of party label as the

basis of the common policy that we have enunciated. Serious difficulties present themselves in the organisation of all India on a similar basis. Under these circumstances, it is incumbent upon us all to make a beginning in Bombay towards the unity of all progressive sections of the people on a common platform. This can only be done by the temporary creation of a new organisation that will pledge itself to pursue common policy enunciated above while working at the same time for the unity of all parties on the Congress platform.

The creed of the new organisation shall be :

- (1) The attainment of Swaraj.
- (2) The immediate objective is the speedy attainment of full Dominion Status.
- (3) The membership of the organisation shall be open to every adult of either sex over the age of 21, who subscribes to the creed and pays the prescribed subscription.

The programme shall be :

- (1) A vigorous prosecution of a broad-based constructive programme through legislative and independent efforts.
- (2) The co-ordination of activities within the Legislature and public bodies and activities in the country.
- (3) The pursuit of a policy of "opposition or support of measures as national interests demand on a consideration of their intrinsic merits" in the Legislatures and public bodies.
- (4) The organisation of the electorates.
- (5) The organisation of an intensive educative political campaign in support of the policy enunciated above.
- (6) Activities shall be confined to Bombay.

- (7) The organisation shall consist of a President, two Vice-Presidents, Secretaries and an Executive Committee.*

THE NEHRU REPORT AND MUSLIM VIEWPOINT

I**

Mr. Chairman and Delegates :

The Report of the Committee which you appointed has already been read out placed before you. I am exceedingly sorry that the Report of the Committee is neither helpful nor fruitful in any way whatsoever. I am sure, gentlemen, that you all realise that the present moment is very critical and vital to the interest not only of the Mussalmans, but to the whole of India. I think it will be recognised that it is absolutely essential to our progress that Hindu-Muslim Settlement should

*Jayakar in *'The Story of My Life'* writes: "When I got this invitation had great hopes that at least for the city of Bombay all Nationalists would combine and work the programme sketched out in the letter quoted above. Accordingly, more than one conference was held with Jinnah. I personally supported Jinnah's idea of a new orientation of parties, but I found that the Swarajists' prejudices against him and their strict adherence to the very letter of their programme prevented the formation of what Jinnah called a new organisation. After several attempts at his residence and mine, ultimately, the attempt was given up. It was revived, as the subsequent pages will show, once more in New Delhi on the advent of the Simon's Commission and there too an attempt to formulate a new inclusive organisation failed. The Swarajists's strong faith in their own programme and their unwillingness to make changes in the same interfered with the success of Jinnah's efforts. If this had been accomplished, the country would have seen a strong Nationalist Party working for a common programme in which leading Swarajists like Motilal and Das and leading Nationalist like Jinnah would have cooperated, but the thing was not to be and the attempt failed."

**Speech at the All-Parties National Convention held at Calcutta on 22 December, 1928 to discuss the Nehru Report. The All-India Muslim League had appointed a delegation of 24 members to present before the convention the Muslim point of view. M.A. Jinnah, speaking on behalf of the Muslim League, placed the Muslim demands before the Convention.

be reached, and that all communities should live in a friendly and harmonious spirit in this vast country of ours. No country has succeeded in either wresting a democratic constitution from a domination of another nation or establishing representative institutions from within without giving guarantees for the securities of the minorities wherever such a problem has arisen. Majorities are apt to be oppressive and tyrannical and minorities always dread and fear that their interests and rights, unless clearly and definitely safe-guarded by statutory provisions, would suffer and be prejudiced, but this apprehension is enhanced all the more when we have to deal with communal majority. I am sure, you will, therefore, consider the present situation in which we are working and struggling for freedom and record your vote in favour of modifications proposed, which, I have said before, are fair and reasonable and thus enable us to triumph in our cause.

The first point that I want to place before you is a point with regard to our proposal that there should be no less than 1/3rd of the Muslim Representation in the Central Legislature. We propose that 1/3rd of the elected members of the Central Legislature should be Mussalmans, and that the seats should be reserved for them to that extent in the joint electorates of the country. Now the Nehru Report has stated that according to the scheme which they have formulated, the Mussalmans are likely to get 1/3rd in the Central Legislature and more. It is argued there that the Punjab and Bengal will get many more seats over and above their proportion and the other minorities Provinces in India will get the representation of the Mussalmans according to their population under the scheme propounded by the Nehru Report. What we feel is this. If it is conceded that Mussalmans should be enabled to secure one-third of the representation in the Central Legislature, the method which is adopted is neither quite fair to the provinces where the Mussalmans are in a minority, nor does it guarantee that we shall obtain 1/3rd representation in the Central Legislature. Therefore, the two Mussalman Majority Provinces—Punjab and Bengal—will get more than their population, which means

you are giving more to the rich who will, under normal conditions, get the largest number of Muslim Representations and you are depriving the Muslim Minority Provinces of great importance, and restricting them to get no more than their population, whereas we wish to restrict the Punjab and Bengal according to their population and desire that the excess should be distributed amongst the minority Muslim Provinces. In other words, we propose that let us carve out of this $\frac{1}{3}$ rd as the Mussalmans wish. Take the case of Madras and Bombay—it is not always the only criterion *viz.*, counting of heads, but the importance of those two Provinces. Take the case of the United Provinces again, it is the centre of Mussalman culture and heart and it will be unfair that they should be restricted according to the number of their population in their representation in the Central Legislature. These three Provinces, Sind being separated, will then, so far as the population goes, be in this position, the United Provinces with the 14 per cent. The method that we want to be adopted is that the excess between $\frac{1}{3}$ rd and $\frac{1}{4}$ th should be distributed amongst the other Provinces according to the relative position of their importance to the Mussalmans and not according to population. I am sure indeed that besides counting our heads, there are other weighty and important considerations, which must not be lost sight of. It is not only question of getting votes in the Legislature, but it is also essential that various parts of the Provinces which are themselves vast, should be represented, so that, questions affecting the people of their grievances may be ventilated properly and thoroughly on the floor of the Legislature. Very often then proper facts and arguments are placed by one single representative which, when they are convincing, sway the entire legislature. It really comes to this that the Nehru Report makes a gift of the extra seats over and above the population basis to Punjab and Bengal, whereas, we propose that this extra 7 or 8 seats should be distributed amongst the minority Muslim Provinces.

Our next proposal is that in the event of the adult suffrage not being established, Punjab and Bengal also should have

seats reserved on population basis for the Mussalmans. But they should not have the right to contest for more. Of course, subject to re-examination of the question at the end of ten years. I am not sure that establishment of adult suffrage is within the range of practical politics in the near future. You remember, originally the proposal emanated from certain Muslim Leaders in March 1927 known as the Delhi Muslim Proposals. That was dealt with by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay and in the open session of the Madras Congress and endorsed by them. The Muslim League in its Calcutta Session in December, 1927 also confirmed the proposal. I am not going to enter into the pros and cons, but it is an admitted fact that although the Mussalmans in Punjab and Bengal are numerically in the majority, their voting strength is far below in proportion to their population and they, therefore, would not secure sufficient representation and it is feared that under those circumstances their representation will be far below their population. It is now devised to meet this undoubted fact by the Nehru proposals and the Report proposes the substitute of adult franchise and from those premises it is argued that there is no need for reservation in Punjab and Bengal, but we wish to provide for the contingency which is most patent and probable that in the event of the adult suffrage not being established, there should be reservation, for Mussalmans in Punjab and Bengal according to their population, but they should not be entitled to additional seats. And we, therefore, attach very great importance to this modification.

Our next proposal is that the form of the constitution should be federal with residuary power vesting in the Provinces and Clause 13A in the supplementary Nehru Report is most pernicious and should be deleted and the whole constitution should be revised on the basis of provincial Governments having the residuary power vested in them, and subject to that there should be revision of the schedules laying down central and provincial subjects as embodied in the Nehru Report. This question is by far the most important from the constitutional

point of view and the future development of India has very little to do with the communal aspect. If this question is examined carefully, it has much less of communal bearing and far graver of general interest of India and the future constitutional progress of the people.

This is hardly a place or an occasion when you would expect me to enter into a debate which might be held between two jurists. We have carefully considered the matter and we have come to the conclusion that a system which will give residuary power to the Provinces is the most suited for the Federation of India.

With regard to the question of separation of Sind and the N.W.F. Province, we cannot agree that they should await until the Nehru Constitution is established with adult suffrage. Do you expect the Mussalmans to oppose the reform being introduced in the N.-W.F. Province until the Nehru Constitution is an accomplished fact? Do you expect the Mussalmans to refuse to accept the separation of Sind until the Nehru Constitution is established? I am somewhat amazed that the Committee appointed by the Convention has rejected these proposals on the ground that a resolution was passed at Lucknow which recorded an agreement arrived at by certain individuals who were parties to that agreement and signed it and, therefore, they cannot re-open the question. The All-India Muslim League was not a party to any such resolution and was not represented at that meeting. I say with the utmost deference to the Members of the Committee that this is not a valid ground or answer. There are many organisations present here in the Convention today, none of them is bound by any such agreements arrived at between individuals or groups. I venture to say that this Convention is not bound and it is wholly untenable to advance any such reason before this Convention. This Convention is entitled to make any change, or alteration or modification in the proposals now before it and I ask the Convention whether the separation of Sind and the

introduction of reforms in the N.-W.F. Province are only to be accepted when the Nehru Constitution with adult suffrage is brought into full effect and operation in this country. The Mussalmans feel that it is shelving the issue and postponing their insistent demand till doomsday and cannot agree to it. I, therefore, appeal to the convention to take all these matters into their careful consideration and meet us.

II*

Sir,

The reason why no other delegate from the Muslim League was going to take part in the debate is that we have come to the Convention, which is composed of something like 1,200 delegates not with a purpose of raising controversies which would lead to bad feelings. We have already placed our proposals before the Convention and our grounds for supporting them and on the hypothesis which must be admitted on all hands that communalism exists in this country. We have not come here to apportion blame for it. The offensive remarks or insinuations served no good purpose and I will not follow the style or the manner of the speech delivered by my friend, Mr. Jayakar. Nor will I on this occasion permit myself to deal with specious arguments and pleadings which he has advanced. In short, his position is an ultimatum and with that ultimatum, we were made aware from the very start on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha. If a single word with regard to the com-

*Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, speaking on the amendment put forth by M. A. Jinnah, remarked that without complete harmony among all the Communities, it was impossible for India to achieve Dominion Status, not to speak of Independence and asked the Conference that they should consider Jinnah's proposition as practical statement for the sake of a settlement. Sir C.Y. Chintamani, on behalf of the Liberal Federation and Rallia Ram, as representative of the All-India Christians Conference opposed Jinnah's demands. Jayakar, the Mahasabhaite, most vehemently and uncompromisingly opposed the amendment of M.A. Jinnah with regard to the reservation of seats for Muslims in the Central Legislature. M.A. Jinnah, speaking in reply to this debate continued.

munal settlement is changed in the report, they will withdraw their support to it. With regard to the remarks of my friend, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, I am afraid some of the speakers have misunderstood them. He called me a spoilt child. I know the spirit in which he meant it and others have put a childish interpretation upon it. But I think it cannot be denied and I hope that Mr. Jayakar and others will agree with me that every country struggling for freedom and desirous of establishing a democratic system of Government has had to face the problem of minorities wherever they existed and no constitution, however idealistic it may be, and however perfect from theoretical point of view it may seem, will ever receive the support of the minorities unless they can feel that they, as an entity, are secured under the proposed constitution and government, and whether a constitution will succeed or not must necessarily depend as a matter of acid test whether the minorities are in fact secure. Otherwise no proper constitution will last but result in a revolution and civil war. I must here point out that it is not correct to say that the Muslim League did not take part at all in the All-Parties Conference. The Council of the League had appointed a Committee in February 1928 and it attended the All-Parties Conference till the 11th of March and the Committee had express instructions not to proceed with the framing of any constitution until the Hindu-Muslim differences were adjusted and agreed upon. It is true that no settlement was reached and as the Committee felt that it was not possible to arrive at any agreement they ceased to take further part in the All-Parties Conference which is responsible for producing the Nehru Report. I am not here today to express my opinion as to whether a constitution ought to be framed or not, but I would ask Mr. Jayakar to consider whether he wants what he calls the greatest common measure of agreement to be still greater or not. We are engaged today in a very serious and solemn transaction. It is not merely for the various organisations to come here and say, we agree to it, and retire. We are here, as I understand, for the purpose of entering into solemn contract and all parties who enter into it will have to work for it and fight for it together. What we

want is that Hindus and Mussalmans should march together until our object is obtained. Therefore, it is essential that you must get not only the Muslim League but Mussalmans of India and here I am not speaking as a Mussalman but as an Indian. And it is my desire to see that we get 7 crores of Mussalmans to march along with us in the struggle for freedom. Would you be content with a few? Would you be content if I were to say, I am with you? Do you want or do you not want the Muslim India to go along with you? You must remember the two major communities in India—I say this without the slightest disrespect to other communities like Sikhs, Christians and Parsees—are the Hindus and Mussalmans and naturally, therefore, these two communities have got to be reconciled and united and made to feel that their interests are common and they are marching together with for a common goal. I want you, therefore, to rise to that statesmanship which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru describes. Minorities cannot give anything to the majority. It is, therefore, no use asking me not to press for what you call these small points. I am not asking for these modifications because I am a naughty child. If they are small points why not concede? It is up to the majority and majority alone can give. I am asking you for this adjustment because I think it is the best and fair to the Mussalmans. Look at the constitutional history of Canada and Egypt. The minorities are always afraid of majorities. The majorities are apt to be tyrannical and oppressive and particularly religious majorities and the minorities, therefore, have a right to be absolutely secured. Was the adjustment between French Canadians and British arrived at on population basis or on the ground of pure equality? Was the adjustment between the Copts, Christians and Mussalmans in Egypt regulated by such considerations? We are dealing with politics. We are not in a Court of Law and, therefore, it is no use resorting to hair-splitting and petty squabbles. These are big questions and they can be settled only by the exercise of the highest order of statesmanship and political wisdom. I, therefore, ask you once more to consider this question most carefully before you decide. Please don't think that in

anything that I have said I am threatening any party and I hope that I shall not be misunderstood. If you do not settle this question today, we shall have to settle it tomorrow, but in the meantime our national interests are bound to suffer. We are all sons of this land. We have to live together. We have to work together and whatever our differences may be, let us at any rate agree to differ but let us part as friends. I once more repeat. Believe me, there is no progress for India until the Mussalmans and Hindus are united and let no logic, philosophy or squabble stand in the way of our coming to a compromise and nothing will make me more happy to see the Hindu-Muslim Union.

RESOLUTION ON 'FOURTEEN POINTS'*

Whereas the basic idea with which the All-Parties' Conference was called into being and a Convention summoned at Calcutta during Christmas week, 1928, was that a scheme of reforms should be formulated and accepted and ratified by the foremost political organisations in the country as a National Pact; and whereas the Report was adopted by the Indian National Congress only constitutionally for the one year ending 31st December, 1929, and in the event of the British Parliament not accepting it within the time limit, the Congress stands committed to the policy and programme of complete independence by resort to civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes: and whereas the attitude taken by the Hindu Mahasabha from the commencement through their representatives at the

*At the All-Parties National Convention held at Calcutta on 22 December, 1928, for eliciting public opinion in favour of the Nehru Report, drafted by the Nehru Committee, the Muslim demands to amend the Report were flatly rejected. On the eve of the open session of the League, a largely attended meeting of the Council of the League was held in Delhi on the 28 March, 1929 to settle the programme for the ensuing session under the Presidentship of M.A. Jinnah. The following text of the draft resolution prepared by Jinnah to accommodate the various points of view in regard to the policy and programme of the Muslim League for the forthcoming constitutional reforms was circulated.

Convention was nothing short of an ultimatum, that, if a single word in the Nehru Report in respect of the communal settlement was changed, they would immediately withdraw their support to it ; and whereas the National Liberal Federation delegates at the Convention took up an attitude of benevolent neutrality and subsequently in their open session at Allahabad, adopted a non-committal policy with regard to Hindu-Muslim differences ; and whereas the Sikh League had already declined to agree to the Nehru Report ; and whereas the non-Brahmin and depressed classes are entirely opposed to it ; and whereas the reasonable and moderate proposals put forward by the delegates of the All-India Muslim League at the Convention in modification were not accepted, the Muslim League is unable to accept the Nehru Report.

The League after anxious and careful consideration most earnestly and emphatically lays down that no scheme for the future constitution of the government of India will be acceptable to Mussalmans of India until and unless the following basic principles are given effect to and provisions are embodied therein to safeguard their rights and interests :

1. The form of the future constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the provinces.
2. A uniform measure of autonomy shall be granted to all provinces.
3. All legislatures in the country and other elected bodies shall be constituted on the definite principle of adequate and effective representation of minorities in every Province without reducing the majority in any Province to a minority or even equality.
4. In the Central Legislature, Mussalman representation shall not be less than one-third.
5. Representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorate as at present, pro-

vided it shall be open to any community, at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate.

6. Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way, affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and N.W.F. Province.
7. Full religious liberty *i.e.*, liberty of belief, worship and observance, propaganda, association and education, shall be guaranteed to all communities.
8. No bill or resolution or any part thereof shall be passed in any legislature or any other elected body if three-fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose such a bill, resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative, such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases.
9. Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency.
10. Reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces.
11. Provision should be made in the constitution, giving Muslims an adequate share along with the other Indians, in all the services of the State and in local self-governing bodies, having due regard to the requirements of efficiency.
12. The constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal laws and Muslim charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants-in-aid given by the State and by local self-governing bodies.
13. No cabinet, either Central or Provincial, should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim Ministers.

14. No change shall be made in the constitution by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the State constituting the Indian Federation.

The draft resolution also mentioned an alternative to the above provision in the following terms :

“That in the present circumstances, representation of Mussalmans in the different legislatures of the country and other elected bodies through the separate electorates is inevitable and further, the Government being pledged over and over again not to disturb this franchise so granted to the Muslim community since 1909 till such time as the Mussalmans chose to abandon it, the Mussalmans will not consent to joint electorates unless Sind is actually constituted into a separate province and reforms in fact are introduced in the N.-W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces.

“Further, it is provided that there shall be reservation of seats according to the Muslim population in the various provinces ; but where Mussalmans are in a majority, they shall not contest more seats than their population warrants.

“The question of excess representation of Mussalmans over and above their population in Provinces where they are in a minority is to be considered hereafter.”

LETTER TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF ENGLAND*

June 19, 1929.

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

I think you will remember our conversation in July last while I was in London. In view of what you said to me then

*The Simon Commission concluded its work by April 1929 but before it could submit its report to Parliament, the Conservative Government in England was replaced by Labour Ministry in the general elections of May 1929. Now Ramsay MacDonald was the Prime Minister and Col. Wedgwood Benn the Secretary of State for India. The Indian National Congress had asked the Government to accept the Nehru Report in its entirety but the Muslims had no political platform. M.A. Jinnah at this juncture wrote a letter to the Prime Minister of England.

and the great kindness with which you treated me, I am encouraged to feel that I must place before you the situation as it presents itself to me. In the solution and settlement of this question vital interests of Great Britain and India are involved which I think you appreciate and understand more than anybody else as you possess personal knowledge of India during the time you were on the Islington Commission. But much water has run down the Thames and the Ganges since then. The present position is a very serious deadlock and if allowed to continue, it will, in my judgement, prove disastrous both to the interests of India and Great Britain.

The Simon Commission was boycotted by political India, of which there can be very little doubt. The exclusion of Indians from the personnel of the Commission from start to finish relegated the Indians to the position of suppliants and assessors, and let me tell you, whatever you may hear to the contrary, you will never get political India to co-operate with the scheme further if the various stages of the scheme are adhered to strictly. But the task of the Simon Commission, as it was repeatedly declared by responsible men and the press in England, was that of a 'rapporteur.'

So far as India is concerned, we have done with it and when its report, whatever it may be, is published in due course, every effort will be made in India to damn it. Of course, this is on the assumption that it will not be satisfactory, which is already assumed in India. After the publication of the report, if the programme and the plan of the scheme of the Commission as announced are adhered to, as I understand it will be, His Majesty's Government will wait until they get the considered opinion of the Government of India on that report and after that they will formulate their definite proposals and place them before Parliament to be referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee without the House definitely committing itself with regard to those proposals of His Majesty's Government; and that at this stage the Indian representatives will be given the opportunity to place their views before the Joint

Parliamentary Committee. What chance of success is there in their efforts to get at that stage any modifications of a substantial character at the hands of the Joint Parliamentary Committee ?

It strikes me, and I think you will agree, that in the normal course there will be no chance of getting the Joint Parliamentary Committee to make any radical change, and my reasons are as follows :

The Joint Parliamentary Committee will be in this position. They will have, in the first instance, before them the recommendations of the Simon Commission ; secondly, the views and the proposals of the Government of India, which I assume will be reactionary—and that is the opinion and feeling in India—and with those materials before them the definite proposals which will be formulated by His Majesty's Government will be referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee. I should have thought that at that stage so far as the principles underlying the proposals are concerned we shall stand not only precluded but barred from suggesting any modification of the fundamental principles of the proposals as referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee by the House, and all that can at that stage be done reasonably and with any success would be to discuss and, if possible, to modify the details of these proposals. If that is all the advantage that is still open to the Indian representatives, can you conceive that political India having boycotted the Simon Commission and the scheme at the stage of enquiry and investigations could now be induced to co-operate directly or indirectly with the further stages of the scheme when, as I have pointed out, no real useful purpose would be served ?

India has lost her faith in the word of Great Britain. The first and foremost thing that I would ask you to consider is how best to restore that faith and revive the confidence of India in the 'bona fides' of Great Britain. His Excellency the Viceroy,

Lord Irwin addressing the Legislature on the 28th January, 1929, attempted to perform this task. This is what he says :

“But I tell this Assembly again, and through them India, that the Declaration of 1917 stands and will stand for all time as the solemn pledge of the British people to do all that can be done by one people to assist another to attain full national political stature, and the pledge so given will never be dishonoured. And as actions are commonly held more powerful than words, I will add that I should not be standing before you here today as Governor-General if I believed that the British people had withdrawn their hand from that solemn covenant. Those, therefore, who preach that a new generation has arisen in England which seeks to explain away the significance of the 1917 declaration are, consciously or unconsciously but none the less really misrepresenting the purpose of Great Britain and poisoning the wells by which the common life of India and Great Britain is supported and sustained.”

You will notice from this quotation that I am not singular in my opinion that India is fast losing her faith in Great Britain. The reason again for this is not far to seek. In 1924 in the course of an important debate in Legislative Assembly on a resolution urging the Government to take steps to review the Government of India Act with a view to establishing full responsible government in India, Sir Malcolm Hailey, in the course of his speech on behalf of the Government of India, in effect, repudiated that the Declaration of 1917 and the preamble to the Government of India Act means that Great Britain was committed to the policy of granting full self-governing Dominion Status to India. He said : ‘The pronouncement of August 1917 spoke of the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India. That is also the term used in the preamble to the Act ; that is the term used in the Royal Warrant of Instructions which adds that ‘thus will India be fitted to take her place among the other Dominions.’ The term has its significance. We

know that it was deliberately chosen. The Congress and the League had asked the Imperial Government to proclaim its intention to confer self-government on India at an early date and the Cabinet chose the present term. The expression used in the Act is a term of precision, conveying that the Executive in India would be responsible to the Indian Legislature instead of to the British Parliament. If you analyse the term 'full dominion self-government' you will see that it is of somewhat wider extent conveying that not only will the Executive be responsible to the Legislature but the Legislature will in itself have the full powers which are typical of the modern Dominion. It may be there is some difference of substance because responsible Government is not necessarily incompatible with a legislature with limited or restricted powers. It may be that full Dominion Self-Government is the logical outcome of responsible Government. nay, it may be the inevitable and historical development of responsible Government, but it is a further and a final step.'

Further, you know in the recent publication of the memoirs of Lord Curzon, I think, it was discovered that there was some difference of opinion as to the significance of the words which were finally adopted in the declaration of August 1917 between Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu. Along with this the policy of the Government of India and His Majesty's Government since 1924 in turning a deaf ear to all reasonable demands has led almost every political party to come to the conclusion that there is no hope of getting any fairplay and thus there is a section in India that has already declared in favour of complete independence and I may tell you without exaggeration that the movement for independence is gaining ground, as it is supported by the Indian National Congress.

This being a short summary of the position, I would most earnestly urge upon you at this moment to persuade His Majesty's Government without delay to make a declaration that Great Britain is unequivocally pledged to the policy of granting to India full responsible Government with Dominion status.

The effect of such a declaration will be very far-reaching and go a great way to create a different atmosphere in the country and will be a very severe antidote to the movement for independence. But, here again I must admit, in the words of the Viceroy, that we must not forget that actions are held more powerful than words. Naturally, therefore, the next question that presents itself to all thinking men is what action or actions should be taken, and may I quote again from the same speech of Lord Irwin. That is what he says :

“It would seem evident, however, that what all people must desire is a solution reached by mutual agreement between Great Britain and India, and that, in the present circumstances, the friendly collaboration of Great Britain and India is a requisite and indispensable condition to obtain it. On the one side it is as unprofitable to deny the right to Parliament to form its free and deliberate judgment on the problems as it would be short-sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India.”

May I suggest a solution, which I think would most probably be acceptable to India. His Majesty's Government before they formulate their proposals and after they are in receipt of the Simon Commission Report and the views of the Government of India, and so, before they formulate their proposals, should invite representatives of India, who would be in a position to deliver the goods (because completely unanimous opinion in India is not possible at present), to sit in conference with them with a view to reaching a solution which might carry, to use the words of the Viceroy, the 'willing assent of the political India.' If such an invitation comes directly from the Prime Minister on behalf of His Majesty's Government, I feel that it will be irresistible, and if such a conference is held with men who are in the front and the foremost rank of political India, I am not unhopeful that a solution may be reached satisfactory to Great Britain and India.

Will you, therefore, consider these proposals of mine with the care and attention that you can give them. In short it comes to this (1) declaration of policy, (2) followed up with an invitation from His Majesty's Government with a view to arriving at an agreement as to the future constitution of India before His Majesty's Government formulated any definite proposals and place them before Parliament. His Majesty's Government will be, as I have said before, armed already with the Simon Report and the Government of India dispatch on it, both of them, I assume, will not be satisfactory.

As to the personnel of the representatives of India to be invited, you may well ask me by what method are we to get them. I have very carefully considered the pros and cons and I have come to the conclusion that if we are to elect our representatives in the Assembly and confine ourselves to the members of the Assembly, there are men outside the Assembly whose presence would be indispensable for a conference of the kind I am contemplating. On the other hand, if it is thrown open to non-members, it might lead to a great deal of canvassing and rivalry and we may not get the personnel we may desire. I think you yourself are fairly well-acquainted with the names of prominent political leaders in India. But besides that His Excellency the Viceroy, I think, by now knows pretty well who is who in the political world of India and further the members of the Government of India would be able to guide you, if necessary. But you must take upon yourself to invite such men as you may be advised, to go over to London and confer with His Majesty's Government and sit in conference with the Cabinet. Of course, the number should be, as far as possible, not very large. I should restrict the number to about fifteen.

This shortly is the scheme which I would put before you, and I have no doubt that you will give your most earnest consideration to it.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

SAFEGUARDS FOR THE MUSLIMS*

Mr. President, to use your own words I can assure you that we are here to co-operate, animated by a determination to succeed.

The first point that I should like to deal with is the point with regard to the moral claims of Great Britain on the one side and the sins of commission and omission by Great Britain on the other. I tell you, Sir, this, that I am one of those who believe that no useful purpose will be served by going into that question. Let that question, may I say to those who indulge in it on both sides, be decided by the historians. For my purpose it is enough that Great Britain is in India. I have no hesitation in conceding this proposition—that you have a great interest in India, both commercial and political, and therefore, you are a party, if I may say so, gravely interested in the future constitution of India. But when I have said that, I want you equally to concede frankly—and frankness does not mean wounding anybody's feelings, nor that we are influenced by bitterness ; it means, as I understand, particularly in a Conference like this, that we should put our points of view frankly and respectfully and without wounding anybody's feelings, and therefore, I shall avoid any kind of bitterness. When I have said this, I want you equally to concede that we have a greater and far more vital interest than you have, because you have the financial or commercial interest and the political interest, but to us it is all in all.

Now, in that spirit, you sitting on that side of the Conference and we sitting on this side, let us approach every question. I almost said that really there are four parties, not forgetting the other smaller minorities, such as the Sikhs and the Christians, and not forgetting for a single moment the depressed classes. But there are four main parties sitting round

*Speech at the plenary session of the first Round Table Conference held in London on 20 November, 1930.

the table now. There are the British party, the Indian Princes, the Hindus and the Muslims.

Let us, Sir, consider what is the issue with which we are engaged. Before I come to that issue I want to dispel one thing. There is a certain amount of misunderstanding, or want of understanding. I want you to understand particularly on account of the observations of Lord Peel. Lord Peel said that his Party was gravely disturbed by the non-co-operation movement. Having emphasised that, he concluded by saying that if we came to any agreement and gave you a great advance in the constitution of India, it would be taken advantage of by those who would like to wreck it. Now, Sir, let us understand the position of India. The position in India is that there is no section, whether they are Hindus or Muhammedans or whether they are Sikhs or Christians or Parsis or depressed classes, or even commercial classes, merchants or traders, there is not one section in India that has not emphatically declared that India must have a full measure of self-government. When you say that a large, a very influential, party in India stands for wrecking or misusing the future constitution, I ask you this question. Do you want those parties who have checked, held in abeyance the party that stands for complete independence, do you want those people to go back with this answer from you,—that nothing can be done because there is a strong party which will misuse or wreck the constitution which we will get from you? Is that the answer you want to give? Now let me tell you the tremendous fallacy of that argument and the grave danger. Seventy millions of Mussalmans—all, barring a few individuals here and there—have kept aloof from the non-co-operation movement. Thirty-five or forty millions of depressed classes have set their face against the non-co-operation movement. Sikhs and Christians have not joined it. And let me tell you that even amongst that party which you characterise as a large party—and I admit that it is an important party—it has not got the support of the bulk of Hindus. Do you want every one of the parties who have still maintained that their proper place is to go to this Conference, and across the Table to negotiate

and come to settlement which will satisfy the aspirations of India, to go back and join the rest ? Is that what you want ? Because what other position will they occupy ? What will be the answer ? I want you to consider the gravity of it, a gravity which was emphasised by the previous speakers. You may, of course, argue it as long as you like.

Now let us understand the character and the function of this Conference. Speaking on behalf of the British India Delegation, I do not want to indulge in generalities, but I want to put before you the cardinal principle by which we shall be guided in the further proceedings of this Conference. I must admit that, while I am stating this cardinal principle, we must have regard to facts and to realities— and that is why we are here, to hammer out those facts and those realities and to hammer out a constitution for India which will satisfy the people of India. That cardinal principle which shall be the guide as far as we are concerned is this, that—if I call it *Dominion Status* I know that Lord Reading will put a poser as to what is the meaning of *Dominion Status* ; I know if I use the words ‘responsible Government’ somebody else will put me a poser, ‘What do you mean by responsible government ?’ I know if I use the expression ‘full self-government’ somebody else will ask me a similar question ; but I say the cardinal principle which will guide us throughout the deliberations of this Conference is that India wants to be mistress in her own house ; and I cannot conceive of any constitution that you may frame which will not transfer responsibility in the Central Government to a Cabinet responsible to the Legislature. If that is the cardinal principle by which we shall be guided, then, as Lord Reading very rightly pointed out, there may be questions, such as defence and foreign policy and so on, which will require adjustments. I do not think there is any secret on that point so far as the British India Delegation is concerned. Whoever has used the phrase *Dominion Status* so far as this Table is concerned has always said, ‘with safeguards during the transitional period.’ Sir, that is going to be our cardinal principle.

To sum up the substance of the speeches of Lord Peel and Lord Reading, the only point that emerged was the difference with regard to the pace. I will only say one thing before I proceed a little further, and it is this, that self-government is not an abstract thing; it is a business proposition, and if the power of the Government is transferred to a Cabinet responsible to the Legislature, the first and foremost thing that we have to provide is that the various interests are safe-guarded, and you cannot possibly frame any constitution, unless you have provided safeguards for the rights and the interests which exist in India. First, there is the minority question, which we shall have to tackle, and unless you create that sense of security among the minorities, which will secure a willing co-operation and allegiance to the State, no constitution that you may frame will work successfully. Very rightly the Indian Princes are here, and you cannot very well frame a constitution for India, for self-government in the sense in which I have described it, without taking into consideration their position; and all that the Princes are anxious about is that they want certain safeguards in that constitution, as the Mussalmans demand safeguards for their community.

The next point, Sir, that I want to make is this. It was said by Lord Peel that there was the journey and the journey's end, as he read from the speech of Lord Irwin. May I point out to him that, in that very speech, this is that Lord Irwin said, which Lord Peel omitted:

'Although it is true that in our external relations with other parts of the Empire India exhibits already several of the attributes of self-governing Dominions, it is also true that Indian political opinion is not at present disposed to attach full value to these attributes of status, for the reason that their practical exercise is for the most part subject to the control or concurrence of His Majesty's Government. The demand for Dominion Status that is now made on behalf of India is based upon the general claim to be free from control, more especially in those spheres that are regarded as of predominantly domestic interest; and here, as is

generally recognised, there are real difficulties, internal to India and peculiar to her circumstances and to world conditions, that have to be faced, and in regard to which there may be sharp variation of opinion both in India and in Great Britain. The existence of these difficulties cannot be seriously disputed, and the whole object of the Conference now proposed is to afford the opportunity to His Majesty's Government of examining, in free consultation with Indian leaders, how they may best, most rapidly and most surely be surmounted.'

One more word I will say with regard to the pace. You, Sir, speaking two years ago at a meeting, said this, presiding at the British Labour Conference in London in 1928 :

'I hope that within a period of months, rather than years, there will be a new Dominion added to the Commonwealth of our nations, a Dominion of another race, a Dominion that will find self-respect as an equal within the Commonwealth—I refer to India.'

And yet, Sir, the crux of the two speeches of Lord Peel and of Lord Reading is that our differences are still with regard to the pace. Since 1928 two years have passed.

"There is one more thing that I want to say. It is this. I think you have lost sight of the announcement and declaration of 30 October 1929, which has created us. From that announcement I will read one passage :

'The Chairman of the Commission has pointed out, in correspondence with the Prime-Minister which, I understand, is being published in England, that, as their investigation has proceeded, he and his colleagues have been greatly impressed, in considering the directions which the future constitutional development of India is likely to take, with the importance of bearing in mind the relations which may at some future time develop between British India and the Indian States. In their judgement it is essential that the

methods by which this future relationship between these two constituent parts of Greater India can be adjusted should be fully examined. He has further expressed the opinion that if the Commission's Report and the proposals subsequently to be framed by the Government take this wider range, it will appear necessary for the Government to revise the scheme of procedure as at present proposed.¹

Therefore, Sir, when Lord Peel says that some of the recommendations of the Simon Commission are revolutionary, the Chairman of that Commission himself suggests that, in the light of the inclusion of the Indian Princes, you have not only radically changed the procedure, but the whole aspect of the position is changed altogether. Sir, let me tell you this in conclusion, that, so far as we are concerned, the Simon Commission's Report is dead. The Government of India Despatch is already a back number, and there has arisen a new star in our midst today, and that is the Indian Princes. Their position has even placed the demand of British India for Dominion Status for the moment in the background, and we are now thinking of a Dominion of All-India. Therefore, it is no use your believing still in the Report of the Simon Commission or in the Despatch of the Government of India. I must say, in conclusion, that I am very much moved by, and that I welcome warmly, the noble attitude, the patriotic attitude, that the Indian Princes have shown.

There is only one other word I would like to say, because there might be some misapprehension. It was said by His Highness The Maharaja of Patiala and also by His Highness The Jam Sahib that, 'before we consider the question of All-India federation we must have our status determined and decided by a judicial tribunal.' I could not quite appreciate the force of that statement, but may I say to my friends, the State Delegates, that whatever may be their position with regard to the orders that the Government of India may have passed

1. *The Indian Quarterly Register*, Vol. II, 1929, Calcutta, pp. 47-48.

under the present constitution, that constitution is now in the melting pot, and they do not want anyone else to decide their status and rights. They are here to assert their status and rights. Whatever decisions this Conference may come to, and if there is an agreement, and if Parliament gives effect to it, it does not matter what has been laid down in the Butler Report or what has been laid down in the Secretariat of Simla or Delhi.

One more word about Parliament. It was said and emphasised by Lord Peel and by Lord Reading that Parliament must decide this question. We know that. We would not have been here if we did not expect Parliament finally to decide it. But remember, the original idea was that His Majesty's Government, in conference with the leaders of British India and of the Indian States, were to obtain the largest measure of agreement; and that if any such agreement was arrived at, they would put these proposals before Parliament. I am very glad, although I was opposed to the idea of the British Delegations being included—I tell you that frankly—because, as a business man, I thought it was better to negotiate with one than to negotiate with three. It is more difficult to get three to agree. Therefore, I was opposed to it. Now you are here. Don't you represent Parliament—the three Parties? You do, and if you come to an agreement, are you afraid that Parliament will repudiate it? May I read here what Lord Irwin said about it when this question was raised;

'It would seem evident, however, that what all people most desire is a solution reached by mutual agreement between Great Britain and India, and that in the present circumstances friendly collaboration between Great Britain and India is a requisite and indispensable condition in order to obtain it. On the one side it is unprofitable to deny the right of Parliament to form its free and deliberate judgment on the problem, as it would be short-sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India.'

In this case now, as the Conference is constituted, it is not only possible to get the willing assent of India, but of the British Delegations who represent the three parties in Parliament. It would be a very bold Parliament indeed that would dare repudiate any agreement that might be arrived at with the widest measure of support at this Table.

COMPONENT ELEMENTS OF FEDERATION*

As far as I am concerned, I have listened to the various speeches, and I cannot find so far that any principle has emerged. I am very anxious that at any rate we should have some definite principle in front of us. So far as British India is concerned any alteration or modification in the constitution of the government of British India can be enacted by an Act of Parliament. So far as the Indian States are concerned, they can only come into Federation by means of an agreement. That may be the procedure, but so far as British India is concerned we are still not quite clear as to what kind of Federation there will be in British India so far as the Provinces are concerned. I do not want to debate in this Committee, but one view is that the Provinces should be made sovereign States in British India. If they are made sovereign States, they come into the Federation in the same way as the Indian States. Then there will be only one Federation, and not a Federation within a Federation or two Federations. With regard to what fell from Sir C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar, I do not wish to answer his arguments at present, because I do not think any useful purpose will be served. I think we, first of all, therefore, ought to get to this point: whatever may be our difficulties so far as the Federation of British India or the Provinces is concerned, let us put that on one side for the moment. The question of whether the Federation of the Provinces of British India are to be as sovereign States or, to use the technical expression, 'with residuary power in the Provinces,' or whether there should

*Speech at the Federal Structure Sub-committee of the First Round Table Conference held in London on 1 December, 1930.

be a Federation with a Centralised Government, would I think better be left on one side for the moment. Let us first of all get to this point : What are the subjects on which the Indian States are prepared to come into this Federation ? If we can get to know that first, then we know where we are. Is the Federation going to be a real one, to use an expression which has already been used, or, as Mr. Sastri put it in his own beautiful language, shall we find when we come to deal with these subjects with regard to which the Indian Princes desire to come into Federation, that the Federation has been watered down or weakened to such an extent that it is no Federation at all ? Therefore, I would rather not complicate the various questions which we may have to consider with regard to the Provinces in British India. Let us at once get on with those subjects which the Indian States are prepared to consider as matters of Federal concern. If we get to that, then a question will arise—and a very important question which has been emphasised very clearly by my friend Sir Muhammad Shafi and also by His Highness of Bhopal.

Then there will be the issue with which we shall be face to face, and that issue will be this : To what extent you can level up the Provinces, or to what extent you cannot level up the Provinces. Therefore, Sir, I do not wish to say anything more at present on this and I beg the Committee to get on with the work instead of debating these various interesting questions. Let us get on with this : to what extent the Indian States are prepared to agree to matters of common concern, and if we get that clearly perhaps our position will be far more clear than it is at present.

I would like to say one more word, Sir, and that is this. The Indian States must realise this, that so far as British India is concerned we have had a definite ideal before us, and we have been determined that so far as British India is concerned it must go ahead with responsible Government in British India, and this demand of ours for which we have been fighting has created this situation, that the Indian States' interests must be

considered. I wish to make quite clear to my friends there, the Princes and the Indian States delegates, that we are ready and we are willing to meet you in every way we can, because with you we shall be stronger and better off than without you. Therefore, we want to meet you in every way we can, but let us see whether you mean real federation, and, if I may use your own expression, to what extent are you prepared to sacrifice for the good of all India. In that spirit I would appeal to you to discuss with us what are those subjects which you are prepared to make over to the All-India Federation.

FEDERAL CONSTITUTION AND THE MUSLIMS*

Mr. Jinnah : My Lord Chancellor, I want to say what our position is with regard to this question which has been discussed by so many members. As I understand, the question is that we should impress upon the Government by expressing our opinions here that the responsibility at the Centre should be brought into being simultaneously with the Provincial Autonomy. That being the question, I want our position at least to be made clear. I want first of all to make it quite clear to this Committee what the position of the Muhammadens is. We have all along, from the very commencement of this Conference, made it clear that so far as the Muhammadens are concerned, we are not going to stand in the way of the constitutional progress of India. Last year I said this—if you will forgive me for quoting my speech.

Chairman : By all means.

Mr. Jinnah : Because it would be better to put it in the same language than in a different language. I said this :

‘We have now come to a stage, however, when I think I shall be failing in my duty if I do not tell this sub-Committee what the Mussalman’s position is. Sir, I maintain that the Hindu-Mussalman settlement is a condition prece-

*Speech at the Federal Structure Sub-committee of the Second Round Table Conference held in London in 1931.

dent, nay, it is a *stin qua non* before any constitution can be completed for the Government of India ; and I maintain that unless you provide safeguards for the Mussalmans that will give them a complete sense of security and a feeling of confidence in the future constitution of the Government of India, and unless you secure their co-operation and willing consent, no constitution that you frame for India will work for 24 hours.'

That is the position today, and we have tried our utmost. I do not wish to enter into any controversy.

Chairman : I quite agree with you, you have tried your utmost.

Mr. Jinnah : I have to say most painfully, under the greatest regret, that we have so far failed to bring about a settlement of this minorities question.

Now, Lord Chancellor, when we reached that stage we realised that if we discussed these very important questions connected with responsibility at the centre, there would be no reality about these discussions. It is the same feeling that my friend Sir Tej Bahadur expressed yesterday ; he realised for another reason that there is no reality about these discussions, and he gave you the warning in the friendliest, the firmest and the plainest language regarding what his position was. Similarly when we decided to reserve our opinion on these vital questions, we intended to convey the friendliest, the firmest, and the plainest warning that you cannot complete your constitution-making unless the Minorities question was settled.

I know perfectly well it is said : "Well, never mind that ; let us go on ; surely we can discuss the other questions." But I tell my friends here and I tell the British delegates that there is a real and a serious and a grave apprehension in the minds of the Muslim delegates here and in India, that if you go on participating in the structure right up to the roof, and when everything is completed, this constant assurance that, of course,

the communal question must be settled, that it is essential, may recede into the background to such an extent that we might have a finding, a decision against us *ex parte* almost ; that is the reason why we have adopted the course that we have been compelled to adopt.

I have said this and I say this again. I am saying this on behalf of the Muhammadans, and you must remember what the feeling is in India today. You must have had some inkling from the newspaper reports that have been wired here from day to day ; but you do not know yet the real feeling that is behind it. Let me tell you that we are in a grave difficulty here. Nevertheless, we do not wish to be misunderstood in any way. Sir, Muhammadans, we do not wish to put any difficulty in the way of the constitutional advance of India. Muhammadans also feel—and I have no difficulty in stating to you frankly that mere Provincial autonomy being brought into being will not command the support of the better mind of India. But I want you also to remember that no constitution that you will frame will be acceptable to the Muhammadans unless their demands are complied with. My Lord, it is easy to break the Constitution ; it is far more difficult to work the Constitution. The work of destruction is easy ; the work of construction is more difficult. I appeal to my friends here : Can they complete any constitution for the Government of India without the minorities question being settled ? Can you complete it ? You may discuss it if you like. Therefore, I say, that the basic difference which goes to the root of it is the question of the minorities.

I do not wish to add anything more except to say this Mr. Lees-Smith, who raised this question, said to us that it will take three years. I am not sure. Estimates are made by optimists. by our friends and sympathisers, that this can be achieved in three years. As I say, I am not sure. It seems to me that some of our friends here are putting forward a proposition which might be got hold of, but there is a danger, and I warn my friends of that danger. You say, no Provincial

autonomy to start with. You say, Provincial autonomy and responsibility at the Centre must take place simultaneously. I am with you in that proposition.

I have no hesitation in saying that I think the better mind of India will not accept anything less, but do not be dragged into a maze. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru himself said he thought it would take less time than three years, but he was open to conviction, and if it were made plain to him that period was necessary, he would not mind it. I cannot imagine how you are going to complete the federal structure of the Government of India on the basis of an All-India Federation within any period that you can reasonably expect India to wait for, and I say, My Lord—I say it with very great respect to all those who have irrevocably committed themselves to the scheme of an All-India Federation—turn your vision nearer to British India. It is not too late. I think you will make quicker progress than you expect to by hugging and hanging on to this illusion and mirage of an All-India Federation.

Lord Reading : May I be allowed to put one question to Mr. Jinnah ? I have followed with the greatest interest what he has said, but I am in a difficulty. The question I want to put, if he can answer me—I cannot press it, of course, if it is not convenient for him to answer it—is : In the absence of a communal settlement by agreement which is the present position, what is the alternative, that Mr. Jinnah would suggest ? As I understand it, he says that you cannot arrive at any conclusion—I do not want to argue about it—at any rate from the Mussalman point of view until you have a settlement. What is not clear to me is : What is it that Mr. Jinnah suggests from the Mussalman point of view is to be done in the absence of a communal agreement as to electorates and so forth ?

Mr. Jinnah : Well, Lord Reading, I am perfectly willing to answer that question on my own individual responsibility. The answer really is this, Lord Reading, that you cannot possibly enact any constitution without a Hindu-Muslim settlement. But when you are talking of a settlement or an agreement I

understand that the agreement must be brought about between the various interests themselves on almost all vital questions before you can set up the constitution for an All-India Federation.

It is not only the question of a communal settlement. That is exactly the reason, Lord Reading, why I said that that is a process which cannot be accomplished within a measurable distance of time, in my judgment, and I say that the responsibility is the responsibility of the British Government today in India. Lord Reading, you are not going to abandon your responsibility in India ; you are not prepared to do that. You are prepared, as far as your Government is concerned, to give a substantial measure of advance in the shape of a limited kind of responsible government. If that is your policy, then, after having had months and months last year and months and months this year to discharge it, it is your duty to India, not in deference to the opinion of one section or of one party here or of one party there, to decide what you propose to do in India. It is your duty ; it is your responsibility.

Let me tell you that whatever difference there may be here, one thing is certain : you cannot carry on your Government as you are carrying on at present. Take the decision, and the co-operation and support of that decision of yours will depend on the nature and the character of your decision, and on the justice of it. If there is a better mind in India, and I say there is, and if your decision is one which is reasonable which is just, and which will appeal to the better mind of India, it will receive the support and co-operation of India, and, believe me, you will then lead India to the path of prosperity, of happiness and of peace.

CORRESPONDENCE WITH CONGRESS LEADERS

Bombay, 12th July, 1940

Telegram from Maulana Azad to Mr. Jinnah

“Confidential. Your July 9 statement : The Congress Delhi resolution definitely means by National Government a compo-

site Cabinet not limited to any single party. But is it the position of the League that it cannot agree to any provisional arrangement not based on the two-nation scheme? If so, please clarify by wire."

JINNAH'S REPLY

"Your telegram cannot reciprocate confidence. I refuse to discuss with you, by correspondence or otherwise, as you have completely forfeited the confidence of Muslim India. Can't you realise you are made a Muslim 'show-boy' Congress President to give it colour that it is national and deceive foreign countries. You represent neither Muslims nor Hindus. The Congress is a Hindu body. If you have self-respect resign at once. You have done your worst against the League so far. You know you have hopelessly failed. Give it up."

September 14, 1944

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I received your letter of September 14, at 4-45 p.m. today in reply to my letter of September 11, (and not of September 13, as you state, which seems to be a mistake), and I thank you for it.

Please let me have, as soon as you can, your promised letter indicating in what way to respect the Lahore Resolution is 'indefinite'.

With regard to the provision in the Gandhi-Rajaji Formula that "the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence," I asked you in my letter dated September 10, "Does it mean the Congress demand for Independence as formulated in the August 1942 Resolution by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay or, if not, what is the significance of this term," To this you replied by your letter of September 11, "the Independence contemplated is of the whole of India as it stands". Hence, I again ask, does it mean on

the basis of a united India ? I find that you have not clarified this point satisfactorily.

As regards the next part of this clause, the formula proceeds to lay down that "the Muslim League will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of the provisional interim government for the transitional period." I requested you by my letter of September 10 to let me know "the basis or the lines by which such a government is to be set up or constituted. If you have a complete and definite scheme, please let me have it." To this you replied by your letter of September 11 under reply, that "the basis for the formation of the provisional interim government will have to be agreed to between the League and the Congress." But that is not meeting my request for clarification or giving me at least the outlines of such a government, and that is what I have been asking for. I hope that you do appreciate my point when I am requesting you to let me have rough outlines of the proposed provisional interim government according to the formula, so that I may have some idea.

Of course, I can quite understand that such a provisional interim government will request all parties and would be of a character that will inspire confidence at the present moment of all the parties I can quite understand that when the moment arrives certain things may follow, but before we can deal with this formula in a satisfactory manner, I repeat again that, as it is your formula, you should give me a rough idea of the provisional interim government that you contemplate and of your conception.

What I would like to know would be, what will be the powers of such a provisional interim government, how it will be formed, to whom it will be responsible, and what its composition will be, etc. You being the sponsor of this Gandhi-Rajaji formula, should give me some rough idea and picture of it, so that I may understand what this part of the formula means.

In your letter of September 14, in reply to my letter of September 11, you inform me that you would have told me

if you had any scheme in mind. "I imagine that if we two can agree it would be for us to consult the other parties," but that is just the point. Unless I have some outlines or scheme, however rough, from you, with are we to discuss in order to reach any agreement ?

As regards the other matters which you have further explained, I have noted the explanation, and I do not think I need press you further, although some of them are not quite satisfactory.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

September 15, 1944.

Dear Quaid-e-Azam,

This is in terms of our talk of Wednesday, September 13.

For the moment I have shunted the Rajaji Formula, and, with your assistance, applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League.

You must admit that the Resolution itself makes no reference to the two nations theory. In the course of our discussions you have passionately pleaded that India contains two nations, *i.e.*, Hindus and Muslims, and that the latter have their homelands in India as the former have theirs.

The more our argument progresses, the more alarming your picture appears to me. It would be alluring if it were true. But my fear is growing that it is wholly unreal. I find no parallel in history for a body of converts and their descendants claiming to be a nation apart from the parent stock. If India was one nation before the advent of Islam, it must remain one in spite of the change of faith of a very large body of her children.

You do not claim to be a separate nation by right of conquest but by reason of acceptance of Islam. Will the two,

nations become one if the whole of India accepted Islam? Will Bengalis, Oriyas, Andhras, Tamilians, Maharashtrians, Gujaraties, etc., cease to have their special characteristics if all of them became converts to Islam?

These have all become one politically because they are subject to one foreign control. They are trying today to throw off that subjection.

You seem to have introduced a new test of nationhood, if I accept it, I would have to subscribe to many more claims and face an insoluble problem.

The only real, though lawful test of our nationhood arises out of our common political subjection. If you and I throw off this subjection by our combined effort we shall be born a politically free nation out of our travail. If by then we have not learnt to prize our freedom we may quarrel among ourselves and, for want of a common master holding us together in his iron grip, seek to split up into small groups or nationalities. There will be nothing to prevent us from descending to that level and we shall not have to go in search of a master. There are many claimants to the throne that never remains vacant.

With this background I shall present you with my difficulty in accepting your resolution :

(1) Pakistan is not in the resolution. Does it bear the original meaning the Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan out of which the name was formed? If not, what is it?

(2) Is the goal of Pakistan pan-Islam?

(3) What is it that distinguishes an Indian Muslim from every other Indian, if not his religion? Is he different from a Turk or an Arab?

(4) What is the connotation of the word "Muslims" in the resolution under discussion? Does it mean the Muslims of the India of geography or of the Pakistan to be?

(5) Is the resolution addressed to Muslims by way of education, or to the inhabitants of the whole of India by way of appeal or to the foreign ruler as an ultimatum ?

(6) Are the constituents in the two zones to constitute "independent States," an undefined number in each zone ?

(7) Is the demarcation to take place during the pendency of British rule ?

(8) If the answer to the last question is in the affirmative, the proposal must be accepted first by Britain and then imposed upon India, not evolved from within by the free will of the people of India !!!

(9) Have you examined the position and satisfied yourself that these "independent States" will be materially and otherwise benefited by being split up into fragments.

(10) Please satisfy me that these independent sovereign States will not become a collection of poor States, a menace to themselves and to the rest of India.

(11) Pray show me by facts and figures or otherwise how independence and welfare of India as a whole can be brought about by the acceptance of the resolution ?

(12) How are Muslims under the Princes to be disposed of as a result of this scheme ?

(13) What is your definition of "minorities" ?

(14) Will you please define the "adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards" for minorities referred to in the second part of the resolution ?

(15) Do you not see that the Lahore Resolution contains only a bare statement of the objective and does not give any idea as to the means to be adopted for the execution of the idea the concrete corollaries thereof ?

For instance :

(a) Are the people in the regions falling under the plan to have any voice in the matter of separation and, if so, how it is to be ascertained ?

(b) What is the provision for Defence and similar matters of common concern contemplated in the Lahore Resolution ?

(c) There are many groups of Muslims who have continuously expressed dissent from the policy of the League. While I am prepared to accept the preponderating influence and position of the League and have approached you for that very reason, is it not our joint duty to remove their doubts and carry them with us by making them feel that they and their supporters have not been practically disfranchised ?

(d) Does this not lead again to placing the Resolution of the League before the people of the zones concerned as a whole for acceptance ?

As I write this letter and imagine the working of the Resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India. Believe me, I approach you as a seeker. Though I represent nobody but myself, I aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India. For, I realize in my own person their misery and degradation which is their common lot irrespective of class, caste or creed. I know that you have acquired a unique hold on the Muslim masses. I want you to use your influence for their total welfare, which must include the rest.

In this hastily written letter I have only given an inking of my difficulty.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi.

September 15, 1944.

Dear Quaid-e-Azam

I have yours of September 14, received at 9-10 a.m. I woke up at 3 a.m. today to finish my promised letter on the Lahore Resolution. There is no mistake about the date, for I wrote in answer to your reminder of September 13.

Independence does mean as envisaged in the A.I.C.C. resolution of 1942. But it cannot be on the basis of a united India. If we come to a settlement it would be on the basis of that settlement, assuming of course that it secures general acceptance in the country. The process will be somewhat like this. We reach by joint effort independence for India as it stands. India, become free, will proceed to demarcation, plebiscite and partition if the people concerned vote for Partition. All this is implied in the Rajaji formula.

As to the provisional interim government, I am afraid I cannot carry my answer any further than I have done. Though I have no scheme for such a government, if you have one in connection with the Lahore Resolution, which also I presume requires an interim government, we can discuss it.

The Formula was framed by Rajaji in good faith. I accepted it in equal good faith. The hope was that you would look at it with favour. We still think it to be the best in the circumstances. You and I have to put flesh on it, if we can. I have explained the process we have to go through. You have no objection to it. Perhaps, you want to know how I would form the provisional government if I was invited to form it. If I was in that unenviable position, I could see all the claimants and endeavour to satisfy them. My cooperation will be available in that task.

I can give you full satisfaction about your inquiry, "What I would like to know would be : what will be the powers of such a provisional interim Government, how will it be formed, to whom will it be responsible ?" The provisional interim government will be responsible to the elected members of the present Assembly or a newly elected one. It will have all the powers less than that of the Commander-in-chief during the war and full powers thereafter. It will be authority to give effect to the agreement that may be arrived at between the League and the Congress and ratified by the other parties.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi.

September 17, 1944.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I have your letter of September 15, and I thank you for it. I note that you have for the moment shunted "the Rajaji Formula" and are applying your mind very seriously to the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League. It is my duty to explain the Lahore Resolution to you today and persuade you to accept it, even though you are talking to me, as you have often made it clear, in your individual capacity. I have successfully converted non-Muslim Indians in no small number and also a large body of foreigners, and if I can convert you, exercising as you do tremendous influence over Hindu India, it will be no small assistance to me, although we are not proceeding on the footing that you are carrying on these talks in your representative character, or capacity, and my difficulties remain until you are vested with a representative status and authority in order to negotiate and reach an agreement with you.

You have stated in your letter dated September 11, that the Lahore Resolution is "indefinite." I, therefore, naturally asked you please to let me know in what way or respect the Lahore Resolution indefinite. And now I have received your letter of September 15 under reply.

The third paragraph of your letter is not seeking clarification but is a disquisition and expression of your views on the point whether the Mussalmans are a nation. This matter can hardly be discussed by means of correspondence. There is a greater deal of discussion and literature on this point which is available, and it is for you to judge finally, when you have studied this question thoroughly, whether the Mussalmans and Hindus are not two major nations in this subcontinent. For the moment I would refer you to two publications although there are many more,—Dr. Ambedkar's book and M.R.T.'s "Nationalism in Conflict in India. We maintain and hold that Muslims and Hindus are two major nations by any definition or test of a nation." We are a nation of a hundred million, and, what is more, we are a nation with our own distinctive

culture and civilization, language and literature, art and architecture, names and nomenclature, sense of value and proportion, legal laws and moral codes, customs and calendar, history and traditions, aptitudes and ambitions—inshort, we have our own distinctive outlook on life and of life. By all canons of international law we are a nation. Now I shall reply to your various points :

(1) Yes, the word “Pakistan” is not mentioned in the resolution, and it does not bear the original meaning. The word has now become synonymous with the Lahore Resolution.

(2) This point does not arise, but still I reply that the question is a mere bogey.

(3) This point is covered by my answer that the Mussalmans of India are a nation. As to the last part of your query, it is hardly relevant to the matter of clarification of the resolution.

(4) Surely you know what the word “Muslims” means.

(5) This point does not arise by way of clarification of the text of the Lahore resolution.

(6) No. They will form units of Pakistan.

(7) As soon as the basis and the principles embodied in the Lahore resolution are accepted, the question of demarcation will have to be taken up immediately.

(8) In view of my reply to (7), your question (8) has been answered.

(9) Does not relate to clarification.

(10) My answer to (9) covers this point.

(11) Does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution. Surely this is not asking for clarification of the resolution. I have in numerous speeches of mine and the Muslim League in its resolutions have pointed out that this is the only solution of India's problem and the road to achieve freedom and independence of the peoples of India.

(12) “Muslims under the Princes” : The Lahore resolution is only confined to British India. The question does not arise out of the clarification of the resolution.

(13) The definition of "minorities": You yourself have often said "minorities" means "accepted minorities".

(14) The adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards for minorities, referred to in the resolution, are a matter for negotiation and settlement with the minorities in the respective States, viz., Pakistan and Hindustan.

(15) It does give basic principles and when they are accepted then the details will have to be worked out by the contracting parties.

- (a) Does not arise by way of clarification.
- (b) Does not arise by way of clarification.
- (c) The Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organization of Muslim India.
- (d) No ; see answer (c).

As regards your final paragraph, before receiving clarification from me you have already passed your judgment and condemned the Lahore Resolution, when you say, "As I write this letter and imagine the whole working of the resolution in practice, I see nothing but ruin for the whole of India." I understand that you have made clear to me that you represent nobody but yourself, and I am trying to persuade you and to convert you that this is the road which will lead us to the achievement of freedom and independence not only of the two major nations, Hindus and Muslims, but of the rest of the peoples of India, but when you proceed to say that you aspire to represent all the inhabitants of India, I regret I cannot accept that statement of yours.

It is quite clear that you represent nobody else but the Hindus, and as long as you do not realize your true position and the realities, it is very difficult for me to argue with you, and it becomes still more difficult to persuade you, and hope to convert you to the realities and the actual conditions prevailing in India today. I am pleading before you in the hope of converting you, as I have done with many others successfully.

As I have said before, you are a great man and you exercise enormous influence over the Hindus, particularly the masses, and by accepting the road that I am pointing out to you, you are not prejudicing or harming the interests of the Hindus or of the minorities. On the contrary, Hindus will be the greatest gainers. I am convinced that true welfare not only of the Muslims but the rest of India lies in the division of India as proposed by the Lahore resolution. It is for you to consider whether it is not your policy and programme in which you have persisted which has been the principal factor of the "ruin of whole of India" and of the misery and degradation of the people to which you refer and which I deplore no less than anyone else. And it is for that very reason I am pleading before you all these days, although you insist that you are having talks with me only in your individual capacity, in the hope that you may yet revise your policy and programme.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

September 22, 1944.

Dear Quaid-i-Azam,

Your letter of yesterday (21st inst), so disturbed me that I thought I would postpone my reply till after we had met at the usual time. Though I made no advance at our meeting, I think I see somewhat clearly what you are driving at. The more I think about the two nations theory the more alarming it appears to be. The book recommended by you gives me no help. It contains half-truths and its conclusions or inferences are unwarranted. I am unable to accept the proposition that the Muslims of India are a nation distinct from the rest of the inhabitants of India. Mere assertion is no proof. The consequences of accepting such a proposition are dangerous in the extreme. Once the principle is admitted, there would be no limit to claims for cutting up India into numerous divisions which would spell India's ruin. I have, therefore, suggested a

way out. Let it be a Partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be.

You seem to be averse to plebiscite. In spite of the admitted importance of the League, there must be clear proof that the people affected desire partition. In my opinion, all the people inhabiting the area ought to express their opinion specifically on this single issue of division. Adult suffrage is the best method, but I would accept any other equivalent.

You summarily reject the idea of common interest between the two arms. I can be no willing party to a division which does not provide for the simultaneous safeguarding of common interest such as defence, foreign affairs and the like. There will be no feeling of security by the people of India without a recognition of the natural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity.

Your letter shows a wide divergence of opinion and outlook between us. Thus you adhere to the opinion often expressed by you that the August 1942, resolution is "inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India." There is no proof for this sweeping statement.

We seem to be moving in a circle. I have made a suggestion. If we are bent on agreeing, as I hope we are, let us call in a third party or parties to guide or even arbitrate us.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi.

September 23, 1944.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 23, and I think you for it. I am sorry that you think I have summarily rejected the idea of common interest between the two arms, and now you put it somewhat differently from 15 (b), when you say there

will be no feeling of security by the people of India without a recognition of the natural and mutual obligations arising out of physical contiguity. My answer, already given, is that it will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan or any other party concerned, to deal with such matters on the footing of their being two independent States.

I am really surprised when you say there is no proof of what you characterize as a sweeping statement of mine, that the August 1942, resolution is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India. The resolution in its essence is as follows :

(a) immediate grant of complete independence and setting up immediately of a federal Central Government on the basis of a united, democratic Government of India with federated units or provinces, which means establishing a Hindu Raj.

(b) that this National Government to set up will evolve a scheme for a constituent assembly, which will be chosen by adult franchise, which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India, which means that the constituent assembly chosen will be composed of an overwhelming majority of Hindus, nearly 75 per cent.

(c) to enforce this demand of the Congress the August resolution decides on and sanctions a resort to mass civil disobedience at your command and when ordered by you as the sole dictator of the Congress.

This demand is basically and fundamentally opposed to the ideals and demands of Muslim India of Pakistan, as embodied in the Lahore resolution, and to enforce such a demand by means of resort to mass civil disobedience is inimical to the ideals and demands of Muslim India ; and if you succeed in realizing this demand, it would be a death-blow to Muslim India, I see from the correspondence and talks between you and me that you are still holding fast to this fateful resolution.

From the very first day of our talks you made it clear to me, and you have repeatedly said in the course of our corres-

pondence and talks, that you have approached me in your individual capacity, and you assured me that you were a seeker of light and knowledge and that you seriously and honestly wanted to understand the Lahore resolution and were open to conviction and conversion. Therefore, in deference to your wish, I made every effort all these days and in the course of our prolonged talks and correspondence to convert you, but unfortunately, it seems, I have failed. And now you have made new suggestions and proposals by your letter under reply :

(1) You say : "I have therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be." I really do not know what this means, and I would like you to elaborate this proposal and give me some rough outlines of this new idea of yours as to how and when the division is to take place, and in what way it is different from the division envisaged by the Lahore resolution.

(2) You say : "Let us call in a third party or parties to guide or even arbitrate between us." May I point out that you have repeatedly made clear to me that you are having these talks as an individual seeker? How can any question of a third party or parties to guide or arbitrate between us arise ?

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

September 23, 1944.

Dear Quaid-i-Azam,

Last evening's talk has left a bad taste in the mouth. Our talks and our correspondence seem to run in parallel lines and never touch one another. We reached the breaking point last evening but, thank God, we were unwilling to part. We resumed discussion and suspended it in order to allow me to keep my time for the evening public prayer.

In order that all possible chance of making any mistake in a matter of this great importance may be removed, I would like

you to give me in writing what precisely on your part you would want me so put my signature to.

I adhere to my suggestion that we may call in some outside assistance to help us at this stage.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi.

September 23, 1944

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 23. May I refer you to my letter of today's date which I sent to you in reply to yours of September 27 ? I have nothing new or fresh to add, but I may say it is not a case of your being asked to put your signature as representing anybody till you clothe yourself with representative capacity and are vested with authority. We stand by, as I have already said, the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore resolution of March 1940. I appeal to you once more to revise your policy and programme, as the future of this subcontinent and the welfare of the peoples of India demand that you should face realities.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. Jinnah.

September, 24, 1944.

Dear Quaid-i-Azam,

I have your two letters of September 23, in reply to my letter of the 22nd and 23rd.

With your assistance I am exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement, so that claim embodied in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied that you must, therefore, have no apprehensions that the August resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement. That resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain and it cannot stand in the way of our settlement.

I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the north-west zones, *i.e.*, Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and that part of the Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India.

Differing from you on the general basis, I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore of 1949, on my basis and on the following terms :

The areas should be demarcated by a Commission approved by the Congress and the League. The wishes of the inhabitants of the areas demarcated should be ascertained through the votes of the adult population of the areas or through some equivalent method.

If the vote is in favour of separation, it shall be agreed that these areas shall form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from Foreign domination and can therefore be constituted in two sovereign independent States.

There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defence, internal communications, customs, commerce and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties.

The treaty shall also contain term of safeguarding the rights of minorities in the two States.

Immediately on the acceptance of this agreement by the Congress and the League, the two shall decide upon a common course of action for the attainment of independence of India.

The League will however be free to remain out of any direct action to which the Congress may regard and in which the League may not be willing to participate.

If you do not agree to these terms, could you let me know in precise terms what you would have me to accept in terms of the Lahore resolution and bind myself to recommend to the Congress? If you could kindly do this, I shall be able to see, apart from the difference in approach, what definite terms I can agree to. In your letter of September 23, you refer to "the basic and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore resolution" and ask me to accept them. Surely this is unnecessary when, as I feel, I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi.

— — —
September 25, 1944.

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

I am in receipt of your letter of September 24, and I thank you for it. You have already rejected the basis and fundamental principles of the Lahore resolution.

You do not accept that the Mussulmans of India are a nation.

You do not accept that the Mussalmans have an inherent right of self-determination.

You do not accept that they alone are entitled to exercise the right of self-determination.

You do not accept that Pakistan is composed of two zones, North-West and North-East, comprising six provinces, namely Sind, Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, subject to territorial adjustments that may be agreed upon, as indicated in the Lahore resolution. The matter of demarcating and defining the territories can be taken up after the fundamentals above mentioned are accepted, and for the that purpose machinery may be set up by agreement.

You do not accept the provisions embodied in the Lahore resolution for safeguarding the minorities, and yet in your letter

under reply you say : "With your assistance, I am exploring the possibilities of reaching an agreement so that the claim embodied in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore may be reasonably satisfied." and proceed to say, "You must therefore have no apprehensions that the August resolution will stand in the way of our reaching an agreement."

I have already clearly explained to you that the August resolution, as long as it stands, is a bar, for it is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore resolution. You then proceed to say : "That resolution dealt with the question of India as against Britain, and it cannot stand in the way of settlement." I am not at present concerned with Britain, but the August resolution, as I have already stated is against the ideals and demands of the Muslim League. Further, there is the resolution of Jagat Narayan Lal, passed by the All-India Congress Committee in May 1942, at Allahabad, which, in express terms, lays down as follows :

"The A.I.C.C. is of opinion that any proposal to disintegrate India by giving liberty to any component State or territorial unit to secede from the Indian Union or Federation will be highly detrimental to the best interest of the people of the different States and provinces and the country as a whole and the Congress, therefore, cannot agree to any such proposal."

These two resolutions, so long as they stand, are a complete bar to any settlement on the basis of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan. It is open to the Congress to revise and modify them, but you are only speaking in your individual capacity, and even in that capacity you are holding fast to the August resolution, and you have given no indication of your attitude regarding Jagat Narayan Lal's resolution. I have repeatedly made it clear after we had discussed the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, as you maintained that, to use your own language, "Rajaji not only has not put the Lahore resolution out of shape and mutilated it but has given it substance and form," and proceeded to say : "Indeed in view of your dislike

of the Rajaji formula, I have, at any rate for the moment, put it out of my mind and I am now concentrating on the Lahore resolution in the hope of finding a ground for mutual agreement.”

When I asked for further clarification, which you furnished me by your letter of September 15, you started by saying: “I have shunted the Rajaji formula and with your assistance I am applying my mind very seriously to the famous Lahore resolution of the Muslim League,” and thenceforward the Gandhi-Rajaji formula was not discussed any further, and the question of your representative character and authority which I had pointed out from the very commencement, therefore, did not arise, as you had given me the task of converting you to the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution, and ever since we discussed the Lahore resolution only at great length and examined the pros and cons, and finally you have rejected it.

As a result of our correspondence and discussions I find that the question of the division of India as Pakistan and Hindustan is only on your lips and it does not come from your heart, and suddenly at the eleventh hour you put forward a new suggestion, consisting only of two sentences, by your letter of September 22, saying: “I therefore suggested a way out. Let it be a partition as between two brothers, if a division there must be.” I naturally asked you what this new suggestion of yours meant, and wanted you to give me rough outlines of this new idea of yours as to how and when the division is to take place and in what way it is different from the division envisaged in the Lahore resolution, and now you have been good enough to give me your amplification, in your letter of September 24 under reply, in which you say: “Differing from you on the general basis I can yet recommend to the Congress and the country the acceptance of the claim for separation contained in the Muslim League resolution of Lahore, 1940, on my basis and on the following terms.” The terms clearly indicate that your basis is in vital conflict with, and is opposed to the fundamental basis and principles of the Lahore resolution. Now let me take your main terms:

(a) "I proceed on the assumption that India is not to be regarded as two or more nations but as one family consisting of many members of whom the Muslims living in the north-west zones, *i.e.*, Baluchistan, Sind, North-West Frontier Province and the part of Punjab where they are in absolute majority over all the other elements and also in parts of Bengal and Assam where they are in absolute majority, desire to live in separation from the rest of India." If this term were accepted and given effect to, the present boundaries of these provinces would be maimed and mutilated beyond redemption and leave us only with the husk, and it is opposed to the Lahore resolution.

(b) That even in those mutilated areas so defined, the right of self-determination will not be exercised by the Muslims but by the inhabitants of those areas so demarcated. This again is opposed to the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution.

(c) That if the vote is in favour of separation, they shall be allowed to "form a separate State as soon as possible after India is free from foreign domination." Whereas we propose that we should come to a complete settlement of our own immediately, and by our united front and efforts do everything in our power to secure the freedom and independence of the peoples of India on the basis of Pakistan and Hindustan.

(d) Next you say, "There shall be a treaty of separation which should also provide for the efficient and satisfactory administration of foreign affairs, defence, internal communications, customs, commerce, and the like, which must necessarily continue to be matters of common interest between the contracting parties." If these vital matters are to be administered by some Central authority, you do not indicate what sort of authority or machinery will be set up to administer these matters, and how and to whom again that authority will be responsible. According to the Lahore resolution, as I have already explained to you, all these matters, which are the lifeblood of any State, cannot be delegated to any Central authority or government. The matter of security of the two States and the natural and mutual obligations that may arise out of physical contiguity

will be for the constitution-making body of Pakistan and that of Hindustan, or other party concerned, to deal with on the footing of their being two independent States. As regards the safeguarding of the rights of minorities, I have already explained that this question of safeguarding the minorities is fully stated in the Lahore resolution.

You will, therefore, see that the entire basis of your new proposal is fundamentally opposed to the Lahore resolution, and as I have already pointed out to you, both in the correspondence and in our discussions, it is very difficult for me to entertain proposals and negotiate and reach any agreement or settlement with you as an individual, unless they come from you in your representative capacity. That was the same difficulty with regard to the Gandhi-Rajaji formula, and I made it clear to you at the very outset, but the formula was discussed as you asserted that it had met the Lahore resolution in substance, but while you were furnishing me with the clarification of this formula, you shunted it and we confined ourselves to the Lahore resolution, and hence the question of your representative capacity did not arise regarding this formula. But now you have, in your letter of September 24, made a new proposal of your own on your own basis, and the same difficulties present themselves to me as before, and it is difficult to deal with it any further unless it comes from you in your representative capacity.

I cannot agree with you when you finally wind up by saying : "In your letter of September 23, you refer to 'the basis and fundamental principles embodied in the Lahore resolution' and ask me to accept them. Surely this is unnecessary when, as I feel, I have accepted the concrete consequence that should follow from such acceptance". This is obviously far from correct. Why not then accept the fundamentals of the Lahore resolution and proceed to settle the details ?

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

Calcutta,
April 6, 1938.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of the 17th March reached me in the Kumaun Hills where I had gone for a brief holiday. From there I have come to Calcutta. I propose to return to Allahabad today and I shall probably be there for the greater part of April. If it is convenient for you to come there we could meet. Or if it suits you better to go to Lucknow I shall try to go there.

I am glad that you have indicated in your last letter a number of points which you have in mind. The enclosures you have sent mention these and I take it that they represent your viewpoint. I was somewhat surprised to see this list as I had no idea that you wanted to discuss many of these matters with us. Some of these are wholly covered by previous decisions of the Congress, some others are hardly capable of discussion.

As far as I can make out from your letter and the enclosures you have sent, you wish to discuss the following matters :

1. The Fourteen Points formulated by the Muslim League in 1929.
2. The Congress should withdraw all opposition to the Communal Award and should not describe it as a negation of nationalism.
3. The share of the Muslims in the State services should be definitely fixed in the Constitution by statutory enactment.
4. Muslim Personal Law and culture should be guaranteed by Statute.
5. The Congress should take in hand the agitation in connection with the Shahidganj Mosque and should use its moral pressure to enable the Muslims to gain possession of the mosque.
6. The Muslim's right to call Azan and perform religious ceremonies should not be fettered in any way.
7. Muslims should have freedom to perform cow-slaughter.

8. Muslim majorities in the Provinces, where such majorities exist at present, must not be affected by any territorial redistribution or adjustments.

9. The Bande Mataram song should be given up.

10. Muslims want Urdu to be the national language of India and they desire to have statutory guarantees that the use of Urdu shall not be curtailed or damaged.

11. Muslim representation in the local bodies should be governed by the principles underlying the Communal Award, that is separate electorates and population strength.

12. The tri-colour flag should be changed or, alternatively, flag of the Muslim League should be given equal importance.

13. Recognition of the Muslim League as the one authoritative and representative organization of Indian Muslims.

14. Coalition ministries.

It is further stated that the formula evolved by you and Babu Rajendra Prasad in 1935 does not satisfy the Muslims now and nothing on those lines will satisfy them.

It is added that the list given above is not a complete list and that it can be augmented by the addition of further 'demands.' Not knowing these possible and unlimited additions I can say nothing about them. But I should like to deal with the various matters specifically mentioned and to indicate what the Congress attitude has been in regard to them.

But before considering them, the political and economic background of the free India we are working for has to be kept in mind, for ultimately that is the controlling factor. Some of these matters do not arise in considering an independent India or take a particular shape or have little importance. We can discuss them in terms of Indian independence or in terms of the British dominance of India continuing. The Congress naturally thinks in terms of independence, though it adjusts itself occasionally to the pressure of transitional and temporary phases. It is thus not interested in amendments to the present constitution, but aims at its removal and its substitution by a constitution framed by the people through a Constituent Assembly.

Another matter has assumed an urgent and vital significance and this is the exceedingly critical international situation and the possibility of war. This must concern India greatly and affect her struggle for freedom. This must therefore be considered the governing factor of the situation and almost everything else becomes of secondary importance, for all our efforts and petty arguments will be of little avail if the very foundation is upset. The Congress has clearly and repeatedly laid down its policy in the event of such a crisis and stated that it will be no party to imperialist war. The Congress will very gladly and willingly co-operate with the Muslim League and all other organizations and individuals in the furtherance of this policy.

I have carefully looked through the various matters to which you have drawn attention in your letter and its enclosures and I find that there is nothing in them which refers to or touches the economic demands of the masses or affects the all-important questions of poverty and unemployment. For all of us in India these are the vital issues and unless some solution is found for them, we function in vain. The question of State services, howsoever important and worthy of consideration it might be, affects a very small number of people. The peasantry, industrial workers, artisans and petty shop-keepers form the vast majority of the population and they are not improved in any way by any of the demands listed above. Their interests should be paramount.

Many of the 'demands' involve changes of the constitution which we are not in a position to bring about. Even if some such changes are desirable in themselves, it is not our policy to press for minor constitutional changes. We want to do away completely with the present constitution and replace it by another for a free India.

In the same way the desire for statutory guarantees involves constitutional changes which we cannot give effect to. All we can do is to state that in a future constitution for a free India

we want certain guarantees to be incorporated. We have done this in regard to religious, cultural, linguistic and other rights of minorities in the Karachi resolution of Fundamental Rights. We would like these fundamental rights to be made a part of the constitution.

I now deal with the various matters listed above.

1. The Fourteen Points, I had thought, were somewhat out of date. Many of their provisions have been given effect to by the Communal Award and in other ways, some others are entirely acceptable to the Congress ; yet others require constitutional changes which, as I have mentioned above, are beyond our present competence. Apart from the matters covered by the Communal Award and those involving a change in the constitution, one or two matters remain which give rise to differences of opinion and which are still likely to lead to considerable argument.

2. The Congress has clearly stated its attitude towards the Communal Award, and it comes to this that it seeks alterations only on the basis of mutual consent of the parties concerned. I do not understand how any one can take objection to this attitude and policy. If we are asked to describe the Award as not being anti-national, that would be patently false. Even apart from what it gives to various groups, its whole basis and structure are anti-national and come in the way of the development of national unity. As you know it gives an overwhelming and wholly undeserving weightage to the European elements in certain parts of India. If we think in terms of an independent India, we cannot possibly fit in this Award with it. It is true that under stress of circumstances we have sometimes to accept as a temporary measure something that is on the face of it anti-national. It is also true that in the matters governed by the Communal Award we can only find a satisfactory and abiding solution by the consent and good-will of the parties concerned. That is the Congress policy.

3. The fixing of the Muslims' share in the State services by statutory enactment necessarily involves the fixing of the shares of other groups and communities similarly. This would mean a rigid and compartmental State structure which will impede progress and development. At the same time, it is generally admitted that State appointments should be fairly and adequately distributed and no community should have cause to complain. It is far better to do this by convention and agreement. The Congress is fully alive to this issue and desires to meet the wishes of various groups in the fullest measure so as to give to all minority communities, as stated in No. 11 of the Fourteen Points, "an adequate share in all the services of the State and in local self-governing bodies having due regard to the requirements of efficiency." The State today is becoming more and more technical and demands expert knowledge in its various departments. It is right that, if a community is backward in this technical and expert knowledge, special efforts should be made to give it this education to bring it up to a higher level.

I understand that at the Unity Conference held in Allahabad in 1933 or thereabouts, a mutually satisfactory solution of this question of State services was arrived at.

4. As regards protection of culture, the Congress has declared its willingness to embody this in the fundamental laws of the constitution. It has also declared that it does not wish to interfere in any way with the personal law of any community.

5. I am considerably surprised at the suggestions that the Congress should take in hand the agitation in connection with the Shahidgunj mosque. That is a matter to be decided either legally or by mutual agreement. The Congress prefers in all such matters the way of mutual agreement and its services can always be utilised for this purpose where there is no opening for them and a desire to this effect on the part of the parties concerned. I am glad that the Premier of the Punjab has suggested that this is the only satisfactory way to a solution of the problem.

6. The right to perform religious ceremonies should certainly be guaranteed to all communities. The Congress resolution about this is quite clear. I know nothing about the particular incident relating to a Punjab village which has been referred to. No doubt many instances can be gathered together from various parts of India where petty interferences take place with Hindu, Muslim or Sikh ceremonies. These have to be tactfully dealt with wherever they arise. But the principle is quite clear and should be agreed to.

7. As regards cow-slaughter there has been a great deal or entirely false and unfounded propaganda against the Congress suggesting that the Congress was going to stop it forcibly by legislation. The Congress does not wish to undertake any legislative action in this matter to restrict the established rights of the Muslims.

8. The question of territorial distribution has not arisen in any way. If any, when it arises, it must be dealt with on the basis of mutual agreement of the parties concerned.

9. Regarding the Bande Mataram song, the Working Committee issued a long statement in October last to which I would invite your attention. First of all, it has to be remembered that no formal national anthem has been adopted by the Congress at any time. It is true, however, that the Bande Mataram song has been intimately associated with Indian nationalism for more than thirty years and numerous associations of sentiment and sacrifice have gathered round it. Popular songs are not made to order, nor can they be successfully imposed. They grow out of public sentiment. During all these thirty or more years the Bande Mataram song was never considered as having any religious significance and was treated as a national song in praise of India. Nor, to my knowledge was any objection taken to it except on political grounds by the Government. When however some objections were raised, the Working Committee carefully considered the matter and ultimately decided to recommend that certain stanzas, which

contained certain allegorical references, might not be used on national platforms or occasions. The two stanzas that have been recommended by the Working Committee for use as a national song have not a word or a phrase which can offend anybody from any point of view and I am surprised that any one can object to them. They may appeal to some more than to others. Some may prefer another national song. But to compel large numbers of people to give up what they have long valued and grown attached to is to cause needless hurt to them and injure the national movement itself. It would be improper for a national organisation to do this.

10. About Urdu and Hindi I have previously written to you and have also sent you my pamphlet on "The Question of Language." The Congress has declared in favour of guarantees for languages and culture. I want to encourage all the great provincial languages of India and at the same time to make Hindustani, as written both in *nagri* and Urdu scripts, the national language. Both scripts should be officially recognised and the choice should be left to the people concerned. In fact, this policy is being pursued by the Congress Ministries.

11. The Congress has long been of opinion that joint electorates are preferable to separate electorates from the point of view of national unity and harmonious co-operation between the different communities. But joint electorates, in order to have real value, must not be imposed on unwilling groups. Hence the Congress is quite clear that their introduction should depend on their acceptance by the people concerned. This is the policy that is being pursued by the Congress Ministries in regard to Local bodies. Recently in a bill dealing with local bodies introduced in the Bombay Assembly, separate electorates were maintained but an option was given to the people concerned to adopt a joint electorate, if they so chose. The principle seems to be in exact accordance with No. 5 of the Fourteen Points, which lays down that "Representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorate as at present, provided that it shall be open to any community,

at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate." It surprises me that the Muslim League group in the Bombay Assembly should have opposed the Bill with its optional clause although this carried out the very policy of the Muslim League.

May I also point out that in the resolution passed by the Muslim League in 1929, at the time it adopted the Fourteen Points, it was stated that "the Mussalmans will not consent to join electorates unless Sind is actually constituted into a separate province and reforms in fact are introduced in the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces." Since then Sind has been separated and the N.W.F. Province has been placed on a level with other provinces. So far as Baluchistan is concerned, the Congress is committed to a levelling up of this area in the same way.

12. The national tri-colour flag was adopted originally in 1929 by the Congress after full and careful consultation with eminent Muslim, Sikh and other leaders. Obviously a country and national movement must have a national flag representing the nation and all communities in it. No communal flag can represent the nation. If we did not possess a national flag now we would have to evolve one. The present National Flag had its colours originally selected in order to represent the various communities, but we did not like to lay stress on this communal aspect of colours. Artistically I think the combination of orange, white and green resulted in a flag which is probably the most beautiful of all national flags. For these many years our flag has been used and it has spread to the remotest village and brought hope and courage and a sense of all India unity to our masses. It has been associated with great sacrifices on the part of our people, including Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs, and many have suffered lathi blows and imprisonment and even death in defending it from insult or injury. Thus a powerful sentiment has grown up in its favour. On innumerable occasions Maulana Mohamed Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali and many leaders of the Muslim League today have associated themselves with

this flag and emphasised its virtues and significance as a symbol of Indian unity. It has spread outside the Congress ranks and been generally recognised as the flag of the nation. It is difficult to understand how any one can reasonably object to it now.

Communal flags cannot obviously take its place for that can only mean a host of flags of various communities being used together and thus emphasising our disunity and separateness. Communal flags might be used for religious functions but they have no place at any national functions or over any public building meant for various communities.

May I add that during the past few months, on several occasions, the National Flag has been insulted by some members of volunteers of the Muslim League. This has pained us greatly but we have deliberately avoided anything in the nature of conflict in order not to add to communal bitterness. We have also issued strict orders, and they have been obeyed, that no interference should take place with the Muslim League Flag, even though it might be inappropriately displayed.

13. I do not understand what is meant by our recognition of the Muslim League as the one and only organisation of Indian Muslims. Obviously the Muslim League is an important communal organisation and we deal with it as such. But we have to deal with all organisations and individuals that come within our ken. We do not determine the measure or importance or distinction they possess. There are a large number, about a hundred thousand, of Muslims on the Congress rolls, many of whom have been our close companions, in prisons and outside, for many years and we value their comradeship highly. There are many organisations which contain Muslims and non-Muslims alike, such as Trade Unions, Peasant Unions, Kisan Sabhas, Debt Committees, Zamindar Associations, Chambers of Commerce, Employers' Association, etc., and we have contacts with them. There are special Muslim organisations such as the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Proja Party, the Ahrars and others, which claim attention. Inevitably the more important

the organisation the more the attention paid to it, but this importance does not come from outside recognition but from inherent strength. And the other organisations, even though they might be younger and smaller, cannot be ignored.

14. I should like to know what is meant by coalition ministries. A ministry must have a definite political and economic programme and policy. And other kind of ministry would be a disjointed and ineffective body, with no clear mind or direction. Given a common political and economic programme and policy, co-operation is easy. You know probably that some such cooperation was sought for and obtained by the Congress in the Frontier Province. In Bombay also repeated attempts were made on behalf of the Congress to obtain this co-operation on the basis of a common programme. The Congress has gone to the Assemblies with a definite programme and in furtherance of clear policy. It will always gladly co-operate with other groups, whether it is in a majority or a minority in an Assembly, in furtherance of that programme and policy. On that basis I conceive of even coalition ministries being formed. Without that basis the Congress has no interest in Ministry or in an Assembly.

I have dealt, I am afraid at exceeding length, with the various points raised in your letter and its enclosures. I am glad that I have had a glimpse into your mind through this correspondence as this enables me to understand a little better the problems that are before you and perhaps others. I agree entirely that it is the duty of every Indian to bring about harmonious joint effort of all of us for the achievement of India's freedom and the ending of the poverty of her people. For me, and I take it for most of us, the Congress has been a means to that end and not an end in itself. It has been a high privilege for us to work through the Congress because it has drawn to itself the love of millions of our countrymen, and through their sacrifice and united effort, taken us a long way to our goal. But much remains to be done and we have all to pull together to that end.

Personally the idea of pacts and the like does not appeal to me though perhaps they might be necessary occasionally. What seems to me far more important is a more basic understanding of each other, bringing with it the desire and ability to co-operate together. That larger co-operation, if it is to include our millions must necessarily be in the interests of these millions. My mind therefore is continually occupied with the problems of these unhappy masses of this country and I view all other problems in this light. I should live to view the communal problem also in this perspective for otherwise it has no great significance for me.

You seem to imagine that I wanted you to put forward suggestions as a petitioner, and then you propose that the Congress should officially communicate with you. Surely you have misunderstood me and done yourself and me an injustice. There is no question of petitioning either by you or by me, but a desire to understand each other and the problem that we have been discussing. I do not understand the significance of your wanting an official intimation from the Congress. I did not ask you for an official reply on behalf of the Muslim League. Organisations do not function in this way. It is not a question of prestige for the Congress or for any of us, for we are keener on reaching the goal we have set before us, than on small matters of prestige. The Congress is a great enough organisation to ignore such petty matters and if some of us have gained a measure of influence and popularity, we have done so in the shadow of Congress.

You will remember that I took the initiative in waiting to you and requesting you to enlighten me as to what your objections were to the Congress policy and what according, to you, were the points in dispute. I had read many of your speeches, as reported in the press, and I found to my regret that they were full of strong attacks on the Congress which, according to my way of thinking, were not justified. I wanted to remove any misunderstanding, where such existed, and to clear the air.

I have found, chiefly in the Urdu press, the most astounding falsehoods about the Congress. I refer to facts, not to opinions, and to facts within my knowledge. Two days ago, here in Calcutta, I saw a circular letter or notice issued by a secretary of a Muslim League. This contained a list of the so-called misdeeds of the U.P. Government. I read this with amazement for there was not an item of truth in most of the charges. I suppose they were garnered from the Urdu press. Through the press and the platform such charges have been repeated on numerous occasions and communal passions have thus been roused and bitterness created. This has grieved me and I have sought by writing to you and to Nawab Ismail Khan to find a way of checking this deplorable deterioration of our public life, as well as a surer basis for co-operation. That problem still faces us and I hope we shall solve it.

I have mentioned earlier in this letter the critical international situation and the terrible sense of impending catastrophe that hangs over the world. My mind is obsessed with this and I want India to realise it and be ready for all consequences, good or ill, that may flow from it. In this period of world crisis all of us, to whatever party or group we might belong and whatever our differences might be, have the primary duty of holding together to protect our people from perils that might encompass them. Our differences and arguments seem trivial when the future of the world and of India hangs in the balance. It is in the hope that all of us will succeed in building up this larger unity in our country that I have written to you and others repeatedly and at length.

There is one small matter I should like to mention. The report of any speech at Haripura, as given in your letter and the newspaper article, is not correct.

We have been corresponding for some time and many vague rumours float about as to what we have been saying to each other. Anxious inquiries come to me and I have no doubt that similar inquiries are addressed to you also. I think that we might take the public into our confidence now, for this is a

public matter on which many are interested. I suggest, therefore, that our correspondence might be released to the press. I presume you will have no objection.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Bombay,
April 12, 1938.

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 6th April, 1938. I am extremely obliged to you for informing me that you propose to return to Allahabad and shall probably be there for the greater part of April and suggesting that, if it would be convenient for me to come there, we could meet, or, if it suits me better to go to Lucknow, you will try to go there. I am afraid that it is not possible for me owing to my other engagements, but I shall be in Bombay about the end of April and if it is convenient to you, I shall be very glad to meet you.

As to the rest of your letter, it has been to me a most painful reading. It seems to me that you cannot even accurately interpret my letter, as you very honestly say that "your mind is obsessed with the International situation and the terrible sense of impending catastrophe that hangs over the world", so you are thinking in terms entirely divorced from realities which face us in India. I can only express my great regret at your turning and twisting what I wrote to you and putting entirely a wrong complexion upon the position I have placed before you at your request. You have formulated certain points in your letter which you foist upon me to begin with as my proposals. I sent you extracts from the press which had recently appeared simply because I believed you when you repeatedly asserted and appealed to me that you would be grateful if I would refer to you any recent statements made in the press or platform

which would help you in understanding matters. Those are some of the matters which are undoubtedly agitating Muslim India, but the question how to meet them and to what extent and by what means and methods, is the business, as I have said before, of every true nationalist to solve. Whether constitutional changes are necessary, whether we should do it by agreement or conventions and so forth, are matters, I thought, were for discussion, but I am extremely sorry to find that you have in your letter already pronounced your judgment and given your decisions on a good many of them with a preamble which negatives any suggestion of discussion which may lead to a settlement, as you start by saying "I was so much surprised to see this list as I have no idea that you wanted to discuss many of these matters with us ; some of these are wholly covered by previous decisions of the Congress, some others are hardly capable of discussion," and then you proceed to your conclusions having formulated the points according to your own notions. Your tone and language again display the same arrogance and militant spirit as if the Congress is the sovereign power and, as an indication, you extend your patronage by saying that "obviously the Muslim League is an important communal organisation and we deal with it as such, as we have to deal with all organisations and individuals that come within our ken. We do not determine the measure of importance or distinction they possess" and then you mention various other organisations. Here I may add that in my opinion, as I have publicly stated so often, that unless the Congress recognises the Muslim League on a footing of complete equality and is prepared as such to negotiate for a Hindu-Muslim settlement, we shall have to wait and depend upon our inherent strength which will "determine the measure of importance or distinction it possesses." Having regard to your mentality it is really difficult for me to make you understand the position any further. Of course, as I have said before, I do not propose to discuss the various matters, referred to by you, by means of and through correspondence, as, in my opinion, that is not the way to tackle this matter.

With regard to your reference to certain falsehoods that have appeared about the Congress in the Urdu press, which, you say, have astounded you, and with regard to the circular letter referred to about the misdeeds of the U.P. Government, I can express no opinion without investigation, but I can give you number of falsehoods that have appeared in the Congress press and in statements of Congressmen with regard to the All-India Muslim League, some of the leaders and those who are connected with it. Similarly, I can give instances of reports appearing in the Congress press and speeches of Congressmen which are daily deliberately misrepresenting and vilifying the Muslim composition of the Bengal, Sind, Punjab, and Assam Governments with a view to break those Governments, but that is not the subject matter of our correspondence and besides no useful purpose will be served in doing so.

With regard to your request that our correspondence should be released to the press, I have no objection provided the correspondence between me and Mr. Gandhi is also published simultaneously, as we both have referred to him and his correspondence with me in ours. You will please therefore obtain the permission of Mr. Gandhi to that effect or, if you wish, I will write to him, informing him that you desire to release the correspondence between us to the press and I am willing to agree to it provided he agrees that the correspondence between him and myself is also released.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

Allahabad,
April 16, 1938

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Your letter of April 12th has just reached me.

I am exceedingly sorry that anything that I have written to you should have caused you pain. It seems to be true that we approach public problem from different standpoints and

inevitably I try to place my viewpoint before you and seek to gain your appreciation of it. To say anything that might pain you would defeat my own purpose, even apart from its impropriety. At the same time, I owe it to you and to myself to endeavour to place frankly before you how my mind works and what my views are on the subject matter under discussion. Our viewpoints might differ, but I do believe that the margin of difference can be lessened by a frank approach on either side. I have sought to make this approach in all sincerity and with every desire on my part not to say anything that might come in the way.

In my last letter I dealt with the various points mentioned in the extracts you had sent me as I presumed that, as you had drawn my attention to them, they might to large extent represent what you had in mind. As you know I have been trying to get at these points of difference and when I saw something concrete I wanted to give my reaction to it. I tried to state what the Congress opinion has been in regard to them. There is no finality in day-to-day politics, although certain principles are supposed to govern policies. It is for the Congress, if it so chooses, to vary any policy. All I can do is to state what the past and present policy is.

I regret that you think that I write in an arrogant and militant spirit and as if I considered the Congress as the sovereign power. I am painfully conscious of the fact that the Congress is not a sovereign power and that it is circumscribed in a hundred ways and further that it may have to go through the wilderness many a time again before it achieves its objective. You have referred to my obsession with the international situation and the sense of impending catastrophe that possesses me. If I feel that way, as I do, I can hardly grow complacent or imagine that the Congress is sovereign. But when I discuss Congress policies as a Congressman I can only repeat what these are and not bring in my own particular view on the subject, if these happen to be at variance with Congress resolutions.

You point out to me that the Congress press has contained numerous falsehoods in regard to the Muslim League and some of its leaders, as well as the provincial governments of Bengal, Punjab, Sind and Assam. I entirely agree with you that falsehoods, misrepresentations and insinuations are to be deprecated and countered wherever they might occur, in the Urdu, Hindi or English press, or whatever the political complexion of the newspaper. There is no such thing as the Congress press over which the Congress has control, but it is true that many newspapers generally support the Congress. But whether we can influence them or not, we certainly want to stop all such false and misleading statements and to express our disapproval of them. In this matter I can only beg to you to point out specific instances so that we might take necessary action.

I note that you say about the publication of our correspondence. I have not got with me copies of your correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi. I am therefore wiring to him to seek his permission as suggested by you.

I am afraid it will hardly be possible for me to visit Bombay in April or May. Early in June I intend sailing for Europe. In case I go to Bombay earlier I shall inform you so that we might have the opportunity of meeting. I understand that you will be meeting Mahatma Gandhi in the near future.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Allahabad,
December 1, 1939.

My dear Jinnah,

When we met last in Delhi, it was agreed that we should meet again to discuss various aspects of the communal problem. You told me that on your return to Bombay you would write to me suggesting some date for such a meeting. I have been looking forward to your letter since then. I hope that

whenever it is convenient for you to fix date you will kindly let me know.

Sir Stafford Cripps is coming to India soon and is likely to spend two or three weeks in this country. He is on his way to China. I do not yet exactly know when he will reach here, but probably he will come in about a week's time. During his brief stay in India he would like to meet you if that is possible. I do not know his programme at all, nor do I know what cities he intends visiting. But I take it that he will go to Bombay. Could you kindly let me know if you are likely to be in Bombay about the third week of this month or later? This information might help him to arrange his programme. He is coming by air and will land in Allahabad.

**Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.**

**Bombay,
4th December, 1939**

My dear Jawahar,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 1st December, and thank you for it. As at present advised I hope to be in Bombay for the next two or three weeks, and if it is convenient to you I shall be very glad to see you and fix up any date that may suit you. Please, therefore, let me know what date and time will suit you.

As regards Sir Stafford Cripps, I received a letter from him, and I have already replied to him c/o your address as directed by him, and as I have already stated I shall be here in Bombay and as he is arriving at Allahabad on the 8th, as I understand from his letter, I shall be very glad to see him when he is in Bombay. On hearing from him I shall fix up also the date and time that may suit him.

**Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.**

Allahabad,
December 9, 1939.

My Dear Jinnah,

Two days ago I sent you a letter informing you that I intended going to Bombay soon and hoped to meet you there. Yesterday morning I read in the newspapers your statement fixing December 22nd as a day of deliverance and thanksgiving as a mark of relief that the Congress Governments have at last ceased to function. I have read this statement very carefully more than once and have given twenty-four hours thought to the matter. It is not for me, in this letter, to enter into any controversy about facts or impressions or conclusions. You know my views about these, formed, I hope, in all earnestness and with all desire to find the truth. It may be that I am mistaken, but I have sought more light and that light has not come.

But what has oppressed me terribly since yesterday is the realisation that our sense of values and objectives in life and politics differs so very greatly. I had hoped, after our conversations, that this was not so great, but now the gulf appears to be wider than ever. Under these circumstances, I wonder what purpose will be served by our discussing with each other the problems that confront us. There must be some common ground for discussion, some common objective aimed at, for that discussion to yield fruit. I think, I owe it to you as well as to myself to put this difficulty before you.

You were good enough to show me in Delhi a letter you had received from Bijnor. I enquired into the matter and am informed that the version of facts given to you is not correct and is wholly misleading. If you would care to have an explanation of what happened, I could obtain it for you from Bijnor. For this purpose, I would like to have a copy of the letter you showed me in Delhi.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Bombay,
13th December, 1939.

Dear Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 9th December. I did not know where to address my reply to you as your movements were reported in the press to be uncertain. The latest announcement is that you are arriving in Bombay on the 14th of December and I am therefore sending this letter to your Bombay address. I quite agree with you that "there must be some common ground for discussion, some common objective aimed at for that discussion to yield fruit"; that is the very reason why I made it clear in our conversations at Delhi in October last to Mr. Gandhi and yourself. First, that so long as the Congress is not prepared to treat the Muslim League as the authoritative and representative organisation of the Mussalmans of India, it was not possible to carry on talks regarding the Hindu-Muslim settlement as that was the basis laid down by the working committee of the All-India Muslim League, and second, that we cannot endorse the Congress demand for the declaration as laid down in the resolution of the Working Committee confirmed by the All-India Congress Committee of 10th October 1939, apart from the nebulous and impracticable character of it, till we reach an agreement with regard to the minority problem. The Muslim League was also not satisfied with the declaration made by the Viceroy. If happily we could settle the Hindu-Muslim question, then we would be in a position to evolve an agreed formula for a demand of declaration by His Majesty's Government that would satisfy us; neither the first nor the second suggestion of mine was acceptable to Mr. Gandhi or to yourself at Delhi, but you were good enough to express your wish that you would like to meet me again and I said that I would be always glad to see you. In reply to your letter of the 1st December expressing your wish to see me in Bombay, I informed you that I shall be in Bombay till the 3rd week of December and I shall be glad to see you, and I can only say that if you desire to discuss the matter further I am at your disposal.

As regards your reference to the Bijnor incident I am sure that you will agree with me that it requires a thorough judicial examination and enquiry before any conclusion can be arrived at, and it is hardly worth our while to deal with one instance, for in my judgment the whole working of the consituation and our charges against the Congress Government must be thoroughly examined by a Royal Commission.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

— — —
Carmichael Road,
Bombay,
December 14, 1939.

My dear Jinnah,

Thank you for your letter of the 13th December which was delivered to me in the forenoon today on my arrival here. I sent you my last letter from Allahabad after reading and giving full thought to your statement about the celebration of "a day of deliverance and thanksgiving" by the Muslims. This statement had distressed me greatly as it made me realise that the gulf that separated us in our approach to public problems was very great. In view of this fundamental difference, I wondered what common ground there was for discussion and I put my difficulty before you. That difficulty remains.

In your letter you have emphasized two other preliminary conditions before any common ground for discussion can arise. The first is that the Congress must treat the Muslim League as the authoritative and representative organisation of the Mussalmans of India. The Congress has always considered the League as a very important and influential organisation of the Muslims and it is because of this that we have been eager to settle any differences that may exist between us. But presumably what you suggest is something more and involves some kind of repudiation by us or dissociation from other Muslims who are not in the League, who have been and are our closest collea-

gues. There are, as you know, a large number of Muslims in the Congress, who have been and are our closest colleagues. There are Muslim organisations like the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the All-India Shia Conference, the Majlis-e-Ahrar, the All-India Momin Conference, etc., apart from trade unions and peasant unions which have many Muslims as their members. As a general rule, many of these organisations and individuals have adopted the same political platform as we have done in the Congress. We cannot possibly dissociate ourselves from them or disown them in any way.

You have rightly pointed out on many occasions that the Congress does not represent every body in India. Of course not. It does not represent those who disagree with it, whether they are Muslims or Hindus. In the ultimate analysis it represents its members and sympathisers. So also the Muslim League, as any other organisation, represents its own members and sympathisers. But there is this vital difference that while the Congress constitutionally has its membership open to all who subscribe to its objective and methods, the Muslim League is only open to Muslims. Thus the Congress constitutionally has a national basis and it cannot give that up without putting an end to its existence. There are many Hindus, as you know, in the Hindu Mahasabha who oppose the idea of the Congress representing the Hindus as such. Then there are the Sikhs and others who claim that they should be heard when communal matters are considered. .

I am afraid therefore that if your desire is that we should consider the League as the sole organisation representing the Muslims to the exclusion of all others, we are wholly unable to accede to it. It would be equally at variance with facts if we made a similar claim for the Congress, in spite of the vastness of the Congress organisation. But I would venture to say that such questions do not arise when two organisations deal with each other and consider problems of mutual interest.

Your second point is that the Muslim League cannot endorse Congress demand for a declaration from the British

Government. I regret to learn this for this means that, apart from communal questions, we differ entirely on purely political grounds. The Congress demand is essentially for a declaration of war aims and more especially for a declaration of Indian independence and the right of the Indian people to frame their own constitution without *external interference*. If the Muslim League does not agree to this, this means that our political objectives are wholly dissimilar. The Congress demand is not new. It is inherent in article one of the Congress and all our policy for many years *past has been based on it*. It is inconceivable to me *how the Congress can give it up or even vary it*. *Personally I would be entirely opposed to any attempt at variation*. But this is not a personal matter. There is a resolution of the All-India Congress Committee, endorsed by a thousand meetings *all over India and I am powerless to ignore it*.

It thus seems that politically we have no common ground and that our objectives are different. That in itself makes discussion difficult and fruitless. What led me to write my last letter to you also remains the prospect of a celebration of a day of deliverance by the Muslims as suggested by you. That raises very vital and far-reaching issues, in which I need not go now, but which must influence all of us. That approach to the communal problem cannot be reconciled with an attempt to solve it.

I feel, therefore, that it will serve little purpose for us to meet at this stage and under these conditions with this background. I should like to assure you however that we are always prepared to have free and frank discussions of the communal or other problems as between the Congress and the League.

I note what you say about the Bijnor incident. It has been our misfortune that charges are made in a one-sided way and they are never inquired into or disposed of. You will appreciate that it is very easy to make complaints and very unsafe to rely upon them without due inquiry.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Bombay,
December 15, 1939.

Dear Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 14th December 1939 and I am sorry to say that you have not appreciated my position with regard to the second point. I did not say that Muslim League cannot endorse the Congress demand for a declaration from British Government. What I have said was that we cannot endorse the Congress demand for the declaration *as laid down in the resolution of the working committee and confirmed by the All-India Congress Committee of the 10th October 1939 for the reasons I have already specified in my letter.*

If this resolution of the Congress cannot be modified in any way and as you say that personally you would be entirely opposed to any attempt at variation of it and as you make it clear that you are wholly unable to treat the Muslim League as the authoritative and representative organisation of the Mussalmans of India, may I know in these circumstances what do you expect or wish me to do.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

Bombay,
December 16, 1939.

My Dear Jinnah,

Thank you for your letter of December 15th.

I realise the difference you have pointed out. Of course the Muslim League cannot oppose the idea of any declaration. What the Congress had asked for was an enunciation of war aims and a recognition of India's independence and the right of her people to frame their constitution, a right that must necessarily be inherent in independence. All these are basic principles which flow from our objective of independence, and as the Muslim League has the same declared objective, there should be no difference of opinion about them. In the applica-

tion of these principles many important matters will no doubt have to be considered. But so far as the basic demands are considered, they are of the very essence of Indian nationalism. To give them up or to vary them materially is to knock down our case for independence.

In regard to the war also the Congress has repeatedly declared its policy during the last eleven years. The present declaration is a logical out-come of that policy. I have personally had some share in shaping this policy and I have attached importance to it. You will appreciate that it is exceedingly difficult, apart from the question of desirability, to vary such long-established and fundamental policies. These policies are political in their essence and, I would venture to say, are the only policies which flow from a demand for Indian freedom. Details may be considered and discussed, their application should be worked out in mutual co-operation and, in particular, the interests of various groups and minorities should be considered carefully and protected. But to challenge the very basis of that declaration is to demonstrate that there is a great difference in political outlook and policies. This, as such, has nothing to do with the Hindu-Muslim problem. It is because of this that I feel that there is little in common in our political objectives.

May I say again that no one on our behalf, so far as I know, challenges or minimises the authority, influence and importance of the Muslim League. It is for this reason that we have been eager to discuss matters with it and to arrive at a satisfactory solution of the problems that confront us. Unfortunately we never seem to reach even the proper discussion of these problems as various hurdles and obstructions, in the shape of conditions precedent, come in our way. These conditions precedent as I have ventured to point out to you, have *far-reaching significance*. I do not know why they should be allowed to obstruct all progress or prevent us from considering these problems. It should not be difficult to remove these hurdles and come to grips with the subject itself. But as these hurdles continue and

others are added to them, I am compelled to think that the real difficulty is the difference in political outlook and objectives.

At the present moment, the decision to have an all-India demonstration on December 22nd has added a psychological barrier which effectively prevents mutual approach and discussion. I regret this exceedingly and have earnestly wished that you would see your way to remove this barrier which is leading and can only lead to ill-will. I still hope that you may be able to do so.

I do wish to assure you that for my part I do not want to leave any stone unturned which can lead to mutual understanding and settlement. But you will not have me, as I do not want to have you, leave integrity of mind and purpose in pursuit of anything. Nothing worthwhile can be gained that way. I have deep political convictions and I have laboured in accordance with them these many years. I cannot leave them at any time, much less now when the world is in the throes of a terrific crisis.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru,*

*In a press statement issued from Bombay on January 7, 1940, by M.A. Jinnah, President of the All-India Muslim League, while releasing the correspondence between him and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, said: "I regret to find that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, during his recent tour in the Punjab and elsewhere, has thought fit to attack me in a manner unworthy of any responsible leader. He accuses me of being bent upon the preservation of British domination over India which I can only characterise as not only unwarranted, but mean. The reasons for his refusing to continue his talks with me, as given by him, far from correct, are misleading and unfair.

I would not further comment upon his reckless and irresponsible pronouncements, but I shall rest content with releasing the correspondence between us on the subject. This will show the true reasons for his refusing to proceed further in the matter, and I leave it to the public to judge the impossible attitude that is being taken up by him and the Congress."

**New Delhi,
April 8, 1944.**

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Here is the basis for a settlement which I discussed with Gandhiji in March 1943, and of which he expressed full approval. He then authorized me to signify his approval of these terms, should I be able to convince you of their being just and fair to all. As the Government have refused to relax any of the restrictions imposed on him to enable him to discuss or negotiate terms of any settlement. I write this to you on his behalf and hope that this will bring about a final settlement of the most unfortunate impasse we are in. You are aware of the intensity of my desire for a settlement. I was very glad when I found it possible to obtain Gandhiji's approval of these terms. I hope that you will bestow your fullest thought on the justice and fairness of these proposals and help to terminate a condition of affairs which is steadily causing all-round deterioration in the country.

**Yours sincerely,
C. Rajagopalachari,**

Enclosure

“Basis for terms of settlement between the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League to which Gandhiji and Mr. Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the Congress and the League to approve :

- (1) Subject to the terms set out below as regards the constitution for Free India, the Muslim League endorses the Indian demand for Independence and will co-operate with the Congress in the formation of a provisional interim Government for the transitional period.**

- (2) After the termination of the war, a commission shall be appointed for demarcating contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is in absolute majority. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite of all the inhabitants held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise shall ultimately decide the issue of separation from Hindustan. If the majority decide in favour of forming a sovereign State separate from Hindustan, such decision shall be given effect to, without prejudice to the right of districts on the border to choose to join either State.
- (3) It will be open to all parties to advocate their points of view before the plebiscite is held.
- (4) In the event of separation mutual agreements shall be entered into for safeguarding defence, and commerce and communications and for other essential purposes.
- (5) Any transfer of population shall only be on an absolutely voluntary basis.
- (6) These terms shall be binding only in case of transfer by Britain of full power and responsibility of the governance of India."

New Delhi,
10th May, 1946.

My dear Jinnah,

In accordance with our decision yesterday at the conference, my colleagues have given a good deal of thought to the choice of a suitable umpire. We have felt that it would probably be desirable to exclude Englishmen, Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs. The field is thus limited. Nevertheless we have drawn up a considerable list from which a choice can be made. I presume

that you have also, in consultation with your executive, prepared a list of possible umpires. Would you like these two lists to be considered by us, that is, by you and me? If so, we can fix up a meeting for the purpose. After we have met, our recommendation can be considered by the eight of us, that is, the four representatives of the Congress and the four representatives of the Muslim League, and a final choice can be made, which we can place before the conference when it meets tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

New Delhi,
May 10, 1946.

Dear Jawaharlal,

I received your letter of 10th May at 6 p.m.

At yesterday's meeting between you and me at the Viceregal Lodge, we discussed several points besides the fixing of an umpire. After a short discussion, we came to the conclusion that we will further examine your proposal made by you at the conference yesterday, with all its implications after your and my consulting our respective colleagues.

I shall be glad to meet you to consider the various aspects of your proposal any time that may suit you tomorrow morning after 10 o'clock.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

New Delhi,
11th May, 1946.

My dear Jinnah,

Your letter of May 10th reached me at ten last night.

During the talk we had at Viceregal Lodge you referred to various matters besides the choice of an umpire and I gave you my reactions in regard to them. But I was under the

impression that the proposal to have an umpire had been agreed to and our next business was to suggest names. Indeed it was when some such agreement was reached in the conference that we had our talk. My colleagues have proceeded on this basis and prepared a list of suitable names. The conference will expect us to tell them his afternoon the name of the umpire we fix upon, or at any rate to place before them suggestions in this behalf.

The chief implication in having an umpire is to agree to accept his final decision. We agree to this. We suggest that we might start with this and report accordingly to the conference.

As suggested by you, I shall come over to your place of residence at about 10-30 this morning.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

New Delhi,
May 11, 1946..

Dear Jawaharlal,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 11th May.

During the talk we had at the Viceregal Lodge, which lasted for about fifteen or twenty minutes, I pointed out various aspects and implications of your proposal and we had had a discussion for a little while, but no agreement was arrived at between you and me on any point except that at your suggestion that you consult your colleagues and I should do likewise. We adjourned to meet again the next day to further discuss the matter.

I shall be glad to meet you at 10-30 this morning for further talk.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

Wardha,
13th August, 1946.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

As you know, the Viceroy has invited me in my capacity as President of the Congress, to make proposals for the immediate formation of the interim government. I have accepted the invitation. I feel that my first step should be to approach you and seek your co-operation in the formation of a coalition provisional government. It is naturally our desire to have as representative a government as possible. Should you wish to discuss this matter further with me, before coming to a decision, I shall gladly see you in Bombay or wherever you may be. I am leaving Wardha on the 14th and reaching Bombay on the 15th August forenoon. Probably I shall leave Bombay for Delhi on the morning of August 17.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

— — —
Bombay,
August 15, 1946.

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,

I received your letter, dated the 13th yesterday, delivered to me by hand.

I know nothing as to what has transpired between the Viceroy and you ; nor have I any idea of what agreement has been arrived at between you two, except what you say in your letter that the Viceroy has invited you, in your capacity as the President of the Congress, to make proposals for the immediate formation of the interim government and that you have accepted the invitation.

If this means that the Viceroy has commissioned you to form the Executive Council of the Governor-General and has already agreed to accept and act upon your advice and proceed

to constitute his Executive accordingly, it is not possible for me to accept such a position on that basis.

However, if you care to meet me on behalf of the Congress to settle the Hindu-Muslim question and resolve the serious deadlock, I shall be glad to see you today at 6 p.m.

The substance of your letter, unfortunately, has already appeared in the press even before I received it. May I, therefore, request you to release this letter of mine also to the press ?

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

Bombay,
August 15, 1946.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you for your letter of today's date which was delivered to me at about 1 p.m.

Nothing has transpired between me and the Viceroy except what has already been published. There is no arrangement other than what is contained in his brief offer and our acceptance. That offer, made by the Viceroy with the concurrence of the British Government, is for us to make proposals for the formation immediately of an interim government. The Executive Council of the Governor-General has not been mentioned as such. It is understood, as stated in the published correspondence between the Congress President and the Viceroy, that the interim government will have the greatest possible freedom in the exercise of the day-to-day administration of this country.

Since this brief offer was made and we accepted it, I have had no opportunity to meet the Viceroy or discuss the matter with him more fully. I hope to do so within the next two or three days. It was our wish, however, that I might approach you first and invite your co-operation. We are naturally

anxious to form a government, which will be as representative as possible in order to deal with the urgent problems facing this country.

In your letter you state that you are unable to accept the position as it appears to you. I regret this. Perhaps, on fuller consideration of the position you would be agreeable to reconsider your decision. If so, we would welcome it. For this purpose I shall gladly see you, if you so desire.

As regards the general Hindu-Muslim question, we are always prepared to discuss this and try to find a way out. Just at present we are immediately concerned with the formation of the provisional government and circumstances demand that early steps should be taken in regard to it. We hope that a coalition provisional government will itself help in the consideration and solution of our problems. While I am willing to discuss the larger question with you, I have no new suggestions to make. Perhaps you may be able to suggest a new approach.

I am prepared to come to your place at 6 p.m. this evening, or if it is more convenient to you, some time tomorrow. I am leaving Bombay on the 17th morning.

My letter to you was not sent to the press. I made a brief statement to the press, however, in view of repeated questions put to me by newspapermen and in order to prevent misconceptions, if you so desire, you can release all this correspondence to the Press.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

Bombay,
August 15, 1946.

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,

I am in receipt of your letter of August 15, delivered to me at about 3-30 p.m. and I thank you for it.

I have already made my position clear in my letter dated the 15th of August sent to you this morning. But as you have given certain explanations, with some of which I must not be taken to agree, and as you desire to meet, I shall be glad to see you today at 6 p.m.

I agree with you that in order to prevent misconception in the mind of the public, our correspondence should be published and accordingly I am releasing it to the press.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

October 6, 1946.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

I have consulted some of my colleagues about the matters discussed by us yesterday and over the possibility of rapprochement between the Muslim League and the Congress. We are all agreed that nothing could be happier and better for the country than that these two organisations should meet again as before as friends having no mental reservations and bent on resolving all their differences by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign power. We would, therefore, welcome the decision of the League to join the interim government for it to work as a united team on behalf of India as a whole.

The points put forward by you in our conversation yesterday were :

- (1) the formula suggested to you by Gandhiji ;
- (2) the League not being responsible for the members at present representing the Scheduled Castes and the minorities ;
- (3) what should be done in case any vacancy should arise among the members representing the minorities other than the Scheduled Castes ;

- (4) the procedure to be adopted over what may be called major communal issues ; and
- (5) alternating Vice-Presidentsip.

Regarding No. 1, we feel that the formula is not happily worded. We do not question the purpose underlying it. We are willing, a result of the elections, to accept the Muslim League as the authoritative representative organisation of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India and that as such and in accordance with democratic principles they have today the unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India, provided that for identical reasons the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress. The Congress cannot agree to any restriction or limitations to be put upon it in choosing such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress. We would suggest, therefore, that no formula is necessary and each organisation may stand on its merits.

Regarding No. 2, I am to say that the question of the League being responsible does not arise and, as you do not raise any objections to the present constitution of the Government in this respect, there is no question to be solved.

Regarding No. 3, I am to say that if any such vacancy arises, the whole Cabinet will consider what should be done, to replace the vacancy and advise the Viceroy accordingly. There can be no question of right in the matter of consultation with the League in regard to the representation of these minorities.

Regarding No. 4, your suggestion about the Federal Court is not feasible. Matters coming before the Cabinet cannot be made subject-matter of references to court. We should thrash out all such matters amongst ourselves and bring up agreed proposals before the Cabinet. In the event of failure to reach an agreed decision, we should seek the method of arbitration of our own choice. We hope, however, that we will act with such

mutual trust, forbearance and friendliness that there will be no occasion to go to such arbitration.

Regarding No. 5, it is out of the question to have any rotation in the Vice-Presidentship. We have no objection if you desire to have an additional Vice-Chairman for the Co-ordination Committee of the Cabinet, who can also preside at such committee meetings from time to time.

I am hoping that if your Committee finally decide upon the League joining the National Cabinet, they will also decide simultaneously to join the Constituent Assembly, or recommend to your Council to this effect.

I need hardly mention that when an agreement has been reached by us it can only be varied by mutual agreement and not otherwise.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru

October 7, 1946

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,

I am in receipt of your letter of 6th October, 1946 and I thank you for it. I appreciate and reciprocate your sentiments expressed in paragraph 1 of your letter.

With regard to the second paragraph of your letter, point No. 1, the formula, it was accepted by Mr. Gandhi and me and the meeting between us was arranged on that basis in order to negotiate and settle a few other points remaining for the purpose of reconstituting the interim government. The formula runs as follows :

‘The Congress does not challenge and accept that the Muslim League now is the authoritative representative of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India. As such and in accordance with democratic principles they alone have today

an unquestionable right to represent the Muslims of India. But the Congress cannot agree that any restriction or limitation should be put upon the Congress to choose such representatives as they think proper from amongst the members of the Congress as their representatives.'

And now, in your letter under reply, not only you have made changes in it but you consider no formula is necessary ! I regret I cannot agree to any change in the language or otherwise as it was the agreed basis of our discussion on other points ; nor can I agree with you that no formula is necessary. It was signed by Mr. Gandhi and accepted by me.

As the whole basis of our talk on other matters was the formula agreed to by Mr. Gandhi, I don't think we can make any further progress unless it is accepted by you as a basis upon which we can proceed to discuss other points we have already discussed orally in the course of our conversation and now I am enclosing herewith a copy of the various points put by me before you in writing.

Even the four points, excluding point No. 1, regarding the formula which I have already dealt with above, you don't agree with any one of them. I am still willing, on the basis of the formula being accepted by you, to further discuss the various points with a view to settle them in the spirit of the sentiments expressed by you in paragraph 1. I am anxious that we should come to our own settlement without undue delay.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

ENCLOSURE (9 POINTS)

1. The total number of the members of the Executive Council to be 14.
2. Six nominees of the Congress will include one Scheduled Castes representative, but it must not be taken that the Muslim League has agreed to approve of, the selection of the Scheduled

Caste representative. The ultimate responsibility in that behalf being with the Governor-General and the Viceroy.

3. That the Congress should not include in the remaining five members of their quota a Muslim of their choice.

4. Safeguard.—That there should be a convention that on major communal issues, if the majority of Hindu or Muslim members of the Executive Council are opposed, then no decision should be taken.

5. Alternative or rotational Vice-President should be appointed in fairness to both the major communities as it was adopted in the U.N.O. Conference.

6. The Muslim League was not consulted in the selection of the three minority representatives, *i.e.*, Sikh, Indian Christian and Parsi, and it should not be taken that the Muslim League approves of the selection that has been made. But in future, in the event of there being a vacancy owing to death, resignation or otherwise, representatives of these minorities should be chosen in consultation with the two major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress.

7. Portfolios.—The most important portfolios should be equally distributed between the two major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress.

8. That the above arrangement should not be changed or modified unless both the major parties—the Muslim League and the Congress—agree.

9. The question of the settlement of the long-term plan should stand over until a better and more conducive atmosphere is created and an agreement has been reached on the points stated above and after the interim government has been reformed and finally set up.

This is what Mr. Gandhi said at a prayer meeting, after signing the formula stated in the above letter :

(Mr. Gandhi went on to say how he felt impelled to tell them of the error committed by him three days ago. He was thoroughly ashamed of it. For him, at this time of life, it was unpardonable. No harm had been done to anyone because of it. It was not possible for him to remember ever having done anything to hurt anyone.)

His error consisted in being overhasty. He read a little thing hurriedly, though there was no occasion for hurry, and fancied it was quite right whereas it was not quite that. No public servant had the right to act in this way. He seemed, for the moment, to have lost confidence in himself and the belief that he would live for 125 years.

Mr. Gandhi said they who listened to him were his world for the time. He was telling them of his mistake in order that they may learn a lesson from it and never be hasty or careless in their actions. While his mind had been relieved of a burden through confession, Mr. Gandhi said it would take a long time for him to regain the lost confidence as far as living 125 years was concerned.)

October 8, 1946.

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

I received your letter of the 7th October as I was going to Baroda House to meet you there last evening. I hurriedly glanced through it and was perturbed by it as it seemed to me to be at variance with the spirit of our talk the previous day. Subsequently we discussed various points and unfortunately could not convince each other.

On my return I read through your letter more carefully and consulted some of my colleagues. They were also disturbed not only by the letter but also by the list of points attached to it. This list had not been seen or considered by us previously. It had little relevance after our talk.

We have again given earnest consideration to the whole matter and we feel that we cannot state our position more clearly than I did in my letter to you of October 6, except for some variations which I shall indicate below. I shall, therefore, refer you to that letter of mine which represents our general and specific viewpoint.

As I have told you, my colleagues and I did not accept the formula agreed to by Gandhiji and you.

The meeting between you and me was not arranged, so far as I was aware, on the agreed basis of that formula. We knew of it and were prepared to agree to the substance of that formula as stated to you in my letter of October 6. That formula contained a further paragraph which you have not quoted in your letter :

'It is understood that all the Ministers of the interim government will work as a term for the good of the whole of India and will never invoke the intervention of the Governor-General in any case.'

While we still think that the formula is not happily worded, we are prepared, for the sake of the settlement we so earnestly desire, to accept the whole of it, including the paragraph left out in your letter.

In that case you will agree, I hope, that we should make our further position quite clear. It is clearly understood of course that the Congress has the right to appoint a Muslim out of its quota. Further, as I have stated in my previous letter, the Congress position in regard to the Nationalist Muslims and the smaller minorities should not be challenged by you.

In regard to points numbered 2, 3 and 4 in my letter of October 6, I have stated our position and have nothing further to add. We have gone as far as we could to meet you and we are unable to go further. I trust that you will appreciate the position.

Regarding No. 5 (the question of the Vice-President), you made a suggestion yesterday that the Vice-President and the Leader of the House (the Central Assembly) should not be the same person. In present circumstances this means that the Leader of the House should be a Muslim League member of the Cabinet. We shall agree to this.

I am writing this letter to you after full and careful consideration of all the issues involved and after consulting such of my colleagues as are here. It is in no spirit of carrying on an argument that I have written but rather to indicate to you our earnest desire to come to an agreement. We have discussed these matters sufficiently and the time has come for us to decide finally.

Yours sincerely,
Jawaharlal Nehru.

October 12, 1946.

Dear Pandit Jawaharlal,

I received your letter dated 8th October, 1946, yesterday in reply to my letter of October 7, 1946.

I regret that you and your colleagues do not accept the formula agreed to by Mr. Gandhi and me.

Mr. Gandhi and I had also agreed that on that basis you and I should meet in order to negotiate and settle a few other points that remained for the purpose of reconstituting the interim government. Accordingly arrangements were made for our meeting on the 5th October.

I am surprised to gather from your letter, when you say that the meeting was not arranged, so far as you were aware, on the agreed basis of that formula. The only formula agreed upon between Mr. Gandhi and me was that which was mentioned in my letter of October 7, 1946. I had not mentioned in my letter, what is referred to by you as paragraph 2 as that

was one of the points among others to be further examined and discussed by you and me. This arrangement was actually put on record.

At our first meeting on the 5th of October, we discussed all the points and you informed me that you will let me know the time that will suit you to meet me the next day, but, instead of that, I received your letter of 6th October, 1946. In this letter you yourself referred to the formula as one mentioned in my letter of 7th October, and expressed your view that the formula was not happily worded and suggested a modification by inserting a proviso as follows :

‘Provided that for identical reasons the League recognises the Congress as the authoritative organisation representing all non-Muslims and such Muslims as have thrown in their lot with the Congress’.

or else, if that was not agreed to you, suggested no formula was necessary. There is no reference in your letter to what you describe as paragraph 2 as part of the agreed formula and you yourself dealt with that point quite separately in the opening paragraph of your letter which runs as follows :

‘We are all agreed that nothing would be happier and better for the country than that these two organisations should meet again as before as friends having no mental reservations by mutual consultation and never desiring or allowing the intervention of the British Government through the Viceroy or others or of any other foreign power.’

That, in substance, was the idea of the paragraph 2, mentioned by you, which among other matters was to be examined and discussed. I also referred to this matter in my reply stating that I appreciated and reciprocated the sentiments expressed in paragraph 1 of your letter of 6th October, 1946.

I fail to understand why you and your colleagues should have been disturbed not only by my letter of the 7th October,

but also by the list of points attached to it. There was nothing new in that list of points which we had not discussed the first day, as it is clear from your letter of October 6, wherein you yourself have dealt with everyone of the points mentioned in the list that I sent to you. Let me take one by one the points in the list sent to you in writing.

- (1) Total number of 14 :
That was not in dispute.
- (2) The Scheduled Castes' representative :
That the League must not be taken to have agreed or approved of the selection, which is referred to in paragraph 2 of your letter.
- (3) Nomination of Muslims in Congress quota :
The matter was discussed.
- (4) Safeguard :
That was discussed it is clear from point 4 in your letter.
- (5) Alternative or rotational Vice-President :
We discussed and is referred as point No. 5 in your letter.
- (6) Vacancies occurring in the seats allotted to minority representatives :
This matter was discussed and is referred to by you in your letter point No. 3.
- (7) Portfolios :
The matter was discussed :
- (8) No change in the arrangements agreed to without the consent of both the major parties :
This was discussed and is referred to in the last paragraph of your letter.
- (9) The long-term question :
This was discussed and is mentioned in your letter last but one paragraph.

All these points were discussed as is clear from what I have pointed out above and the list was sent to you merely as a matter of convenience and preciseness.

You state in your letter under reply that your position is the same with regard to the various matters that were discussed between us as is mentioned in your letter of the 6th of October, except for some variations which you have indicated in your letter.

Following are the variations and my reaction to them :

(1) That you would accept the formula provided paragraph 2 is included in the formula and is made a part of it.

This constitutes a fundamental departure from the original formula upon the basis of which I had agreed to have discussions with you. I cannot agree to this variation.

(2) Provided that the Muslim League does not challenge that the Congress represents the minorities and the Nationalist Muslims as indicated in terms of your previous letter of the 6th October and referred to in your letter under reply.

This again is a serious departure from the agreed formula. Besides this is a matter for the minorities concerned.

I note what you say with regard to points 2, 3 and 4 of your letter of October 6, *i.e.* Scheduled Castes' representative and other minorities ; the position about the vacancies occurring in future in the seats allotted to the minorities and the procedure to be adopted with regard to major communal issues. Even with regard to these points there is no agreement between us.

With regard to point No. 5, Vice-Presidentship, I note what you say.

Since you have stated your position after full and careful consideration of all the issues involved and after consultation with your colleagues, I presume that it follows that this is your final stand. I deeply regret that we have failed to come to an honourable agreement of our own satisfactory to both the parties.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah.

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IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS**CIRCULAR OF THE MAHOMMEDAN LITERARY
SOCIETY OF CALCUTTA REGARDING
SWADESHI MOVEMENT**

(November, 1905)

It has recently been brought to the notice of the Mahommedan Literary Society of Calcutta that there exists some doubt in the minds of some Mahommedans as to what attitude they should adopt in respect of the policy of Government in connection with the partition of Bengal and also in respect of the political meetings held under the name of 'Swadeshi'.

We have therefore the honour to point out for the guidance and information of such Mahommedan who are in doubt, that the policy of Government in effecting the partition of Bengal, besides insuring numerous general administrative advantages is calculated to confer a great boon upon the Mahommedan community at large, and it is, in the opinion of the Committee of the Mahommedan Literary Society of Calcutta, incumbent upon every true and loyal Mahommedan faithfully to support the policy of Government in every possible way in his power.

We would also venture to suggest that all true and local Mahommedan subjects of His Gracious Majesty King Edward VII, in the interest of peace and order and for the protection of the sacred Mahommedan interests, which are distinct from those of any other communities, should strictly abstain from joining any political meeting or demonstration whatsoever, in connection with the partition of Bengal....

It may, however, be noted that there is nothing in the laws to prevent any Mahommedan from buying or selling country made articles or using the same as he pleases.

All true and loyal Mahommedan subjects of the King-Emperor are accordingly requested to exert their best influence over their less advanced and ignorant Mahommedan neighbours and friends through the medium of religious heads, Imams, Mullahs and other influential Mahommedans of every town and hamlet to abstain from joining any political agitation or movement against our benign Government to whom the Mahommedan community are eternally grateful for numerous and manifold benefits conferred upon them, from time to time.

LETTER FROM J.B. FULLER TO LORD MINTO

(26 November 1905)

There are some influential men among them...they are, practically unrepresented in the Native Press. The landlords are mostly Hindus, and are bringing great pressure to bear upon their Mussulman ryots. Still, the preponderance of Mussulmans is a reassuring feature in the situation, we have to be careful not to commit ourselves entirely to Mussulman interests, or to act in any way which would encourage Mussulman ryots to rise against their Hindu landlords.

They have in some places been greatly irritated by the interference of Swadeshi agitators, and impertinent school boys. It is unfortunately the case that Mussulmans are very scantily represented in the public service. The superior officers of the police, in particular, are almost wholly Hindus. This increases our difficulty.

The attitude of the common people is generally reassuring. The Mussulmans are glad to see me wherever I go. The Hindus rarely acknowledge me when they first see me ; but I have noticed that on my second or third visit to the town, their manner became more cordial.

At the time of Partition the condition was poor and the leading Mussulmans definitely asked me for protection against insult and annoyance.

BENGAL'S PARTITION PETITION REJECTED BY JOHN MORLEY*

My Lord — I have considered in Council the letter of Your Excellency's Government No. 3 dated the 28th February, last, enclosing memorials addressed to me (1) by Khwaja Atikullah of Dacca and certain other inhabitants of Bengal, and Eastern Bengal and Assam ; and (2) certain Mahommedan inhabitants of the district Faridpur, in which they pray for a reconsideration of the orders regarding the partition of Bengal.

Your Excellency-in-Council has no recommendation to make on behalf of the memorialists. I have examined in Council the representations made by the memorialists, but while I fully recognise that the recent change has been unwelcome to some of the classes affected by it, I am not impressed either by the facts or by the arguments now advanced. I accordingly request that the memorialists may be informed that I am unable to comply with their prayer. I cannot doubt that Your Excellency's Government will find the means to remove any substantial grievances that may be proved to exist, and I trust that with the loyal cooperation of the people the benefit anticipated when measure was sanctioned will in no long time be generally realised.—I have the honour to be, my Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient and humble servant.

MUSLIMS AND REFORMS**

Every thoughtful Indian, who believes that self-government is a plant of slow growth and that the structure of society and the peculiar conditions obtaining in India cannot be changed

**The Pioneer*, 24 May, 1907.

**Letter from S. Raza Ali to the Editor regarding the minorities and the Reforms Scheme, *The Pioneer*, 7 February, 1909.

with the stroke of a statesman's pen, will readily agree that the scheme of reforms recently announced in the despatch of Lord Morley is more liberal than was expected. All communities and classes have reason to congratulate themselves on the concessions allotted to their share. But it is proposed in this letter to discuss the scheme with reference to the Mahommedans and the landholders. Take the case of the former. The Government of India proposed that the four provinces had the largest Mahommedan population namely, Bengal, Eastern Bengal and Assam, the United Provinces, and the Punjab, should each be allowed to return a member to the Imperial Legislative Council. The fifth seat was given to Madras and Bombay alternately. After discussing the views of the Provincial Governments as to the feasibility of forming Mahommedan electorates, the Government of India made the following recommendation: 'Our view is that in the provinces where election by a regular Mahommedan electorate is feasible, that method should be adopted; that Mahommedan Associations should be made use of where electorate cannot be formed; and that nomination by Government should be resorted to where neither of the first two methods is practicable.' Now without rejecting these proposals Lord Morley has recommended the plan of Electoral Colleges. There is not the shadow of a doubt that the Secretary of State has suggested it in the honest belief that due representation will be secured to various sections of the people by a comparatively simple process. But let us see how it will affect important minorities, such as the Mahommedans. Briefly the scheme is this. Suppose that the total population of a province is 20 millions, of which 15 millions are Hindus and 5 millions Mahommedans, and the number of members to be elected 12. Divide the province into three electoral areas in each of which three Hindus and one Mahommedan are to be elected. In each of these areas constitute an Electoral College consisting of, let it be supposed, a hundred members of whom 75 should be Hindus and 25 Mahommedans. And it would be the privilege of the Electoral College as a body to elect three representatives for the Hindus and one for the Mahommedans. Now the address

presented by the Mahomedan deputation to the Viceroy at Simla stated in most clear and unambiguous language that in any system of election, in which the Hindus formed the majority, no Mahomedan could hope to be elected unless he were prepared to sacrifice his own views to those of the majority opposed to his own community ; and that if he might be willing to make that sacrifice, he would cease to be a representative of his community. The address proceeded that the only way of securing Mahomedan representation was to constitute an exclusively Mahomedan electorate for each province. But for the fact that we know there is not a more honest, sincere and just Briton than Lord Morley, it might have been said that every precaution has been taken in the Electoral Colleges' scheme to deprive the Mahomedans of the remotest chance of representation, while seeming to bestow it upon them. The Provincial Legislative Council of the United Provinces, to take one out of many cases similar in principle, is to consist of 17 elected members excluding the two representatives of the Allahabad University and the Upper India Chamber of Commerce. Now if the Electoral College for these Provinces were to consist of 102 members, it follows that 24 of them would be Mahomedans and 12 landholders. The remaining 66 members would be Hindus. Suppose that the Mahomedans want to return A, a Mahomedan who has devoted much of his time and money to bettering the condition of his community ; and that the Hindus are for electing X, another Mahomedan whose chief qualifications are that he is a bitter opponent of the partition of Bengal, vehemently preaches boycott, advocates the introduction of the Bhasha (Hindi) language as a compulsory subject in schools and is known not to have missed any annual sitting of the Congress. Now which of these two rival candidates will be returned ? Why X assuredly as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Even if the representatives of the landowning class side with the Mahomedans, which is not probable, their joint forces will yet suffer a crushing defeat, namely, 36 to 66. The net result is that the Mahomedan community will be represented by

persons who happen to be Hindus in all but name. These remarks apply with equal force to the case of landholders. If the power of constituting an electorate had been entrusted to a Congress leader, for instance, Mr. Gokhale, who, it should be remembered, was in England at the time when the Secretary of State wrote his despatch and is known to have had several interviews with him, he could have hardly devised a more clever scheme for rendering the Mahommedan vote ineffective than Lord Morley's. In the face of definite proposals by the Government of India it is no small wonder that he should have managed to see difficulties in the formation of Mahommedan electorates. Even if the task were truly Herculean, the efforts to accomplish it would be well worth making. It is agreed on all hands that representation of different communities and classes is absolutely necessary, but how can you secure that representation unless you create special constituencies? The reason of the subject presenting difficulties to Lord Morley is that he has sought to work from top to bottom. Logically it ought not to have been taken in hand till the composition, the electorates and the powers of district boards and municipalities were settled.

The address presented by the Mahommedan deputation stated that municipal and district boards 'form as it were the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government, and it is here that the principle of representation is brought home intimately to the intelligence of the people'. It went on to say that the representation of the community on these bodies had been wholly inadequate, and requested that the number of Hindus and Mahommedans entitled to seats should be declared in every district. The suggestion seems to have met with the approval of the Government of India, who, in their circular letter of the 24th August 1907, expressed themselves in favour of the principle of assigning a fixed proportion of seats on these bodies to the followers of the two religions. If we began with reforming them, more than half the difficulties in forming special electorates would disappear. Suppose that the municipal and district Boards in a certain district are composed of

20 members each, of whom 12 are Hindus and 8 Mahommedans. The latter might be allowed to elect one of their number to vote at the election of one Mahommedan member to the Provincial Legislative Council. In this way the representatives of these bodies might be allowed to fill half the number of seats appropriated to Mahommedans in that chamber. Once we get our rural and municipal boards constituted in such a manner as to secure the due representation of every section of the population, the process of building up on their basis a revised constitution for the Provincial Councils becomes comparatively easy. But it should not be forgotten that the boards are only a part of the system of special constituencies, and care must be taken to introduce popular element into them. There is nothing worse than the monopoly of representation by one class.

To constitute a Mahommedan electorate, which should be feasible and at the same time give satisfaction to the community, is no easy matter ; but the following rough scheme would appear to be free from the difficulties which are seen by Lord Morley and may, with necessary modifications, serve as the basis of an electorate, in which, it may be said once for all, that no non-Mahommedan is included. Mahommedan electorates for Provincial Councils : Group I. (a) Municipal Commissioners ; (b) Members of district boards. Group II. (a) Those who pay income tax on an annual income of Rs. 1,000 ; (b) those who derive from land an annual income of Rs. 1,000 or pay the same amount as land revenue ; (c) Graduates of Universities of five years' standing. Each of the two groups may be allowed to elect half of the Mahommedan Councillors.

Again Lord Morley's Electoral Colleges make no provision for elections to the Imperial Legislative Council ; and he has to admit that 'some modification of the scheme suggested for the provinces will no doubt be necessary.' To create a Mahommedan electorate for this purpose is less difficult, and it may be constituted somewhat on the following lines :

Mahommedan electorate for Imperial Council : (1) Members of the Provincial Legislative Council ; (2) Fellows of the local University ; (3) Gentlemen in service of British Government getting an annual salary of not less than Rs. 12,000 ; (4) Gentlemen belonging to the professional classes who pay income tax on an annual income of not less than Rs. 15,000. It will be noticed that Mahommedan landholders have been omitted from this scheme for the simple reason that the land owning class has been assigned separate representation, and the mere accident that they profess a certain creed should not entail a forfeiture of their rights as members of that class. They should, therefore, be included in the small class of landholders rather than counted amongst the huge population of Mussulmans. The plan of giving them a place under both the heads is harmless in itself, but does not meet with the approval of Lord Morley who is against giving a double vote to any person, though it may be remarked in passing that some people will very likely have it, for instance, fellows of Universities who also possess qualifications carrying a right to vote in the territorial electorates. And here it may be appropriately pointed out that Mahommedans are in no way anxious to vote in the territorial electorates which Lord Morley fears would be resented by other classes of the population, provided that they are allowed to have their own electorates. The object of bestowing separate representation on the landed classes will most probably be defeated unless a similar course is adopted as regards them. Their case is very much like that of the Mahommedans. Both are sure to be swamped in a territorial electorate in which they can at best be an impotent minority. Considering that the number of those who pay an annual land revenue of Rs. 10,000 or more cannot be very large in each province, there should not be much difficulty in forming the landholders' electorates on some such principles as follows : Landholders' Electorates for Provincial Councils ; Landholders having an annual income of Rs. 10,000 or paying the same amount as land revenue. Landholders Electorate for Imperial Council : (1) Landholding members of the Provincial Councils ; (2) Landholders having an annual income of Rs. 25,000 or

paying the same amount as land revenue ; (3) Landholding members who have served on the Imperial Council for an uninterrupted period of eight years.

The last question discussed in the despatch is the expansion of the Executive Councils of Madras and Bombay and the creation of similar councils in the four major provinces. We are further told that it is contemplated to admit Indians to these councils. Mahommedans throughout India rejoice at these valued concessions. They are sometimes charged by unfriendly critics with caring more for their own interests than the welfare of the country. Nothing could be farther from the truth. They are in no degree less anxious than the self-styled 'children of the soil', to make India a great country ; but they clearly see that no system of representation can promote the true interests of the country in which the counsels of their Hindu fellow countrymen prevail to the exclusion of themselves. Now the appointment of Indian to the Executive Councils is one of the most important reforms embodied in the despatch. The followers of Islam being less numerous in the Madras and Bombay Presidencies may acquiesce in the appointments being given to the Hindus. But in other provinces, where they form a very large proportion of the population, such a measure will create deep discontent. Take, for instance, the Governor-General's Executive Council, which in many respects resembles the Cabinet in the British constitution. If one Indian member, as Lord Morley has announced, is to be appointed he will in all probability be a Hindu His Lordship has insisted—and for good reasons on maintaining a substantial official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council. Admittedly the body which is charged with executive functions is more important than the one that legislates. Therefore, the claim of the Mahommedans for the appointment of a member of their community to the highest executive body is by no means illegitimate or extravagant. There is no doubt that the number of these posts being limited, it is not possible to secure the due representation of all the races and creeds that inhabit our country. But so far as the adjustment of sharply conflicting claims of the largest

communities is concerned, the welfare of the followers of two religions only, namely Hinduism and Islam, need be taken into consideration, without forgetting the interests of Government of India and especially the Secretary of State by sending, if possible, a deputation to England, requesting them to make provision in the Bill, which is to be introduced in Parliament next session, for appointing two Indians, one Hindu, and one Mahommedan, to the Councils of, at any rate, Eastern Bengal and Assam, the Punjab and the United Provinces. Above all, it is absolutely necessary that a Mahommedan should have a seat on the Governor-General's Executive Council, which might be done by creating one additional membership. Lord Morley says that it is an enormous advantage to have the point of view of an Indian. His Lordship was speaking of London, but when the scene is transferred to Calcutta it would be essential for Government to be in touch with Hindu and Mahommedan opinions, which together make up the Indian point of view. A careful perusal of the despatch would show that the Secretary of State is under the impression that Mahommedans are entitled to a share in the proposed reforms on the basis of their numerical strength. As has been pointed out times without number this is a mistake. Besides the fact that in estimating their position regard should be had to their political importance and the value of the contribution they make to the defence of the Empire, it is to be remembered that large sections of the population, classified as Hindus in the census of 1901, have no two things in common with the followers of Hinduism. In fact, there is no more justification for calling them Hindus than there would be for counting them amongst Mahommedans. If a reduction be made for these sections, the proportion of Mahommedans to Hindus becomes something like four to eleven. It is to be earnestly hoped that this important fact will not be lost sight of when the time comes for re-constituting local and district boards and municipalities on the reformed lines. The representation accorded to Mahommedans in the Provincial Legislative Councils, notably in Eastern Bengal and Assam and the United Provinces, is hardly adequate and in view of the fact that they are to be so constituted as to

dispense with the official majority, it is but just to request the Government of India and the Secretary of State to increase by one the number of seats allotted to the community. It only remains to notice that the North-West Frontier Province where the bulk of the population is Mahommedan, is to derive no benefit under the scheme. One can well understand the reason why local self-government is denied to it ; but there does not seem to be much justification for refusing it the right to be represented in the Imperial Legislative Council by a nominated member.

ON THE ROYAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF 1911 RESULTING IN THE REUNION OF BENGAL

I*

When His Majesty the King Emperor declared his intention of announcing in person to his loving Indian subjects the event of his Coronation this year, it was felt throughout this country that a momentous action had been decided upon and it was difficult to exaggerate its sanctity and significance. Those who were privileged to witness the magnificent ceremony of the Imperial Durbar on the 12th December were so deeply impressed with it that, far from the least tinge of disappointment being detected, which is not an unusual experience of humanity in relation to events and sights long and lovingly anticipated, the actual ceremony surpassed in its grandeur, variety and impressiveness all the expectations of the beholders. But little did those who beheld so unique a sight know how momentous was the occasion in reality, till they read the final announcement of His Majesty, copies of which were distributed only after the King and Queen had left the amphitheatre. It was then and then only that the tremendous changes, which were proposed by the Government of India nearly four months ago and sanctioned by the Secretary of State on the 1st November and the secret of which had been guarded so remarkably well that not even the Local Govern-

**The Comrade*, 16 December, 1911.

ments were aware of them before the actual announcement, became known to the assembled multitudes. Once out, the news travelled like wild fire and, while it occasioned both joy and sadness, the most predominant effect was the shock of surprise. An edict of the Emperor of China could not have been more sudden, a ukase of the Czar of all the Russias could not have been more despotic. Apart from the merits of the scheme, it may safely be said that the greatest of playwrights would envy the Government its artistic perception of dramatic effect. It is one of the disadvantages of constitutional government that the audience, who heard the momentous announcement, cannot for a time at least know how far the Imperial personage who uttered the words approved of their full significance. But we cannot conceive that the central figure of any pageant, no matter how glorious or full of serious import, could have desire to have a more portentous message delivered through him to a larger number of people than the one which His Majesty's advisers announced through him. But when all this is said, we have still to consider whether the message did not surpass in dramatic effect the solemn significance of the original purpose for which the august messenger had undertaken so long and arduous a journey. For our part we are constrained to say and we say it with immense regret that the announcement has killed the Durbar. Whether at the reception on the same evening the garden party on the following afternoon, the review on the 14th, or, later at the investiture, the general topic of conversation was not what was going on, but what had gone before. We cannot believe that this could have been intended, and yet we cannot conceive that the nine patriot kings, who have thus dramatically settled the destinies of millions with an impressive and imperial disregard of the existence of the rest of the world, could have failed to contemplate the effect of their choice of time and place. The position of a constitutional monarch is perhaps the most difficult that our modern political philosophy has created. The duties of such a king are enough to tax the power of any man to the full, but for the efficient performance of those onerous duties it is

necessary that every word and act of the king's advisers should add to rather than militate against the dignity that should surround the king like an earthly halo. In our humble judgement, while the Government has not added to its own dignity by thus seeking shelter behind the Imperial robes, it has been guilty of doing damage to the dignity of the Monarch. Whatever it may be elsewhere, in India the offence is unpardonable. But after all it shows how little the West understands the East even today.

As regards the importance of the scheme there can hardly be two opinions. The government of India regard it as 'one of the most weighty decisions ever taken since the establishment of British Rule in India.' But when we come to consider the manner in which such a 'weighty decision' has been arrived at, we stand amazed at the audacity of the whole enterprise. There is no pretence of consulting public opinion, there is no reference to the assistance given by local Governments, to whose opinions so much deference is seemingly paid when the Government of India have made up their own mind to pass or reject a measure and the outlying provinces say Amen. When the question of giving Council Government to the United Provinces, which were then the second largest and are now the largest administrative unit, came up for discussion early this year in the Viceroy's Legislative Council, all debate was hushed because forsooth a masterful Lieutenant-Governor preferred his own unaided judgment to the opinion of the rest of mankind. Yet now the Capital of India is transferred to a thousand miles after a century and a half, two provinces are united, two others are cut up to form another local Government and a local Administration, a Lieutenant-Governorship is converted into a Governorship, a new province is given Council Government while the destinies of much older provinces are still in the hands of single individuals, and a smaller unit, which had been given representation in a Legislative Council, is wholly disfranchised. And the local Government so deeply affected know no more of these tremendous and far-reaching changes than did the scarlet runners of the Supreme

Government. It makes one doubt whether we are living in twentieth century under the aegis of the British Democracy or in the fourteenth under erratic Tughlak. If, in the words of the Earl of Crewe, this does not satisfy the historical sense of millions, we do not know what else would do. It will be said and it is being said unofficially that the discussion of 'so abrupt a departure from the traditions of British Government and so complete a dislocation of the official habits' would have caused endless agitation, but this is nothing else but a repetition of our grievance. If discussions and agitations are incongruous when changes of such great pith and moment are contemplated, we are asked to believe that the only subjects which the country can be trusted to discuss are wells and drains and smoky municipal lamps. The Government of India have in this instance not only choked public opinion for which in fact they have never had any superstitious respect, but have also strangled local Governments. And yet we do not know but that there may be a resurrection of the satrapies that are both dead and damned to-day, when at the touch of the new Messiah they may rise from their graves to kill Mr. Gokhale's Bill. We can well picture Sir Spencer Harcourt Butler standing up in the Legislative Council to quote reams of reports from local Governments as a counterblast to the unanimous opinion of the country in favour of the Bill and suavely give it the quietus, after blessing it with almost convincing fervour.

As regards the merits of these measures, it would not have been possible to express an opinion so early, if they had really been as novel as they have been sudden in their reappearance. But, whatever else may be said for the Government of India, they cannot be complimented on the originality of their united judgment. There is hardly any aspect of the Partition question which has not been considered at one time or another; and the idea of the transfer of the Metropolis to Delhi is, in more senses than one, as old as the hills. We cannot hope to exhaust the discussion of the merits in a single article, and we do not know if any useful purpose could now be served by such a discussion. It is not arguments evidently that carry weight with

the Government of India, but agitation, indicating 'bitterness of feeling', and that too only if it is 'very widespread and unyielding.' If, however, the gods on Olympus can receive or need any consolation from the support of mere men, we may assure them that, irrespective of the time, place and procedure preferred by the Government of India, and taken each by itself as wholly unconnected schemes, we are ourselves in favour of both the schemes. We have already indicated our disapproval of the place and the procedure selected by the Government. As regards time, the partition in the form now approved was due in 1905, and the transfer of the Capital was needed in 1857. Half a century was allowed to lapse before so obvious a change as the latter was at last effected, and the vested interests that grow up in half a century cannot be brushed aside so lightly as this cavalier Government has done in its remarkable despatch. Considerations of space compel us to follow its example and say no more on the subject of these interests. But guilty as we shall appear of a somewhat unseemly frivolity in discussing so serious a question, we cannot help wondering what will become of that fateful enterprise of Lord Curzon, the Victoria Memorial. It will hardly fulfil its original purpose in Calcutta when Delhi again becomes the Capital of the Empire. Presuming of course that there are no engineering difficulties in the way of its erection, it could not bodily be carried to Delhi. Shall it then be left to its fate with the confident expectation that the temporising *Times* of London would write another ponderous leader to prove that the chief objects towards which Lord Curzon's masterful energy was directed in this instance 'had been fully safeguarded'? To revert to the main question, we may conclude that in view of the many conveniences of Delhi and specially its vicinity to Simla, we are disposed to welcome the transfer of the Metropolis. Thanks to jute and tea and the existence of a tidal river, Calcutta cannot suffer much in importance as a whole, though the unfortunate rich, recently labelled as the 'pampered vampires' namely, the landlords, who have been hustled a good deal by the recent Improvement Trust Act, would lose considerably in rents of their house property. But

if the change had to come, the sooner it came the better, and we cannot conceive that Calcutta could ever acquire the climatic and geographical advantages of Delhi, which alone could make it a satisfactory capital of the Empire. On the whole, therefore, the change is justified, though it must be remembered that it is not the geographical position alone of the capital that would bring the Government in closer touch with the people. As long as an Englishman is socially as an island, surrounded by a vast sea of aloofness and chilly conventions of the Arctic regions, the Capital of India would remain as inaccessible as ever to the people of India. But even while generally welcoming the transfer, we cannot accept as correct the political advantages enumerated by the Government of India in paragraph 6 of their despatch and namely echoed in paragraph 3 of the despatch of the Secretary of State. To talk of 'sacred legends which go back even beyond the dawn of history of Kurawas and Pandavas and of Indraprastha is to bolster up a useful enough scheme with sentiment that is of no avail in this connection, even if it is not too rickety and tawdry at the best of times. Nor has the Mahommedan any reason to feel 'unbounded gratifications' in seeing 'the ancient Capital of the Moghals restored to its proud position as the seat of Empire'. History never repeats itself, and restorations are impossibilities. It is not to the past that Mussulmans should be invited to look back but to contemplate a future, different no doubt but possibly not less glorious. What, however, strikes us as rather grotesque is the expectation that Mussulmans 'would presumably regard with satisfaction the re-erection of Delhi as the Capital of India', when not so very long ago the Lieutenant-Governor of Burma informed a Mussulman that efforts to erect a grave over the mortal remains of Bahadur Shah, which lay neglected in the compound of an Englishman's house in Rangoon, would be looked upon with disfavour by Government. We feel sure that the erection of a suitable grave at the cost of Government would be regarded by Mussulmans with greater satisfaction so far as mere sentiment goes than the re-erection of Delhi. The further assertion that the change 'would be accepted by all as the assertion of an

unflinching determination to maintain British Rule in India' seems to us to be little better than bombast and fustian. Nobody doubts for a moment the unflinching determination of the British to maintain their rule in India ; and to insist on its being indicated by so tremendous a change as to create a doubt when none existed before. It is not by clothing the obvious in the language of a Bardolph or an Owen Glendower that the obvious can be recommended to the suffrages of the people.

It is not possible to deal in this article with the question of the modification of the Partition ; and unless the Government of India wish the world to know that it is only in the nature of a compensation to the sentiment of the Hindus of Bengal, and not an act justifiable on its own merits, we do not understand why the two questions should have been considered indissolubly linked together. We shall discuss the smaller and yet, in our view, the more far-reaching decision of the modification in a later issue. In the meantime we may say that in the case of the Hindus of Bengal, or Bengalis as the Government of India's despatch chooses to call them, the announcement has been a matter of give and take, that for 'sturdy loyal' Beharis it has been one of 'take' only, while for the Mussalman of Eastern Bengal it has been one of nothing but 'give'. We congratulate the Beharis on their signal good fortune and we rejoice as well as regret with the Bengalis. As for the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal, they must derive what cold comfort they can from the well-known lines :

Laugh, and the world laughs with you,
Weep, and you weep alone.

After all they are only 'loyal and contented', and as a reward of their loyalty and contentment they have been given a generous helping of the humble pie. We pray that they may not have a too acute attack of indigestion.

II*

Last week we criticised at some length the time, place and procedure preferred by the Government for carrying out two great schemes of far-reaching consequences, but indicated fairly clearly our general support for those measures taken each by itself as wholly unconnected schemes. The transfer of the Capital from Calcutta to Delhi is, we venture to think, a measure which would meet with unanimous approval, if we accept the vested interests of Calcutta which stand to lose considerably. The Hindus of Bengal are in a fix and no amount of florid manifestoes or torchlight processions can disguise the patent fact that to them the announcement is one of those peculiar morsels which can neither be swallowed nor thrown out. They have scored a victory in the modification of the Partition ; but the victory has been gained at a cost which may in after times be found to be heavier than many a defeat. There are other vested interests also, such as those of the non-official European community of Calcutta and its neighbourhood, and we shall be much mistaken, in spite of its many sermons to 'natives' on the evils of agitation and the virtues of moderation, it will not out-Herod Herod in condemning the transfer of the Capital. But India as a whole stands to gain by that measure and we hope to discuss later certain aspects of the transfer in greater detail.

To-day we intend to turn the searchlight towards the question of the Partition and its modification, though we cannot exhaust the subject in this article. We have held with a very large number of others, both Indians and Englishmen, that some kind of Partition was a crying necessity in 1905. But it has always been our belief that the most satisfactory arrangement was certainly not the one which Lord Curzon effected. Its greatest merit was that it freed a very large Moslem population in Eastern Bengal from the crushing yoke of Hindu domination, while it gave to the neglected half of Bengal a separate administration to look after its vital con-

**The Comrade*, 23 December, 1911.

cerns. And we are constrained to say that, apart from the opposition of the monopolist to a reduction of his share of loaves and fishes, which would have been the consequences of any reduction of the area of the monopoly, the Partition of 1905 met with an unparalleled hostility chiefly because the yoke was lifted from the sore necks of the Mussulmans. But it is undeniable that linguistic and ethnic considerations were entirely opposed to the form which Lord Curzon's Partition assumed, and this supplied to the opponents of any form of Partition a rational basis for hostility to the measures carried out by a despotic and somewhat vindictive Viceroy. Had the Partition come in 1905 in the form which it has taken in 1911, it would still have been opposed, no doubt; but it would then have been opposed much less vehemently and with not a shred of reasonableness. Administrative measures are not always essentially ethical in character, and the line of least resistance which the moralist must ignore should often commend itself to the practical administrator. Had Lord Curzon's Government followed those lines the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal would still have been to a great extent labouring under the same load as they had patiently borne so long. But we venture to think that by depriving the anti-partition agitation of its sole basis in fact, the Government would have also reduced the volume and force of that agitation. That Lord Curzon did not choose to do so was a blunder, and both the people and the Government have paid dearly for that blunder.

But it is not so easy to correct administrative blunders as it is to commit them. It is not always possible for Governments to sin in a hurry and repent at leisure. It will serve no useful purpose to discuss in greater detail what might have been. We must, therefore, concentrate our attention on what has been, what is, and what should be. To-day the Government of India have issued a fiat that the old Partition should be annulled and a new one carried out. We have already dealt with the manner in which the Government have acted and we shall only add that in undoing the Partition of Lord Curzon they have adopted a despotic procedure from which even Lord Curzon would have

shrunk. His Partition was carried out on the 16th October 1905 ; but he began his attempt to carry public opinion along with him in the middle of a heavy legislative session as early as in 1904. He found time for a tour through the districts most directly affected by his territorial redistribution. At Chittagong, at Dacca and at Mymensingh he gave exhaustive expositions of his measure. Even then public opinion attributed to Lord Curzon and Mr. Brodrick (now Lord Midleton)—and rightly so—a desire to rush through a far-reaching scheme of Partition. What is, then, one to say of the Government of Lord Hardinge and of the Marquis of Crewe, who never gave an opportunity to the public to have the least say in the matter, and have asked it to face another 'accomplished fact' in December, in a matter for the first time referred to the Secretary of State towards the end of September and breathlessly accepted by him in November ? If this is not the homeopathy of despotism, we know not what epithet to apply to it.

The Partition of Lord Curzon could have been rightly modified only on either of two grounds. It could have been declared to have been unrighteous and inequitable in its motives of administratively unsound in its consequences. But, as we shall show later, neither of these contentions have been put forward by the Government or their feeble echo, the Secretary of State. It is true that the Government of India have haltingly attempted to show that the opposition was 'at first based mainly on sentimental grounds', but that 'since the enlargement of the Legislative Councils and especially of the representative element in them the grievance of the Bengalis has become much more real and tangible'. It is no longer a matter of mere sentiment' but 'one of undeniable reality'. We suppose the Government felt that they were required to produce some 'new fact' to upset the 'settled fact' before they could satisfy the conditions imposed on the Bengalis by Lord Morley, and in their search for that rarity discovered that only the enlargement of the legislatures could be passed into service if the 'bomb' had to be the scrupulously avoided. We heartily sympathise with the difficulties of the Government and are

even prepared to say that it was not abject fear that mainly actuated them to modify Partition. But the last factor which could have entered into their calculations was the reforms. It is true that Lord Curzon could not have contemplated them ; but, then, Lord Morley had them clearly at the back of his mind when he refused to touch the Partition even with a pair of tongs. Moreover, the reforms have not converted a majority into a minority or *vice versa*. When the Hindus of Bengal became minorities both in Eastern and Western Bengal, their influence became that of minorities, albeit educated, wealthy, solid and assertive minorities. The reforms only affected them so far as to make all representation direct as well as more extensive. If anything, the reforms provided safeguards for minorities of which the Hindus of Bengal could have availed themselves if they had chosen. The 'substantial grievance' of the Hindus of Bengal that as minorities they 'can never exercise in either province that influence to which they consider themselves entitled by reason of their numbers, wealth and culture' is one which is shared with them by Mussulmans in most other parts of India. In Sindh, for instance, the Mussulmans cannot exercise the influence to which their wealth and numbers entitle them, because they are yoked to the wholly dissimilar provinces of Guzerat and Deccan in the Bombay Presidency, and not joined to Baluchistan and Western Punjab, to which linguistic and ethnic affinity point as the proper yoke-fellows of Sindh. In short, there never was a question of equity and righteousness-to which we are told, no law of limitation is applicable so far as the Partition was concerned. But if there existed these supreme ethical considerations, then, we submit, that the time to pay heed to them was soon after the 5th of December 1905, when the Liberals came into power, even if the Unionists had passed them by on the 16th October of the same year. 'Honest John', who cared for these things, had succeeded Mr. St. John Brodrick, the heedless Gallio of the Unionists. The British Government could then have re-considered the question in all its bearings, and could have soothed the qualms of conscience by stepping forward boldly and announcing that even if they had not always been as wise as

Solomon and had sometimes blundered badly, they were honest enough and bold enough to confess their blunders and rectify them. Then all this waste of Indian money and official energy, all this Bengali agitation, and consequent anarchy would have been prevented. But then Lord Morley, although he did not share with Lord Curzon the belief that the 'inconvenient storm of public opinion' was machine made and 'the work of political wire-puller and political agitators, and although he was disposed to agree with those who thought that the Hindus of Bengal had in their minds 'a distinct feeling that they were going to suffer a great wrong and inconvenience', declared that the Partition could not be annulled or modified, and, in the words of the *Bengalee*, showed that it was immaterial whether Liberals or Conservatives were in power, that there was but one party which governs India in which all distinctions between Liberals and Conservatives and Unionists are merged—the party which will not re-consider a mistake, even if admitted as such, on the ground that it was a 'settled fact'. Our contemporary wrote at the time that 'to-day we stand in the unhappy position of having lost all faith in both political parties in England. If Mr. Morley can act so what may we not expect of others, of men who have never cared for principles in politics and who have made office the aim of their ambition?' What that we could assure our contemporary that the faith lost through a Morley has been resorted at last—as long last—through a Crewe. It is not because the Partition of a Curzon was unjust and inequitable that the Partition of a Hardinge has been sanctioned by the same Liberal Government.

If not inequitable in its motive and design, has it been a failure in its consequences? Unless we believe in a statement which is either too rebelliously original to be true or too platitudinous to be useful in practice, the Government do not acknowledge failure. By publishing a despatch obviously intended from the very beginning for public consumption in India rather than for conveying a sceptical or unbelieving Secretary of State and Cabinet in England, the Government have deprived

themselves not only of the chance of being glorified as intensely righteous, but also of an opportunity to establishing their courageous candour in confessing errors. There is not a word in the whole despatch about the financial embarrassment of the administration, the unsatisfactory result of yoking Assam with a part of Bengal, or about the difficulties of communication between the Rajshahi Division and Dacca. The Partition is acknowledged to have fulfilled 'two of the chief purposes which its authors had in view.' It is stated to have relieved the over-burdened administration of Bengal and to have given 'the Mahommedan population of Eastern Bengal advantages and opportunities of which they had perhaps hitherto not had their fair share.' But when a paragraph or two later, the Government of India come to 'sum up', they declare with the utmost boldness that 'the results anticipated from the Partition have not been altogether realised.' That is a judgment which none but a despotic bureaucracy could have inferred from the premises that 'much good work has been done in Eastern Bengal and Assam' and that 'the Mahommedans of that province have reaped the benefit of a sympathetic administration closely in touch with them.' We fear we can see in this reversion and the reasoning that is expected to recommend it neither righteousness nor the saving grace of a sturdy commonsense.

What then has induced the Government to modify the Partition? Is it fear? One of the four indispensable requirements of a settlement which would be 'satisfactory and conclusive' is, according to the Government themselves, that it must be so clearly based upon broad grounds of political and administrative expediency as to negative any presumption that it has been exacted by clamour or agitation. This is so obviously true that we would not have even referred to it had not the Government done their mighty best to disprove it themselves. How else is one to interpret para 9 of the despatch of the Government of India? It says:

"Various circumstances have forced upon us the conviction that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the Partition

of Bengal is very widespread and unyielding, and that we are by no means at an end of the troubles which have followed upon that measure. Eastern Bengal and Assam have no doubt benefited greatly by the Partition and the Mahommedans of the province, who form a large majority of the population, are loyal and contented, but the resentment amongst the Bengalis in both the provinces of Bengal, who hold most of the land, fill the professions and exercise a preponderating influence in public affairs is as strong as ever, though somewhat less vocal."

Again, in para 13, the Government of India, referring to the Partition, state that

"It relieved the overburdened administration of Bengal, and it gave the Mahommedan population of Eastern Bengal advantages and opportunities of which they had, perhaps hitherto not had their fair share. On the other hand, as we have already pointed out, it was deeply resented by the Bengalis."

In para 15 also the 'violent hostility' of the Bengalis is the dominant theme.

"Although much good work has been done in Eastern Bengal and Assam, and the Mahommedans of that province have reaped the benefit of a sympathetic administration closely in touch with them, those advantages have been in a great measure counterbalanced by the violent hostility which the Partition has aroused among the Bengalis."

In effect the Government wish us to believe that although the new province had benefited greatly from the Partition, and that justice was at last done to its Moslem population which is loyal and contented, all these advantages were sufficiently counterbalanced by 'the resentment among the Bengalis', by 'the bitterness of feeling' which was 'very widespread and unyielding', and by their 'violent hostility', to

have induced the Government to modify the Partition in the manner in which they have done. If these clear statements to the direct country are sufficient 'to negative any presumption that it has been exacted by clamour and agitation,' then surely words have lost their meaning or mankind has lost its senses. After all, the test of these things is not the convictions of the Government but what the people themselves believe, and if the Government wish to verify their own opinions and beliefs, they have not far to go. To use the immortal phrase of Lord Macaulay, which, however, has lost some of its force in these days in Bengal, 'every schoolboy knows' that it is 'clamour and agitation' that have exacted the modification of the Partition. It is impossible to convince any sane Indian to-day that 'clamour and agitation' do not pay in Indian politics. Some are even inclined to think that agitation gains rather than loses if it has a slight flavour of force, and, more for the sake of our own countrymen than of our Government, we trust that even if the main proposition is universally accepted, the mischievous rider would prove wholly unconvincing.

But whatever influence 'clamour and agitation' may have had, we are convinced that they do not form the main motive of the measure. For it is not the modification of the Partition but the transfer of the metropolis that has been mainly aimed at. For reasons which the Government of India have explained fairly and frankly, though not exhaustively, they decided to shift the Capital from Calcutta, and in order to do this with as little opposition from Bengal as possible they discovered in the modification of the Partition the necessary sugar-coating for a bitter pill. That fatal doctrine with which European foreign politics has familiarised us to the extent of downright moral contempt, has, it seems, now peacefully penetrated itself into internal administration as well. It was the great Doctrine of Compensation which gave Morocco to France, and all but gave Tripoli to Italy. To-day it gives the rescission of the Partition to Bengal. This is the full significance of the opening sentence of the Government of India's despatch, and the true explanation of the reasons why these 'two questions of great

political moment' are in their opinion 'indissolubly linked together'. As His Majesty's announcement declares, it is only 'as a consequence of that transfer' that the Partition is modified. In para 7 of their despatch, the Government openly declared that the Bengalis 'should be reconciled to the change by other features of our scheme which are specially designed to give satisfaction to Bengali sentiment.' It is the 'proposal to make Delhi the future Capital of India' that is 'the keystone of the whole project', and in spite of all that is said about the widespread and unyielding bitterness of feeling in Bengal, the Government of India were not at all prepared to modify the Partition if Delhi was not made the capital. 'According, as it is accepted or not, our scheme must stand or fall.' In other words, the ideal partition is not like virtue its own reward, but only the price of a transfer of the Capital. The Marquis of Crewe is even franker, and in para 7 of his despatch states openly that it is no more that 'the compensation which will be offered to Bengali sentiment' for 'the objections to the transfer which are likely to be entertained in some quarters.' The cat is at last out of the bag. But, then, why all this long-drawn sermon on the genesis and results of the Partition, and the sanctimonious talk of Bengalis 'labouring under a sense of real injustice which we believe it would be sound policy to remove without further delay?' It is bad enough to treat the people as a pack of school children, but worse still to believe them to be fools as well.

Now, it is characteristic of the Doctrine of Compensation that it must be paid out of one's plenty but out of the bare necessities of one's poorest neighbour. And India has been no exception to the rule. As Shelley had said, here, too,

The weak one is singled
To endure what it once posseset.

The Mussulman of Eastern Bengal, to whose claims we shall refer in detail in a later issue, were the only people who happened to be 'loyal and contended'. What could be easier than to politely disburden the loyal and contended Peter of his

few worldly belongings in order to load the discontented if not disloyal Paul with rewards and compensations? The Mussulmans have no Panther to send to Agadir, and it is too well-established a rule of diplomacy that no Panther, no compensation.

III*

In dealing with the treatment of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal last week, we had occasion to refer to the Doctrine of Compensation which seems to have travelled beyond the limits of foreign affairs and to have peacefully penetrated into internal administration. We had occasion to mention that the Mussulmans had no *Panther* to be sent to Agadir, and that it was too well-established a rule of diplomacy that no *Panther*, no compensation. Not that the Government are wholly callous. They have evidently not reached *that* stage yet. There are times when they believe they 'could not defraud the legitimate expectations of the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal who form the bulk of the population of that province and who have been loyal to the British Government throughout the troubles' without exposing themselves to the charge of 'bad faith'. But while the charge of bad faith towards the Mussulmans is the skeleton in the cupboard, the Government of India have not been so indiscreet as to leave that dreadful receptacle unlocked.. The charge of bad faith does not push them from their stools like the ghost of Banquo. They salve over their conscience with the comforting thoughts that 'the Mahommedan would still be in a position of approximate numerical equality with, or possibly of small superiority over the Hindus', that Dacca would be another Lucknow, the second capital of the new Governor-in-Council, and that 'the interests of the Mahommedans will be safeguarded by the special representation which they enjoy in the Legislative Councils.

Now, as regards the first 'wooden spoon', surely the Government of India are not themselves, nor consider the

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Mussulman to be, so obtuse as to regard approximate numerical equality with, or possibly small superiority over, the Hindus' as the equivalent of a two-thirds majority? They could not have forgotten that when the Government of the United Provinces proposed to increase Moslem representation in local bodies from a seventh to a fifth, every Hindu paper throughout India began a vigorous campaign against that Government and silenced the official batteries within a month. If a reduction of 7 per cent in the Hindu majority in local bodies of the United Provinces was a sufficient *casus belli*, surely the reduction of more than 14 per cent in the Moslem majority in the Provincial Council of United Bengal is large enough to disturb Moslem equanimity.

As regards the 'second Lucknow' argument, may not Dacca, which is more than 16 hours' journey from Calcutta and involves two changes, be a second Bankipore rather, which was after all only half that distance and still remained unvisited by the Lieutenant-Governor of Western Bengal. Moreover, one is not sure that an arrangement which would make the Government peripatetic as in the United Provinces would be an improvement on the cold neglect of Dacca in the good old days. In the United Provinces there is hardly any public opinion to control, or at least guide, the bureaucracy, and it is our conviction that this is so partly because the United Provinces have a locomotive administration.

There is still the sheet-anchor of the Government, the separate representation of the Mussulmans. With the redistribution of the areas nobody knows what new proportion Moslem representation may assume in Bengal, and a bird in hand is generally worth several in a bush. But even assuming that this safeguard is adequate, could it not have protected so wealthy and cultured a minority as the Hindus of Bengal? Why did not the Government assure them that even if they were 'labouring under a sense of real injustice', it could have been removed by their utilising the safeguards of the minorities even better than by a modification of the Partition? As a

matter of fact, as we shall show later, the Hindus of Bengal have been amply protected in both the Councils of divided Bengal. But there is still another and a greater consideration. Who can now be persuaded that Lord Minto's Separate Representation will not follow Lord Curzon's Partition on the primrose way to the ever-lasting bonfire? The Government of Lord Hardinge have given their pledge no doubt; but then Lord Minto had pledged still more clearly and solemnly that separate and adequate representation would be accorded to the Mussulmans in local bodies as well. More than five years have passed and the pledge is still unredeemed. But why need we go so far? Was not the Partition of Bengal to be looked upon as a 'settled fact'? When another Liberal M.P. said the democracy was entirely opposed to and would resist the doctrine of the settled fact, what was it that the great Liberal, Lord Morley, told us? He said in the House of Commons:

"Now if that be so, I am very sorry for democracy. I do not agree with my hon. friend. I think democracy will be just as reasonable as any other sensible form of government, and I do not believe democracy will for a moment think that you are to rip up a settlement of an administrative or constitutional question because it jars with some abstract or *a-priori* idea. I for one certainly say that I would not remain at the India Office or any other powerful responsible departmental office, on condition that I made short work of settled facts, hurried on with my catalogue of first principles, and arranged on those principles the whole duties of Government."

This was what Lord Morley had pledged himself to less than four years ago. But what a mockery are those words today. Remember, it is not only this that democracy has ripped up the settlement of an administrative question while the Liberals are still in power, and Lord Morley, if not at the India Office, still holds a powerful and responsible office in the Cabinet. There is something far more unsettling than the ripping up of a settled fact. It is the platitude of the Govern-

ment of India that Government schemes 'could only be justified by success', and the revolutionary doctrine that success signifies nothing more or less than the satisfaction of those that know how to clamour and agitate. In the light of these two doctrines is there any pledge that can be considered sacred? That which assured the Mussulmans about their separate representation certainly cannot. Whosoever may regard separate Moslem representation as a settled fact, those at any rate who opposed the Partition do not regard it as such. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar had exhausted the resources of polemics last Easter at Bareilly in opposing that safeguard of minorities and more than anything else it was the vigour of that attack which cleared the way for his leadership of this year's Congress. The same old arguments are repeated in his Presidential Address that have resounded from other political platforms, while all arguments that go to show why a defenceless minority was forced to apply for a partition of the franchise are ignored in the approved way of the Congress. We think we had dealt adequately with Mr. Dar after Easter, and whatever may be his feelings about Christians, we must confess, we have no heart to go over the old ground once more. All that we need say here is that he claims that the principle of communal representation has been 'denounced by the whole country', that its approval only by a section of the Mahommedans is supported by their interpreting 'a certain passage in Lord Minto's speech to the All-India Mahommedan deputation in their own way', that 'injustice was done to the Hindus but they remained quiet', that the arguments favouring a modification of the fallacious test of numbers in politics have been 'tricked out in costume of shame history', that history is like the child's box of the letters of alphabet which you may arrange in any way', that 'the Hindus will never tolerate' such arguments, that 'they shall never rest contented so long as that humiliation is not removed', that 'Mr. (now Sir Lewis) Jenkins, the Home Member, perpetuated a cynical joke at their expense when to Mr. Malaviya's Resolution he replied that before Government could undertake to correct the disproportionate representation

of Mahommedans, the Hindus must first convert the Mahommedans to their view', and that 'it is official pronouncements like this which compromise the strict equity of British rule'. One can see that the clamour and the agitation are there just the same. So also is 'the growing estrangement' between Hindus and Mussulmans for which the Government of India have shown a refreshing concern in their despatch. Only the customary symptoms of 'a very widespread and unyielding bitterness of feeling' against the Government are apparently required to make the Government rip up another settlement.

It is undeniable that the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal laboured under many difficulties before the partition was carried out. They were for the most part the descendants of the depressed classes of Hindus, and the although Islam had improved their social status, their conversion had added to the ignominy of the low-caste the reproach of the renegade. They were also tenants and wage-earning labourers, and that too, in a permanently settled area. Above all, they were ignorant and helpless. Yet they endured all this quietly and as only the weakest of the weak can endure. It was not they who had clamoured and agitated for the Partition. But the Partition came to them as a well-deserved though wholly unexpected blessing. Their condition began to improve and with that their ambitions and hopes. It may even be confessed that like all *nouveaux riches*, these political *parvenus* sometimes held their heads too high and strutted about in the peacock vein. But like the exaltation born of a draught of haschish, it did not last long, and the reaction has come with a suddenness that is terrible. The emancipated slaves are once more sold into bondage, and who does not know that revenge is sweet? Their old masters who are once more in the position of the slave-driver will be more than human if they do not use the lash and the bastinado a little lavishly. And this is the boon which the Government of India have in their unaided judgment and with a full throated laudation of their generosity conferred on the 'loyal and contented Mussulmans'. Well could they have said with the poet, in anticipation of this boom : (Let us see what

boons the lovers receive from the idols of their affections. A Brahman has declared that this would be an auspicious year !)

The questions are what should the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal do at this juncture, and what should the Government do to break their fall ? We have considered in the course of the last three weeks every advice that has been offered to the Mussulmans, and we may add that we ourselves have not escaped those impulses of the moment to which the announcement gave rise. We trust we shall be charged neither with sycophancy nor with callousness for the wrongs of the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal if in adding our own counsel to those of others we declare that in our judgment the Mussulmans should accept the decision of the Government. But while this is our advice to the Mussulmans, we cannot conceal the fact that it is the Government of India that stand more in need of friendly counsel than the people whom they have apparently ignored. They must temper the wind to the shorn lamb. It is not enough to secure to the Mussulmans a majority of about two millions in a population of 42 millions. Even to-day in the Provincial Council of Western Bengal there are only 6 Mussulmans out of 32 non-officials, and 4 of these owe their seats to the separate electorates which Mr. Bishan Narayan Dar would regard merely as a cynical joke of the Government. From Bengal itself only two Mussulmans were elected, as against 11 non-Moslems, and in the Government nominations too the 'favourite wife' failed to secure even a single seat, while the termagant obtained three, including the Hon. Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, who is a host in himself. One would have thought that in Eastern Bengal at least the Moslem majority would assert itself. But the Mussulmans number not more than 8 out of 24 non-officials in the Council of that Province. Of these 4 owe their seats to the separate electorates, which on paper ought not to have been necessary to protect a 66 per cent majority and two Mussalman of the influence of Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur and Nawab Syed Nawab Ali have come in through the back door of nomination. Taking both these Councils together, we find that out of 44

lected members, only 12 are Mahomedans, 8 of whom owe their seats to separate electorates, and that out of 12 nominated non-officials only two are Mussulmans. Thus, out of an aggregate of 56 non-elected or nominated, the Mussulmans number 14, or a mere fourth.

When the area represented by these 56 members is redistributed we doubt whether the Mussulmans of the new Province of Bihar would secure an average of four Mussulmans to eight Hindus which they have now obtained. But, howsoever Bihar Mussalman may fare, those of the two portions of Bengal will find it impossible to secure more than the 10 seats that they now possess out of a total of 40 non-officials, as against 21 Hindus. It must be remembered that all that the Government promise to the Mussulmans in Bengal is 'a position of approximate numerical equality with, or possibly of small superiority over, the Hindus'. It is only the re-grouping of the population that will take place and nothing more. Following the lines of that re-grouping, we find that, other things remaining the same, the Mussulmans of Bengal, in spite of their approximate numerical equality with, or possibly a small superiority over, the Hindus, will secure no more than a 25 per cent representation in the Legislative Council of re-united Bengal. As regards the Imperial Council, Bihar has now one Hindu and one Muslim, and the two Bengals three Hindus and three Mussulmans. But it must be remembered that the Hon. Mr. Ghuznavi owes his seat to the spin of the coin. In the ordinary course, therefore, Bengal Mussulmans can expect at the present ratio no higher a ratio of representation than 7 to 9, and this after the Moslem interests are safeguarded to some extent by the separate Moslem electorates existing side by side with joint territorial electorates.

It will be premature at this stage to suggest details of any future rearrangement, but we think we shall not be asking too much for the Mussulmans if we demanded some security both in the Provincial and the Imperial Legislatures the Mussulmans will for a certainty have a few seats more than those that may

fall to the Hindus, and this chiefly by election. We may only add that this will never be possible without the introduction of the principle of separate communal electorates in local bodies. If superior wealth and education count for anything in the struggle for supremacy, a 50 per cent representation will afford to the Hindus of Bengal a good enough opportunity of making their influence felt. After all, when the Hindus of Bengal numbered no more than a fourth of the total population of the old undivided Province, they could not only lord it over the Mussulmans of the Province but also crush the Hindus of Bihar, Orissa, and Chhota Nagpur. With their present wealth and education they should be the last to grumble if the possible Mussulman majority gets an equality of representation with them.

The second necessary safeguard is that for all posts in the gift of the Government of Bengal a minimum qualification should be fixed, and so long as the numerical proportion of the Mussulmans is not exhausted none but Mussulmans with the fixed minimum qualification should be employed. If Mussulmans with such qualifications are not available within the limits of the Province, they should be imported from the neighbouring provinces. Unless this is done, it will be impossible to destroy the Upas tree of the monopolist under which no other vegetation has yet prospered. Similarly, the Indian member of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal should alternately be Moslem and Hindu. It is no secret that a Mahommedan official of Bengal of considerable talents had to be thrust back because another Mahommedan of Bengal had been selected for a still higher appointment. This shows that it is not necessarily the best man that is always selected. In view of the fact that all the three appointments to the Provincial Executive Councils were those of Hindus, the new post in Bihar and the first vacancy in Bengal should go to Mussulmans.

We must admit that this looks like seeking shelter behind the Government when all communities should learn to put

their trust in themselves. But it is our belief that taking their historical position into consideration, Mussulmans in Bengal as in the North, have not had an equal opportunity with other communities. They were allowed to waste their energies in a vain endeavour to find sustenance out of the dry bones of some of their ancient learning to the absolute neglect of modern studies, and, what is far more important, modern methods of study. The Madrasah system of Bengal is a standing reproach to the indifference and neglect of Government, and we see no hope for the Mussulmans if this system is allowed to continue. The least that the Government should do at this juncture is to open a first grade modern residential College for the Mussulmans at Calcutta and another at Dacca, which should be worked on the lines of Aligarh. The Durbar grant of 50 lakhs for education, taken together with the Opium windfall of last year some of which is earmarked for the same purpose, cannot be too small an allotment to permit the erection of such Colleges. What strict equity demands is that for the next thirty years at least the educational budget of the Mussulmans should separate and a *pro rata* allotment should be made for Moslem and Hindu primary, secondary and collegiate education, for girls as well as for boys. It is manifestly unjust that the Number of Mussulman students admitted into the Presidency College at Calcutta should be strictly and even ungenerously limited when the Mussulmans have no College such as the Hindu College exclusively for their use. Nor is it equitable that liberal aid should be denied or delayed to girls' schools opened by Mahommedans on the plea that there is no saving in the Budget on account of the growing requirements of the Bethune College which is practically of as little use to Moslem ladies as Girton or Lady Margaret's Hall. We remember a cartoon in a Bombay paper depicting the Governor of Bombay as informing a Moslem politician dressed like a boy that he must first climb up the ladder of education before he could reach desirable toys such as high Government appointments. There certainly was not much humour in this cartoon as it was originally conceived, but it has amply been supplied by the Government of more than one Province which has left the toys on the high

shelf, but has removed the ladder. And of no Government is this truer than of the Government of Bengal which reserves most of its niggardlines for its friends and so-called favourites. If the Government of India and the Secretary sincerely desire to see the Mussulmans qualifying themselves for the high offices and the representation on Councils to which their numbers entitle them, they will have to demand from the Local Government an annual report about the progress of Moslem Education in Bengal, and a more careful attention on the part of the Bengal Government to the programme of reform prepared by the Mahomedan Educational Conference. The Department of Public Instruction has taken the high road all these years. It is not time to take the lower road pointed out by the Mussulmans themselves and to see if that would take them to Scotland any earlier ?

But it is essential that all these concessions should be announced immediately and that the announcement should come from His Majesty himself. The Government must have learnt from the agitation against the Partition the lesson that the longer a wrong, real or supposed, remains unredressed the more difficult becomes the redress. It will be no statesmanship to delay an obvious act of justice so long that agitation on a colossal scale is commenced, and while much bad blood is needlessly created, all grace is removed from the act of righting the wrong. He who gives at once give twice, and we trust the Government will give at once. The mere fact the Mussulmans of Bengal retain an insignificant and unfruitful majority instead of a majority of two-thirds in Eastern Bengal will not certainly allay their rising discontent. Nor what we have suggested as balancing concessions can be called 'adventitious assistance'. At any rate, it is idle to expect that the restoration of Delhi which is not only 'the ancient capital of the Moghals' but also 'intimately associated in the minds of the Hindus with sacred legends which go back even beyond the dawn of history', as the Government of India rightly remind us—would itself be regarded as sufficient boon to the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal 'in common with others of their

faith' to make them forget the primary consideration, which is concerned with 'the local aspect of the proposals'. A perusal of the despatches makes us conscious of the fact that neither the Government of India nor the Secretary of State regard in their heart of hearts the absence of all compensation to the 'loyal and contented Mussulmans' as a satisfactory feature of their great scheme. But if it is not merely an unfruitful sentiment, we are confident that our suggestions would supply to the Government just those complimentary concessions which would thoroughly justify Lord Crew's proud boast that 'regarding it as a whole, and appreciating the balance sought to be maintained between the different races, classes, and interests likely to be affected, I cannot recall in history, nor can I picture in any portion of the civilized world as it now exists, a series of administrative changes of so wide a scope, culminating in the transfer of the main seat of Government, carried out, as I believe the future will prove, with so little detriment to any class of the community, while satisfy the historical sense of millions, aiding the general work of Government, and removing the deeply felt grievance of many.' But, on the contrary, if the Mussulmans of Eastern Bengal are left with a nominal majority, friendless and unprotected, it will not be possible to discover in history a more ignoble instance of rewarding loyalty with deprivation of recently recovered rights and punishing contentment as worst of crimes.

**LETTER FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE
CENTRAL NATIONAL MAHOMMEDAN
ASSOCIATION TO THE VICEROY**

(24 January 1912)

'The committee feel that they would be ill discharging their duty to the Mussulman community, whose wants, feelings and opinion they have humbly striven faithfully to represent to the authorities for the last thirty-five years and also to the Government whose permanent and beneficent stability they recognise as essential not only for the protection of Islamic interests but

for the peaceful progress of India, if they failed at this critical juncture in the history of the Muslim fate in Bengal to bring to the notice of the Government that in consequence of the modification of the Partition a feeling of widespread apprehension pervades the Mahommedan community that their interests especially in Eastern Bengal may be injuriously affected unless definite safeguards in respect of certain matters are at once adopted. It were idle for the committee to take up bold controversies on the subject of the Partition or to refer to the great sacrifices Mussulmans have to make in not joining the anti-partition movement and in loyally standing by the Government during the storm and stress of recent years or to dilate on the assurances by His Excellency Lord Curzon's Government that Mahommedan interests would be safeguarded by the Partition, as these are matters which admit of no controversy and are in a manner echoed in the recent Government despatch on the subject of the territorial changes in India. It is true that at first this association in Lord Curzon's time, when asked for an expression of opinion on the question of Partition thought fit to raise its voice against the contemplated partition, but subsequently acquiesced in it on the strength of the assurances subsequently given by His Excellency Lord Curzon's Government regarding the protection of Muslim interests and as a matter of fact the committee find that Muslim interests in East Bengal have been adequately safeguarded, nay advanced, by the Partition.'

The despatch of the Government of India annulling the partition is then quoted in support of this view and the committee ask that this safeguarding shall be continued. They submit five proposals among which are that half the Indian members on the Governor's Legislative Council shall be Mahommedans, that the Indian members on the Governor's Executive Councils should be one Hindu and one Mahommedan. If this be found unfeasible, the appointment should go alternately to a Hindu and to a Mahommedan. That on district boards, local boards, and municipalities the numbers of the Hindu and Muslim representatives should always be a proportion

to the numerical strength of the Mahommedan and Hindu populations respectively in each district and sub-division and municipality. That the distribution of State patronage in all departments and offices for the whole presidency of Bengal should be regulated by the same standard of numerical population and half of the appointments open to Indians should be allotted to Mussulmans and half to Hindus. A standard of an irreducible minimum qualification should be laid down and so long as Mussulmans satisfy, this standard they should be employed in proportion to the numerical strength.

The Committee further propose that the allotments of provincial grants for education in Bengal should be separately made in equal shares for Hindus and Mahommedans respectively. As matters now stand, the bulk of the provincial grant goes year after year towards the education of Hindus by reason of their preponderating influence in public affairs. Finally, as regards the district board and the municipal allotment for education, the Committee desire that it should be divided amongst Hindus and Mahommedans according to their respective numerical proportions in each district and under each municipality.

The letter closes as follows : 'The committee feel assured that His Excellency would not willingly allow the loyal Mussulman community in Bengal by reason of the modification of the partition to relapse into an unhealthy condition of decadence, depression and despair, a condition which would be injurious to the community and far from conducive to the interests of the Empire. The committee venture to think that should their prayers be granted by His Excellency a great and loyal community with historic traditions will, despite the modification of the Partition, be afforded a fair field for peaceful advancement and progress side by side with the great Hindu community under the aegis of the beneficent British Crown and will never cease to bless His Excellency for dealing fairly, wisely and legitimately with Mussulman claims.'

**THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA AND THE
MAHOMMEDANS*****A RECORD OF CONFLICTING STATEMENTS**

The details of Indian life and administration are too complex to be readily understood by anyone not familiarised therewith by residence in the country or constant study of them, and when, as in the problem of the position of the Mahommedan community in connection with the establishment of an electoral system, one proposal after another has been put forward as constituting the official solution the situation is likely to be misapprehended even by persons ordinarily well-informed on Indian affairs. They may reasonably be inclined to assume that the solution has been reached when the Viceroy of India concludes a telegraphic exposition of the latest plan of the Government of India with a declaration that, in his view, their proposals 'do reasonably fulfil the pledges given to Mahommedans'. Unhappily, however, the opinion of His Excellency on this matter is not borne out by a survey of those pledges, and the circumstances under which they were made. The purpose of this pamphlet is not to reargue a case for justice to the Mahommedans, again and again set forth both here and in India, but to give a connected view of the frequent and unhappily, conflicting, official statements on the subject, so as to make clear to every unprejudiced reader that the Indian Mahommedans have been taken to the verge of the Land of Promise but have not been given possession. The results of this failure to fulfil repeated pledges, if it is adhered to, must be injurious not only to the community immediately concerned, but also to India as a whole, as well as to British prestige in the East; and hence the present chronological record calls for the attentive consideration of the Press, of members of the Legislature, and of other public men to whom it is addressed.

*Issued by the London Branch of the All-India Muslim League, 28 May, 1909.

The First Pledge

It is well known that the first definite pledge on which the Indian Mahommedans rely in connection with the Reforms was given by the Viceroy in reply to a representative deputation of leading Mahommedans from all parts of India, introduced by His Highness the Agha Khan, which waited on His Excellency at Simla on 1st October 1906. A committee of the Executive Council, had at that time been appointed to consider the question of an expansion of the Indian Legislatures and other reforms in the direction of giving the people a larger voice in the conduct of affairs, general, provincial and local. In the address presented to His Excellency, the deputation drew attention to the importance of adequate recognition of the numbers and influence of the Moslem community in any such reforms. It was urged that :

“The position accorded to the Mahommedan community in any kind of representation, direct or indirect, and in all other ways affecting their status and influence, should be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance, and the value of the contribution which they make to the defence of the Empire ; and we also hope that Your Excellency will, in this connection, be pleased to give due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago, and of which the traditions have naturally not faded from their minds.”

Detailed methods of fulfilling this principle was suggested not only in respect to the Legislatures, but also in regard to local self-governing bodies. It was suggested that the local authority—in other words the Provincial Government—should, in every case, be required to declare the number of Hindus and Mahommedans entitled to seats on municipal and district boards, such proportion to be determined in accordance with the numerical strength, social status, local influence and special requirements of either community ; and that the elections should be separate.

His Excellency's reply contained an explicit endorsement of the principle thus laid down, and gave the utmost satisfaction to the deputation, and when published, to the millions for whom the Agha Khan and his colleagues spoke, Lord Minto said it was manifestly impossible to go into the actual details laid before him, though these would be submitted to the Committee of his Council he had appointed to consider the question of representation. But he could reply to the general tenor of their remarks :

“The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a Legislative Council in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahommedan candidate, and that, if by chance they did so, it could only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me ; I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced, as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent. The great mass of the people of India have no knowledge of representative institutions. I agree with you, gentlemen, that the initial rungs in the ladder of self-government are to be found in the municipal and district boards, and that it is in that direction that we must look for the gradual political education of the people. In the meantime I can only say to you that the Mahommedan community may rest assured that their

political rights and interests as a community will be safeguarded in any administrative reconstruction with which I am concerned, and that you and the people of India may rely upon the British Raj to respect, as it has been its pride to do, the religious beliefs and the national traditions of myriads composing the population of His Majesty's Indian Empire."

The Pledge Affirmed

The first official document published in connection with the Reform scheme was the circular letter to Local Governments, dated Simla, 24th August 1907, outlining the provisional proposals of the Governor-General in-Council as a result of the labours of the Committee already mentioned. In paragraph 16 of the arguments of the deputation of the previous October were quoted with approval, and 'special stress' was laid on his Excellency's observations as to the mischief of a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population. It was admitted that in the past the representation of the Mahommedan community, even though supplemented by nomination had been incommensurate with the weight to which it was entitled. It was suggested that in addition to the small number of seats the Mahommedans might be able to secure in the ordinary manner, it would be desirable in each of the Councils to assign a certain number of seats to be filled exclusively by Mahommedans.

In submitting to the Secretary of State their scheme of reforms, revised in the light of constant public discussion of the draft plan, the Government of India, in the despatch of 1st October 1908, were able to report that 'all local Governments approve of the proposals for the special representation of Mahommedans which were made in our letter of 2th August 1907.' It was pointed out that in some provinces there would be difficulties in the way of a separate Mahommedan electorate, owing to want of organisation, to paucity of numbers of qualified persons, or to scattered residence. But the Government of India clearly contemplated separate electorates as the normal and most satisfactory condition of things.

We would deal with the question in the same way as we have proposed to deal with the representation of landholders. Our view is that in provinces where election by a regular Mahommedan electorate is feasible, that method should be adopted ; that Mahommedan associations should be made use of where electorates cannot be formed ; and that nomination by Government should be resorted to where neither of the first two methods are practicable. It will be for the Local Government to determine, in consultation with the leaders of the Mahommedan community which plan should be adopted. (Para 30).

Thus both in the draft and the revised scheme of the Government of India there was retention of the principle of separate communal representation, and it was laid down that wherever elections were found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedans. Yet in the telegram read to the House of Lords, on 4th May, Lord Minto speaks of this as impracticable, and asserts that he does not understand it to be claimed by any Mahommedans in India.

Lord Morley's Suggested Plan

It will be in the recollection of all interested in this question, that in his despatch on 27th November 1908, replying to the Government of India, Lord Morley 'without rejecting the various expedients suggested by His Excellency for adoption,' in order to secure the adequate representation of the Mahommedans, suggested for consideration a plan of electoral colleges, to which a fixed proportion of Mahommedans and Hindus in the ratio of population should be returned, and which should elect to the Legislature of the province representatives for the two communities in like proportion. His Lordship remarked that among other advantages such a plan would bring the classes specially concerned within the popular electorate, and so meet the criticism of the Hindus, to which you refer in paragraph 30—an observation which, incidentally

affords proof that the Secretary of State understood the plan of the Government of India to be one of election of 'the classes specially concerned' (landowners and Mahommedan) separately from the territorial elections.

His Lordship's suggestion for mixed electoral colleges was immediately followed by the most vigorous protests from the Mahommedans in India and their brethren entitled and expressly authorised to speak for them in this country. Emphatic resolutions on the subject were passed almost simultaneously by the conference of the All-India Moslem League at Amritsar and by the London Branch. The resolution of the latter body, whilst gratefully recognising the value of the Reform scheme as a whole, set forth that 'any method which entrusts the election of Mahommedan representatives to the Viceregal and Provincial Councils to a mixed body of electors would be highly detrimental to Mahommedan interests, and that the only system which would meet the just claims and requirements of His Majesty's Mussalman subjects is the separate election of their own representatives by Mahommedan voters.'

The Deputation and its Sequel

The grounds for this view, and for the alarm and apprehension the mixed electoral college scheme excited in Moslem circles, were focussed in a representation laid before Lord Morley by a deputation of the London Branch on 27th January, headed by the President, Mr. Ameer Ali. In the course of his reply, the Secretary of State sought to reassure his hearers by pointing out that his scheme of mixed electoral colleges was not put forward as a direction to the Government of India, but was in the form of a suggestion for consideration. He said he would discuss their suggestions with the Government of India ; that a separate Mahommedan electorate was not necessarily outside the scope of the despatch, and that while he held that numerical strength should be the main factor

in determining how many representatives should sit for this or the other community, modifying influences might be taken into account in allotting the number of such representatives.

These remarks were regarded as somewhat too vague and indefinite to satisfy the Mahommedans as to the fulfilment of the Viceroy's pledge, and a further pronouncement as a result of discussion between the India Office and the Governor-General in Council was anxiously awaited. It was with the utmost relief that the community and the large body of public opinion in this country supporting their claims read an announcement by the Secretary of State of a decision to 'meet to the full' the requirements of the Mahommedans in respect to the elections. In moving the Second Reading of the Indian Councils Bill in the House of Lords on 23rd February the Secretary of State said :

"The Mahommedans demand... the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahommedans have three, or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore we are not without a parallel for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. These two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet to the full."

This unequivocal declaration, constituting an application in detail of the pledges given by the Viceroy some two and half years earlier, was received with much relief by the Moslem community. Their leaders regarded the battle for their rights at an end, and awaited with every confidence the measures of Government for giving effect to the two vital demands they had put forward. The London Branch of the League promptly conveyed to Lord Morley the grateful thanks of the community ; and took the opportunity to remark that they construed

his Lordship's declaration 'as also applicable to the elections for district, municipal and rural self-governing bodies, as these elections have invariably been included in the Mussulman appeal for adequate and distinct representation.' They asked for further details, and offered to supply any information in their possession calculated to assist in the framing of the scheme.

Opposition and its Results

Although many of the Nationalist political leaders 'had expressed vague and indefinite sympathies with the Moslem claims, the acceptance of them by the Government was the signal for considerable anti-Moslem agitation. Meetings were got up in various centres to 'protest' against the promised fulfilment of long-standing pledges. Mr Surendranath Banerjee and fifteen other leading Nationalist politicians in Calcutta issued a manifesto, declaring the 'innovations' to be dangerous, and what they would 'prefer the abandonment of the entire scheme (of reform) rather than see it carried in its present shape.' The subsidised organ of the Congress party here, and the Parliamentary group connected with that party, were active in pressing for what they were pleased to term the non-recognition of 'creed distinctions'. A hostile amendment to the second reading of the Councils Bill, tabled by Mr. C.J. O'Donnell, asked the House to declare that it could not approve of 'legislation by which it is intended to establish sectarian discrimination, and to apply sectarian tests both to members of Legislative Councils and to the voters who will elect them.' The falsity of the suggestions underlying these words, and of the analogies drawn in the amendment, were pointed out in a pamphlet issued by the London Branch, and evidence was cited to show that the opposition to the election of Mahomedan representatives on a separate register had for its distinct object the subordination of the stable and loyal Mahomedan element to Hindu, or rather Brahmanical, dominancy.

In the debate on the second reading on 1st April, Mr. Buchanan, the Under-Secretary for India, declared the Secretary of State's adhesion to the 'solemn promise' given to the Mahommedans again and again 'that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want.' From that promise, thrice repeated, 'we cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.' The Prime Minister was equally emphatic, and brushes aside the sophistries underlying Mr. O'Donnell's amendment. In reply to some remarks of Lord Percy, he said (Times report) :

"Undoubtedly there will be a separate register for Mahommedans. To us here, at first sight, it looks an objectionable thing, because it discriminates between people and segregates them into classes on the basis of religious creed. I do not think that is a very formidable objection. The distinction between Mahommedan and Hindu is not merely religious, but it cuts deep-down into the traditions of the historic past, and is also differentiated by the habits and social customs of the community."

To these declarations no exception could be taken but when Mr. Buchanan came to details as to the form of fulfilling the pledges, his remarks, as Mr. Ameer Ali observed at a public meeting on the following day, were not of a character to satisfy the community as constituting a complete and genuine fulfilment' (Times report, 3rd April). Mr. Buchanan said that the scheme of joint electoral colleges having been dropped, Mahommedan representation would be maintained in the future in different ways in different provinces :

In some provinces by a system of Mahommedan electorates specially constructed, in other cases by asking Mahommedan associations to name representatives, in others, at any rate for the time, by nomination. He could not give the House full particulars as to the various policies in the various provinces, but with regard to the United Provinces they had assurances

from the Lieutenant-Governor that he held to the scheme proposed in the Blue-book. The substance of that was that of the four Mahommedans who were to be placed on the Legislative Councils of the United Provinces, two would be nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor. With regard to Eastern Bengal, the two Mahommedan representatives who were included in the constitution of the new Council would be put on that Council in accordance with the ideas submitted in the big Blue-book from the Governor of that province—that was to say, certain Mahommedans in Eastern Bengal would be asked to choose representatives. The only other province from which they had a definite recommendation at the present moment was Madras. They were unable to devise a scheme of a Mahommedan electorate and they proposed at any rate at first, to remain with two Mahommedan representatives on that Council by means of nomination (Times report, 2nd April).

In the speech already referred to, Mr. Ameer Ali promptly and clearly stated the objections of the Mahommedan community, and the grounds for them. To again quote the Times report (3rd April) he said :

“For one thing, in every authoritative announcement on behalf of the Mahommedans they had expressed opposition to any resort to the system of nomination instead of election. There was no difficulty, as they had shown in the creation of special Mussulman electorates. Unless their representatives were chosen by themselves instead of by the Government their independence would be questioned, and it would be asserted that they were only voicing the opinions of the Government by whom they had been nominated. With respect to numbers, it was absurd to give only two Mahommedan representatives to Eastern Bengal, where they formed a predominant majority of the population. In spite of this majority in numbers, they were willing to concede that, in view of the wealth and intelligence of the Hindu community, the latter should have a majority of seats in the local Legislature. But they certainly did not contemplate that their own guaranteed

representation would be so utterly inadequate as two members only. Unless the numbers Mr. Buchanan mentioned were greatly augmented, the Mahommedans would not be able to exercise a substantial voice in the deliberation of the Sirkar.”

The First Telegram from the Viceroy

These views were fully endorsed by the Mahommedan leaders in India when information reached them as to the tenor of Mr. Buchanan’s speech. Meanwhile, there was jubilation in the opposite camp. Mr. O’Donnell refrained from moving his amendment, and the Congress organ, *India*, devoted a leader to showing that Lord Morley’s pledges were not to be fulfilled ; that ‘wiser counsels had prevailed’, and that though the scheme was still open to objection, the ship had at least been taken into mid channel. The pressure of advanced Hindu political leaders upon the Indian authorities, now that it was seen that the pledges were not to be fully regarded, was redoubled, and the effect of such pressure was seen when the Committee stage of the Bill was taken on 19th April. The Secretary to the Treasury, Mr. Hobhouse (representing the India Office in the absence, through illness, of Mr. Buchanan) was asked by Earl Percy to reconcile the statements made on the second reading with Lord Morley’s promise that Mahommedan representation should be not merely sufficient, but something in excess of their actual numerical position. Mr. Hobhouse said that the Secretary of State adhered to that declaration ‘in all its fullness and completeness’, but added that the difficulty had been how to provide such representation without unnecessarily increasing the numbers of Legislative Councillors. Communications with the Government of India on this ‘difficult and complicated problem’ had been passing, and, telegraphing on 12th April, the Viceroy said :

“The method proposed is simply that in general electorates, such as municipalities, district boards, and provincial councils, all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together. By this means some, but not sufficient representation,

will be obtained for Mahommedans. In addition, a certain number of seats will be reserved for Mahommedans, and no one but Mahommedans will have a voice in filling them. They may be filled in many ways - by election pure and simple, by election, by associations, by electoral colleges, or by nomination, as the circumstances of each province require. The methods will vary in different provinces, and will be subject to alterations from time to time as experience may dictate."

The Earl of Ronaldshay at once pointed out that elections conducted as suggested would not constitute a fulfilment of the promises given to the Mahommedans, and that it was absurd to suppose that under the system proposed in the telegram they would be able to gain their fair share of representation on the Legislative and other councils. The news of this telegram was received by the Mahommedans in India almost with incredulity, for they could not believe that there would be so great a lapse between the promises of Government and their performance. But incredulity gave place to dismay and bitter disappointment; meetings were held in all parts of the country, and strongly worded resolutions of protest were recorded by various branches of the All-India Moslem League, some of them being telegraphed to this country and published in the newspapers. It is not too much to say that the Moslems felt that they had been betrayed by the Government, and that they were, after all, to be subjected to the dominance of the Hindu majority, and consequently to be a negligible quantity in the shaping of legislation and the influencing of executive action. The overwhelming evidence of this state of feeling could not be passed over by the authorities, and once more the Government of India pledged its word.

Removing Obstacles from the Path

When the Councils Bill came up in the Commons on report, on 26th April, Lord Ronaldshay brought matters to an issue by moving an amendment providing that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation on all representative

bodies should be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahommedan community was to be filled by election, the necessary electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahommedans. Lord Ronaldshay drew attention to published telegrams from important Moslem leaders in India, and said that they showed that the Mahommedans throughout India were suffering from a sense of grievous wrong and injustice. He truly remarked that if the Government followed a course calculated to shake the faith of this great community in their undeviating justice and the inviolability of their word, they would go far to undermine the whole fabric of British rule in Asia. Thereupon, Mr. Hobhouse declared that there had been a misunderstanding of the telegram of 12th April, and that the pledges given were to be adhered to. He went on to say :

“Looking to the size of India and the different customs, traditions, and habits of the various peoples, it was not surprising that the local authorities found in the course of their inquiries that it would be impossible to apply a uniform system under which the principle could be carried out. The noble lord thought that he had detected some divergence between the view expressed by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State and those expressed in the telegram from the Government of India. If there was a divergence and he did not admit it—it was due to the difficulties experienced by the Government of India in making the inquiries to which he had referred. That telegram did not necessarily close the discussion. It did not mean that they had done more than propose to the Secretary of State certain things. It did not follow that the difficulties experienced by the Government of India were either permanent or fundamental. Every endeavour would be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any obstacle which might be found to lie in their path in carrying out the pledges which had been given to the House. It was quite impossible, looking at the different conditions which were found in every province, to set up rules for elections which

should be uniform and identical...Wherever elections were found to be possible they would be conducted on the basis of separate representation for the Mahommedan community." (Times report, 27th April).

While personally favouring the inclusion in the Bill of some such express provision for separate Moslem representation as the amendment proposed, Mr. Balfour suggested the withdrawal of the motion, in view of the satisfactory undertaking with which Mr. Hobhouse had concluded his speech. The amendment was accordingly withdrawn, and the Bill passed from the effective control of the House of Commons on the express understanding that 'wherever elections were found to be possible, they would be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community.'

Yet Another Withdrawal

After the Commons' amendments had been considered in the House of Lords on 4th May, Lord Curzon asked the Secretary of State to amplify the information previously given as to the Mahommedan position and to make it clear that in no respect was there cause to fear that the pledges which had been given did not still hold good. In reply Lord Morley read the text of a private telegram he had received from the Viceroy on the previous day, to the following effect :

"Hobhouse's speech has been interpreted as meaning that major portion of representation accorded to Mahommedans is to be given through the mixed electorates, such as district boards and municipalities, on which they will vote conjointly with other classes, and that the special electorates in which Mahommedans will vote separately are only intended to supplement general elections, and will carry only a small number of seats. I need hardly say that this is not all what we contemplated. Our intention was that Mahommedans should have, by means of separate electorates, a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerical proportion in the population would entitle them, and that over and above

this they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates such as district boards and municipalities, Universities, Presidency corporations, and as Landholders. In Bombay, for example, under the scheme detailed in my telegram of 8th February four seats are specially assigned to Mahommedans, and in addition to these, two Mahommedans will be elected by landholders and district bodies of Sind, so that they will secure a certain minimum of 6, or 28 per cent, their ratio to the general population being only 20. In the United Provinces, where they number only 14 per cent, they will have four special seats, or nearly 20 per cent of the seats assigned for election. Of course, the same ratio cannot be applied in all provinces, and allowance must be made for the status, character, and educational attainments of Mahommedan population in each case. There has also been misapprehension of our views regarding nomination, which are intended to be merely a temporary expedient to be resorted to until the community should be ripe for election. I do not understand any Mahommedan here to claim concession suggested—namely, that wherever elections are found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community. If interpreted literally, that would involve having separate Mahommedan electorates within the various electorates proposed, such as Presidency corporations, district boards, and municipalities, Universities, landholders, and the commercial community. This is manifestly impracticable. It could only be effected by recasting the entire scheme and increasing maximum strength of all councils as fixed by Bill. On the whole case, my view is that present proposals as now explained do reasonably fulfil pledges given to Mahommedans.”

A communique of similar purport was issued to the Press of India.

Thus, at the moment when the Indian Councils Bill passed from the control of Parliament, there were made public proposals constituting further variation, as the Moslem League contends, from repeated assurances of separate representation in all stages and in excess of numerical proportion. How His

Excellency can have regarded this latest scheme as 'reasonably fulfilling the pledges given to the Mahommedans' it is difficult to see. It is clear on the face of the telegram that the Viceroy has been misinformed. His statement that he does not understand any Mahommedans in India to have claimed concession of separate representation wherever elections are found possible is at variance with constant and emphatic declarations made by the Leagues and leading members of the community in India, including representations and telegrams addressed to the Indian authorities, and some of which have been officially published (vide *the Reform Blue Books*, Vol. II). The Mahommedans are well aware that the principle referred to would involve have separate Mahommedan electorates 'within the various electorates proposed', and this is what they have understood was promised them throughout. His Excellency declares such a method to be impracticable, and says it could only be effected by recasting the entire scheme and increasing the maximum strength on all Councils as fixed by the Bill. In the annexure to the representation submitted to the Secretary of State by the deputation of 27th January a scheme of representation was outlined; the London Branch submits that this was entirely practicable, and certainly would not involve the recasting of the Reform scheme as a whole, nor the increase of the maximum strength of the Councils. Such an increase would indeed be deprecated by the community as affecting its ratio of representation and thus tending to take away with one hand what had been given to them by the other.

The Alleged Concurrence of Moslems

By way of supporting the method of meeting Moslem claims outlined in the telegram published on 4th May, a number of communications appeared in Anglo-Indian and Home Journals asserting that 'the Government of India have not wavered in their original plan, which holds the field' and that 'the mischievous suggestion of electoral colleges in Lord Morley's despatch caused such trouble as has arisen' (Simla correspondent of *The Times*, 4th May). The *Times of India*, of 23rd

April published a telegram from its Simla correspondent stating that the scheme Mr. Hobhouse outlined in the House of Commons on 19th April, was identical with the proposal of the Government of India given in the despatch of 1st October.

The sequence of events in this connection is that the Government of India proposed this arrangement in Mahommedan interests and that the Secretary of State put forward a modification of it, which was unfavourably received by the Mahommedans, and that in deference of Mahommedan representations the original arrangement has now been reverted to.

With reference to these statements it should be noted that the London Moslem League in the representation submitted to Lord Morley on the 25th January, which expressed the general consensus of Mahommedan opinion, distinctly pronounced against the arrangements proposed by the Government of India. The statement that in deference to Mahommedan representations the original arrangement has now been reverted to proceeds upon a complete misapprehension of the Mussulman attitude.

In order, however, to impress upon the British public the mistaken view of the case above referred to, a further extract from Lord Minto's telegram of 2nd May has been published as a White Paper (10th May). It cites an isolated passage from a letter addressed to the Viceroy on behalf of a special sub-committee of the All-India Moslem League (Aligarh), dated the 4th of February. This letter (published in full in the newspapers at the time) deals with a variety of subjects ; it welcomes the 'Reforms', expresses relief at Lord Morley's declarations to the Moslem deputation of the 27th January with regard 'to class representation as it affects the Mahommedans of India', states that his Lordship's 'pronouncement with respect to exclusive Mussulman electoral colleges had been read by Mahommedans with much thankfulness', and reiterates with much emphasis the Mahommedan objections to mixed electorates, as members returned by those bodies 'would only be mandatories and nominees of a non-Moslem majority'. It

suggests that 'the denominational element should be carried down to the very base', but waives it in the last stage, *viz.*, the case of the members returned to the Councils (this position was afterwards abandoned); and submits that 'whereas the effective class representation of Mahommedans is impossible, without giving them separate electorates from beginning to end', the last suggestion would avoid the possibility of political isolation between them and their non-Moslem fellow-countrymen. It then goes on to add 'that if the full due of the Mahommedans as to number of seats in the Councils can be secured to them by means of separate and denominational electorates, of which the Mahommedan section of the rural and municipal boards may form parts, the Mahommedans have no desire to court the resentment of their non-Moslem countrymen to vote again on the same boards for the purposes of returning members to the Councils.' The passage which has been furnished to the Viceroy for defeating the Mahommedan claims and upsetting the solemn pledges to them is merely incidental. It refers to the proposals made by the Government of India in the despatch of 1st October; and states that the arrangements were in keeping with the maintenance of 'the principle of effective Mahommedan representation'; that the community was under a heavy debt of gratitude to his Excellency for the despatch; and that unless the reform scheme was carried on the 'principles laid down in that document, its grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority, great or small' could not be foretold. The telegram of the Viceroy added:

"These views were shared by the Deccan Moslem League, Bombay, and the Madras Presidency Moslem League also intimated general approval. In fact the Government of India have received no representations from Mahommedans taking exception to any essential feature of proposals made in their despatch."

With regard to the attitude of these two Leagues there is evidently a grave misapprehension, for on the 12th of February the Deccan League, and on the 14th March, and again so

recently as the 27th April (barely a fortnight before the Viceroy's telegram), the Madras League emphatically and unequivocally condemned mixed electorates.

The most extraordinary feature in this eventful episode of British rule in India is the fact that resolutions adopted in Mussulman meetings, though telegraphed to the Viceroy, do not appear to reach him.

The Isolated Quotation

In considering the bearing of the telegraphed extract from a letter submitted to the Government of India more than three months ago it is important to remember the sequence of events. The great and overwhelming anxiety of the Moslem community at that time was to obtain a reversal of Lord Morley's plan of mixed electoral colleges. Lord Morley had received the deputation of the London Branch a few days before ; but the full text of his speech had not reached India, and all that was in possession of the public there was a meagre and not very clear summary of his Lordship's remarks. Those remarks left it still an open question whether mixed electoral colleges would not be adopted ; and in the circumstances the League in India was apparently advised to press for adhesion to the principles of the despatch of 1st October. The Government of India had, in fact, reaffirmed the principles to which Lord Minto originally gave adhesion in October 1906, and the Secretary of State's plan would have constituted a departure from them. In pressing for adherence to those principles the Moslem League certainly did not commit itself to an acceptance of all details of the despatch of 1st October.

The extensions and additions made in the general plan of the Government of India by the Secretary of State—extensions giving the Councils fuller powers, greatly increasing their maximum strength, dispensing with official majorities in the provincial Legislatures, and in many other ways adding to the vital

necessity for safeguarding the rights of minorities—profoundly affected the details of application and the general structure of the Reforms.

The situation was further changed when on 23rd February (nearly three weeks after the letter quoted by the Viceroy had been submitted by the special sub-Committee of the League) Lord Morley accepted 'the Mahommedan demand'—voiced as insistently in India as in this country—for 'election of their own representatives to these councils in all stages', and 'a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength.' These pledges, combined with the drastic changes in the general framework of Reforms, made obsolete in no small measure the detailed proposals of the despatch of 1st October. To these the Government of India may be wedded; but it is not fair or just, on the strength of an isolated passage of a letter written long before Lord Morley's pledges were made, and in the face of the overwhelming Mahommedan opinion which has so strongly and insistently expressed itself all over the country, to claim that they have the entire acquiescence of the Indian Mahommedans. The appendices show that, whether here or in India, the Mahommedans will be satisfied with nothing else than a full and generous discharge of the pledges given first by Lord Minto, then by Lord Morley, and repeated time after time on their behalf in the House of Commons. Not only so, it can be shown that the scheme set forth in the Viceroy's telegram does not correspond in every detail with the plan of 1st October, as the Government of India supposes. But into this aspect of the question it is not necessary now to enter.

Summary of Official Declarations

It has been deemed desirable to trace in some detail the varying and conflicting official declarations whereby the Mahommedans of India, have been alternately gratified and disappointed, relieved and perplexed, and mollified and dismayed, and to show the justification that exists for the terms of the resolutions of the London Branch, dated 6th and 13th May,

given in the Appendices. It only remains in conclusion to present a bird's eye view of the many widenings of the path along which the Mahommedans have been led to the mirage of varying systems of representation only partially meeting their needs. They feel that the pledges given to them have been set aside, and that their interests have been subordinated to the clamour of a hostile agitation ; and they ask for justice even now at the eleventh hour.

Here is the extraordinary record :

1906

- Oct. The Viceroy expresses to a representative Moslem deputation his hearty concurrence in the view that in any system of representation whether to a municipality, a district board or a legislature the Mahommedans should be represented as a community, and says that their interests shall be safeguarded in any administrative reconstruction in which he is concerned.

1907

- Aug. In adumbrating a draft scheme of Reforms the Government of India quote and reaffirm this pledge.

1908

- Oct. In submitting a revised plan to the Secretary of State the Government of India intimate that all the Local Governments approve of their proposals for the special representation of Mahommedans, and they propose separate Mahommedan electorates as the normal and desirable method.

- Nov. Lord Morley suggests to the Government of India, in substitution of their proposal, a plan of mixed electoral colleges on a strictly numerical basis.

- Dec. The two despatches aforementioned are published, and immediately the Mahommedan community protests against the mixed electoral colleges as failing to fulfil the pledges of the Viceroy.

1909

- Jan. 27 Lord Morley receives a Moslem deputation and promises consideration of their claims as to separate electorates and representation in excess of strict numerical proportion. The deputation suggests exclusively Mahommedan electoral college. The Secretary of State accepts the idea.
- Feb. 23 Lord Morley informs the House of Lords that these two demands he is ready and intends to meet in full. Hostile agitation on the part of Hindu politicians and their helpers in this country ensues.
- Apr. 1 The Prime Minister and the Under-Secretary of State for India assure the House of Commons that there will be no going back on the pledges given to the Mahommedans. But the Under-Secretary in stating details, speaks of the representation being carried out in different ways in different provinces, and of a numerical minimum in certain provinces so small that it is held by the Mahommedan leaders to fail to constitute a complete and genuine fulfilment of the pledges.
- Apr. 19 The Secretary to the Treasury, in the absence of Mr. Buchanan, reads to the House of Commons a telegram from the Viceroy stating that 'in general electorates.. all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together', and that in addition a certain number of seats would be reserved for Mahommedans. This announcement, indicating, as was supposed, abandonment of separate Moslem electorates as the normal state of things, causes bitter disappointment.
- Apr. 26 Mr. Hobhouse tells the House of Commons that the telegram had been misunderstood, and promises 'that every endeavour will be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any sort or kind of obstacle which may be found to lie within our power to the carrying out of the pledges which 'reasonably fulfil have been given before this

House,' and that 'wherever elections are found to be possible they will be conducted on the basis of separate representation for the Mahomedan community.'

May 4 Lord Morley, asked by Lord Curzon for further information, just after the House of Lords had accepted the Commons' amendments to the Councils Bill, and the measure was no longer under the effective control of Parliament, produces a telegram from the Viceroy alleging that the Mahomedans in India had not asked for separate electorates wherever found possible; that this would be impracticable and involve the recasting of the entire scheme of reforms; and that a scheme partly of special and partly of mixed electorates would reasonably fulfil the pledges given.'

May 10 The Secretary of State presents to Parliament a further extract from the Viceroy's telegram, citing an isolated passage in a detailed representation made by a special Sub-Committee of the All-India Moslem League, with the object apparently of suggesting that the plan outlined in the original part of the telegram has the approval of the Indian Mahomedans. As the special object of the letter in question was to press for abandonment of the plan of mixed electoral colleges, and as Lord Morley had not then given his specific pledges on the subject, the letter does not afford the evidence suggested. The appendices show that demands of the Moslem community have been insistent, consistent and clear.

ON THE COMMUNAL AWARD*

Our Hindu brethren generally and the Maha Sabhaites particularly are carrying on a vigorous propaganda against the White Paper and the Communal Award. They are never tired of accusing Muslims of communalism and anti-nationalism and the Government of encouraging communalism by their proposals for the Indian Constitutional Reforms as contained in

**The Communal Award and Its Critics*, Delhi, 1934.

the White Paper. They talk as if Hindus as a body are imbued through and through with democratic ideas and are nationalists, while Muslims are from top to bottom anti-nationalists or communalists.

If the Hindu writers and speakers are to be believed, the Hindu community as a whole is permeated with nationalistic and democratic ideals—every Hindu in the street according to them, a Sheogovind, Ramgovind as much as a Gandhi or Jawaharlal is imbued with the national spirit ; as if all distinctions of caste and creed have been overcome ; the demon of untouchability has been laid at rest and the whole Hindu community including the rural masses is pulsating with one spirit that of nationalism and the love of the country and it is only the Muslim community backed and encouraged by a Satanic Government that is proving a fly in the ointment and is standing in the way of the progress of the country towards Swaraj or Independence. But does the past or present history of the two communities justify such an inference ? Does the past or contemporary history of the Hindu community warrant such a conclusion ? Have any democratic institutions ever flourished in the Hindu community in the past. Is the division of the community into castes and sub-castes, into touchables and untouchables very conducive to the development of the spirit of nationalism ? Has the caste system been done away with and true brotherhood between man and man, which is the first essential for real nationhood, come into being ? If so, why there was such a storm of protest all over the country against Ranga Iyer's Temple Entry Bill which could practically secure no votes or supporters during the recent sessions of the Legislative Assembly ? Does the working of the Local Boards, the District Boards and Municipalities supply much evidence of the existence of true national spirit among the members of these bodies ? The electorates and the membership of these bodies is predominantly Hindu throughout this province. Can any Hindu friend honestly say that the chairman, vice-chairman and other office bearers of these bodies are always elected on merit in the true nationalistic spirit without any communal bias coming into play ? I would

like the reader to look into the annual reports of the local bodies and find out for himself the relative number of Muslim and non-Muslim chairmen of these bodies during the past, say 15 or 20 years.

I just read in the *Pioneer*, dated 26.9.34, the report of the election to the Court of the University of Allahabad and I found that of the 30 registered graduates that have been declared as elected to the Court there is only one Muslim, namely Dr. Waliullah and he too succeeded in securing his election probably because he is connected with the professorial staff of the University. Can it be supposed that there was no other Muslim registered graduate fit for election to the Court and can it be honestly affirmed that this election to the Court took place purely on merits and that communal bias had nothing to do with it? I am not sure but I believe that Dr. Zia Uddin Ahmad and Justice Iqbal Ahmad are registered graduates of the Allahabad University. While Dr. Sulaiman, the Chief Justice, is such a graduate for certain, one would like to know if all 30 gentlemen recently elected to the Court are superior to the three educationists above named as far as merit and educational qualifications go.

The dispute in the Lucknow University Union is going on since a dozen years and the complaint of non-Hindus is that they can never secure election to any of the offices of the Union. Recently at a meeting of the Union that was addressed by Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant the Muslim members of the Union had to walk out because the majority community did not allow them to have their say at the meeting. The instances could be multiplied *ad infinitum* but I confine myself to these two instances of the Allahabad University and the Lucknow University, because in these cases the electorate are highly educated, and if such educated electorate cannot act without communal bias and cannot create confidence in the minority, how can uneducated electors of the Legislative bodies be expected to behave better especially when they are not going to be left to themselves, and the educated members of both the communi-

ties thus prejudice their minds. If the case of our Hindu friends were that there are communalist as well as patriotic people in both the communities (Hindus and Muslims) no Muslim could have any quarrel with them. But when it is proclaimed from house-tops that Patriotism and Nationalistic spirit is the monopoly of the Hindu community while every other community in the land is fired with the communal spirit and is anti-nationalist, there is time to enter a strong protest.

The Muslim community in India has unfortunately great many defects ; it is unorganised, disunited, impecunious and unbusiness-like, but the charge of being undemocratic or anti-nationalist cannot justly be laid at its door. The Muslim community as a whole is perhaps more democratic in spirit than perhaps most of the communities of the world.

Dewa Worship

There is not the same tendency towards Dewa Worship in the Muslim community as there is now in the Hindu community. The tremendous influence that Mahatma Gandhi exercised and still exercises (though to a diminished degree) over the Hindu masses including the intellectuals is clearly traceable to this spirit of Dewa Worship. Mahatma Gandhi is a saint and mystic and if his activities were confined to the spiritual uplift of the masses he would be an ideal teacher but instead of confining himself to his proper sphere he interfered with politics and committed quite a number of his Himalayan blunders ('Himalayan' is of Mahatma Gandhi's own coinage), the first blunder was his rejection of Lord Reading's offer for a Round Table Conference at the end of 1921 and then the issuing of his Bardoli Resolution soon after and the consequent collapse of the first Non-cooperation Movement of 1921-22. Even Mahatma Gandhi's staunchest followers admit that this was his greatest blunder. When Lord Reading made his offer, there was the mass movement of civil disobedience in the land and the Government were not sure how the movement was going to end. That was the psychological movement for a settlement of understanding with the Government, Mahatma

Gandhi missed the opportunity and made India lose the chance of a life-time.

The civil disobedience movement after its collapse in 1922 remained quiescent for a number of years. It again gathered force in 1930 and Mahatma Gandhi as its head and leader acquired unprecedented influence in the country when he used to parley with Lord Irwin and the Irwin-Gandhi pacts used to be issued. At the instance of Lord Irwin Mahatma Gandhi went to England to attend the second Round Table Conference but came back to India without contributing anything towards the solution of the constitutional problems of India. This was the second best opportunity for securing the best of terms for India because both the Home Government and Lord Irwin's Government were most favourably inclined towards the Indian Reforms. But Mahatma Gandhi again missed this opportunity. Many Indian politicians held and hold rightly that Mahatma Gandhi either should not have gone to the Round Table Conference, or if he had gone there he should not have returned without agreeing to some definite constitution. The tremendous influence that Mahatma Gandhi possessed at the time over the masses of India and the world-wide reputation that he had acquired would make his voice heard. If he had risen to the occasion and agreed to a settlement with the minorities and presented a united front before the British Government the Indian constitution would have been an accomplished fact by now instead of being only in the making as it is at present and Mr. Gandhi's name would have been enshrined as the ablest and wisest man of his times as he is justly held to be the holiest ; but he again failed, and came back to India without achieving anything. This was his second blunder.

He returned to India at the end of 1931 when he had to measure strength not with Lord Irwin but with a seasoned politician and experienced administrator in the person of Lord Willingdon and committed his third blunder in launching the third civil disobedience movement without correctly feeling the political pulse of the country and without being able to realise

that the country was not prepared for a third campaign of civil disobedience and the respect was that the movement could easily be suppressed within a short time of its inception.

Notwithstanding these blunders, Mr. Gandhi's voice is listened to in the political counsels of the country (though happily to a lesser degree) and why simply because of this spirit of Dewa Worship. His advice is followed in political matters not necessarily because it is sound but merely because it is Mr. Gandhi's advice. Muslims are more ready to discard their leaders, though it must be admitted that Muslims in India have so far produced few leaders worth of the name but there can be no gainsaying the fact that with all these defects there is greater spirit of equality and fraternity in the Muslim community of India than in the sister community and therefore the Muslim community as a whole is more suited to democratic institutions than their brethren, the Hindus.

The Muslims of India though they have fallen on evil days yet they still retain something of the old spirit of equality and fraternity. Now if we go into the honesty of the present constitutional changes we find that the Congress itself entered into a pact with Muslim League as far back as the year 1916 and conceded separate electorates to the Muslims (I may say at the very outset that I am not very much enamoured of separate electorates. I personally won't mind having joint electorates with reservation of seats, but on this question I won't like to go against the views of the majority of my community). This Pact known as the Lucknow Pact was accepted by the Government for fixing not only the method of representation but also the quantum of it in the Montague-Chelmsford Constitution. The Resolution of the Congress adopting the Lucknow Pact has never been rescinded. Notwithstanding the existence of this Pact, the late Sir Muhammad Shafi made his famous offer of joint electorates with reservation of seats at the first Round Table Conference on behalf of the Muslims, and it was the Hindu community led by such starwarts as Dr. Moonje that rejected the offer and jeopardized the chances.

of an agreed settlement, though I understand that politicians of the eminence of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Mr. Jayakar and others were for accepting Sir Muhammad Shafi's offer and earnestly appealed to their co-religionists to accept the offer ; but politicians of the type of Dr. Moonje and certain fire-brands from the Punjab probably thought that both the Muslim community and the British Government were at the end of their tethers and therefore it was no good to compromise. Again the late Maulana Muhammad Ali, a member of the Minorities Sub-Committee, put forward at the first Round Table Conference his scheme that as far as possible no communal candidate should be elected unless he secured at least 40 per cent of the votes of his own community and at least 5 or 10 per cent of the votes of the other community, but this scheme too was not adopted by the Minorities Sub-Committee. 'From the deliberations of the Minorities Sub-Committee, though it could not arrive at an agreed settlement, it was plain that failing an agreement separate electorates would have to be retained as the basis of the electoral arrangements under the new constitution'. (vide the Report of the Minorities Sub-Committee).

It would be noted that the only two constructive schemes put forward at this first session of the Round Table Conference to solve the communal problem were put forward by the representatives of the Muslim community.

In view of Sir Muhammad Shafi's offer and the rejection of the same by the Hindu delegates, the reader can decide for himself which community was responsible for the failure to secure an agreed settlement of the communal question at the first Round Table Conference. I may also ask my Hindu brethren if the offer of Sir Muhammad Shafi was so unreasonable and so very anti-nationalist that Nationalist India could not honestly accept it. There can be no doubt that it was the greatest blunder on the part of the Hindu delegates to reject Sir Muhammad Shafi's offer and not to come to an agreed settlement on its basis and thus jeopardize the success of the first Round Table Conference.

The Prime Minister in his statement of January 1931 at the close of the first Round Table Conference earnestly appealed to the communities to come to an agreed settlement on the communal question in the following words :

'Then there is the third category of safeguards relating to communities. Now I repeat what I have said to you so often regarding that. If you fail to agree to set up your own safeguards, to come to a settlement between yourselves regarding those safeguards, the Government will have to provide in the constitution provisions to help you ; but do remember the best is all of your own.....We do not propose to let you go as though you have said the last word, because we do not believe you have said the last word'.

This was the Prime Minister's statement in his personal capacity and the statement he made on behalf of the British Cabinet was to the same effect. He said, 'In the opinion of His Majesty's Government it is the duty of communities to come to an agreement amongst themselves on the points raised by the Minorities Sub-Committee but not settled there. During the continuing negotiations such an agreement ought to be reached and the Government will continue to render what good offices it can to help to secure that end, as it is anxious not only that delay should take place in putting the new constitution into operation, but that it should start with the goodwill and confidence of all the communities concerned.'

The communities concerned therefore had a mandate both from the Prime Minister and the British Cabinet to come to a mutual understanding outside the Round Table Conference if they had failed to do so inside it. The British Indian delegates returned to India and the leader of the communities concerned did make serious efforts at a number of unity conferences which all but succeeded in coming to an agreed settlement the points of difference were reduced to a minimum but unfortunately an agreed settlement could not be reached the position of the minorities in the Punjab and Bengal providing the main

stumbling block, the blame for the failure was laid at the door of the Muslim community which proposition I would very strongly contest. Muslims are in a minority in all the provinces of India except three, namely, the Punjab, Bengal and the North-West Frontier Province (the Sind Province is yet to come into existence) and they remain a hopeless minority in these provinces notwithstanding the weightage that is given to them. Yet they are ready to trust this Hindu majority in these provinces and to live in amity with them. How is it that the Hindu and Sikh majority in the Punjab and Hindu minority in Bengal are not ready to trust the barest Muslim majority (which had almost been reduced to minority according to the communal award) in these two provinces and is it very unreasonable on the part of the Muslims to insist upon the maintenance of their small majorities in two major provinces whereas they have to live in hopeless minority in so many other provinces. If the spirit of give and take were abroad, the Hindu community at least would not make the problem of the Punjab, and the Bengal practically unsoluble. The Sikh might have been raised difficulties about the Punjab, but the Hindu Community at least had no just cause to raise difficulties both about the Punjab and the Bengal. If Muslim minorities do not fear extension in so many other provinces, why should Hindu minorities fear such a fate in the Punjab and Bengal? Trust begets trust. If Muslims trust such big Hindu majorities in so many provinces, why the Hindus should not trust the barest Muslim majority in two provinces only? If there is a spirit of true nationalism abroad, the Muslims should trust the Hindu majority and *vice versa* as if it were their own majority.

Anyway, the communities concerned had not come to an agreed settlement when the second Round Table Conference was convened about the end of 1931 in which Mahatma Gandhi also took part. Mahatma Gandhi went to this Conference with a degree of prestige behind him both in India and abroad that was perhaps unparalleled in the recent political history of the world. It was expected that Mahatma Gandhi

would rise to the occasion and with his unique influence over all the Indian communities in general and the Hindu community in particular would unite the Gordian knot and would solve the communal problem, but unfortunately he failed. In fact he did not put forward a single constructive scheme regarding the solution of the communal problem before the second Round Table Conference, and the result was that this second Conference also rose without solving that knotty problem. The communities concerned were, however, again asked to try to come to an agreed settlement outside the Conference.

It is also a fact that at the second Round Table Conference when the British Indian delegates failed to come to an agreed settlement regarding the communal question, they referred the problem to the Prime Minister for his decision. His Majesty's Government were still anxious that the communal problem be solved by the communities themselves. But in the statement made by the Prime Minister on behalf of His Majesty's Government on December 1, 1931, at the conclusion of the second Round Table Conference, he made it plain that if the communities in India were unable to reach a settlement acceptable to all parties on the communal questions which the Conference had failed to solve, His Majesty's Government were determined that India's constitutional advance should not on that account be frustrated and that they would remove the obstacle by devising and applying themselves a provisional scheme. On 19th March 1932 His Majesty's Government, having been informed that the communities concerned had failed to reach an agreement, decided that they shall themselves try to solve the problem though provisionally and the communal decision or award as we know it was the result.

It may be noted that His Majesty's Government had to take the decision because the failure of the communities to come to an agreement was blocking the progress of the plans for the framing of new constitution.

His Majesty's Government had to decide between keeping the question of the constitutional advance of the country hang

fire for an indefinite period or to make a decision about the communal questions themselves and then proceed with the constitutional advance. They chose the latter course. There was evidently no other course open to them. Nobody has ever suggested nor even the severest critics of the White Paper and the Communal Award that because the communities concerned had failed to come to an agreed settlement, the British and the Indian Government should have sat with folded hands and should not have proceeded with the framing of the new constitution. As they had to proceed with the framing of the new constitution they had to give some decision on the communal question, and they did.

Even in making this decision they made it clear that they were most desirous not to close the door to an agreed settlement, should such be forthcoming and therefore they laid down in the decision itself that if before a new Government of India Act was passed into law they were satisfied that the communities concerned were mutually agreed upon a practical alternative scheme, either in respect of the one or more of the Governors' Provinces, or in respect of the whole of British India, they would be prepared to recommend to the Parliament that the alternative scheme should be substituted for the provisions of the Communal Award.

The British Government have since given proof positive of their bonafides in this respect in as much as they have modified the Communal Award as far as it affected the representation of the Depressed Classes.

Again the communal decision as it stands is not final. Provision is to be made in the constitution itself to empower a revision of the electoral arrangement after 10 years with the assent of the communities concerned.

Such, in short, were the circumstances under which the communal decision or award was given. In view of the circumstances recounted above it is strange how any Indian politician, be he a Hindu or a Muslim, a Congressite, a Liberal

or a Maha Sabhaite, can have the face to turn round and blame the Prime Minister or the British Government for giving their decision on the communal problem. The British Government ask you to decide the problem yourself, give you opportunity after opportunity to do so, you miserably fail in your attempt at a solution. You ask the Prime Minister and the British Government to solve the problem for you, they do so and in doing so make it clear that their decision is only provisional and can be replaced if any mutually agreed solution were forthcoming. Still you have the temerity, the lack of all decency to denounce the British Government for doing your work for you in giving the decision. Lack of decency and good sense cannot go further. I think our sense of self-respect, if nothing else, should have stood in our way of denouncing the Communal Award. If we fail to do our own job, leave it to others to do it and others take the trouble of doing it for us we are honour bound to abide by their action, no matter whether they do it well or ill. No Indian politician, whether he be a Liberal, a Congressite or a Maha Sabhaite, has got any right to denounce the Communal Award but as a matter of fact the Hindu politicians, to whatever party they belong, are vying with one another to denounce it. The Maha Sabhaites denounce it because the award attempts to do some justice to the Muslim minority and they shall denounce any decision if it attempts to be fair to the Muslims. The Maha Sabhaites do not want Indian Swaraj and any proposed constitution that interfered with that goal must be an anathema to them. The members of newly formed Nationalist Party of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya denounce it because they, in their heart of hearts, are no better than Maha Sabhaites and their goal of nationalism is merely a make-believe which can deceive nobody.

Malaviya's Secession from the Congress

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has, in his heart of hearts, always been a Maha Sabhaite. He was not an active Congress worker during the first non-cooperation movement of 1921-22 when so many Indians, both Hindus and Muslims, went to jail.

In 1930-31 when the star of the Congress was again in the ascendant Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya became active Congress worker, but has deserted it since at a time when the Congress stands most in need of the loyalty and devotion of all its old workers, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya has deserted the Congress because he apparently thinks that the Congress is losing its hold on the country. Otherwise there is no logic in the action taken by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and his colleague, Mr. Aney, in breaking away from the Congress at this critical moment in the political life of the country. The Congress Working Committee took its decision of neutrality with regard to the Communal Award after full and prolonged deliberations. Both Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Mr. Aney were given every opportunity to have their say in these deliberations. They were over-ruled. It was their duty to abide by the decision of the Working Committee whether it agreed with their personal opinions or not and to carry out that decision like good soldiers but they thought fit to break away from the Congress and create new rifts in the already thinking ranks of that body. This is unpardonable disloyalty to the parent body and is absolutely opposed to all parliamentary spirit of which Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya always claims to be a great advocate. If Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Company cannot act upto the parliamentary principles when no real responsibility rests with the Congress, how will they be able to uphold the parliamentary principles when real responsibility rests with the Indian Legislature.

The attitude of the Congress too with regard to the Communal Award is not easy to understand or to justify. It may be noted that their attitude of neutrality adopted by the Congress is only with regard to voting inside the Legislatures, *i.e.*, if a person goes to the Council or the Assembly on the Congress ticket he shall not be at liberty to vote either for or against the Communal Award. Outside the Legislatures the Congress condemns the Communal Award as much as any other political body. This attitude, this sitting on the fence, to say the least of it, is hardly worthy of a body like the Congress.

I have already explained that notwithstanding their repeated efforts the communities concerned were unable to come to an agreed settlement on the communal problem, the attempts at the solution of problem at the second Round Table Conference (to which Congress was also a party) were equally abortive. The matter was left or referred for decision to the Premier and the British Government. They have given their decision. The only honourable and manly course open to Congress or any other political body in India was and is to accept the Communal Award without a word, without a murmur and if they were dissatisfied with its provisions try to bring about an agreed settlement and have it substituted for the Communal Award. The Congress at least we expected to give this lead to the country but unfortunately it failed.

*The Attitude of Political Organizations
Towards Communal Award*

Again the Congress and other political organizations of the country that so vehemently denounce the Communal Award fail to realise one very important consequence of their attitude. It will, I believe, be conceded that the framing of the new constitution cannot proceed or at least the new constitution cannot be given effect to unless the communal problem is solved one way or the other. The communities concerned have not offered an agreed settlement. The communal decision given by the British Government is not to be accepted and acted upon, what is going to be the consequence. Should or should not the new constitution be brought into being and enforced? If the Maha Sabha, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's Nationalist Party or the Congress are dissatisfied with the Communal Award, if they do not want a constitution of which the present Communal Award forms part, they must be honest with themselves and say in clear terms, "We do not want the new constitution as the obnoxious Communal Award forms part of it. The Government must not proceed with the framing of the new constitution and stop it for good." If the opponents of the Communal Award said so in so many words, there would be some consistency in their attitude but

none of the political organizations of the country have had the courage to say so. There has been confusion of ideas, want of clear thinking and lack of necessary courage to give expression to one's real thoughts. Evidently, however, there is no escape from one of the following two alternatives :

- (1) accept the Communal Award as it stands under in the new constitution, modify and improve the Communal Award if you find it inconvenient by an agreed settlement and have this new agreement substituted for the Communal Award after the lapse of ten years.

Or

- (2) reject the Communal Award and say we do not want any constitutional changes for the present ; we shall make those changes when we have settled the communal question among ourselves.

PART II

BRITISH COLONIAL INTERPRETATIONS AND PRONOUNCEMENTS

I have never sought to delude Indian opinion that a definition of purpose, however plainly stated, would of itself, by the enunciation of a phrase, provide a solution for the problems which have to be solved, before that purpose is fully realised. The assertion of a goal, however precise its terms, is of necessity a different thing from the goal's attainment. No sensible traveller would feel that the clear definition of his destination was the same thing as the completion of his journey ; but it is an assurance of direction.

—Viceroy Lord Irwin

**Statement in the Central Legislative Assembly on 15
January, 1930.**

BRITISH APPRECIATION OF MUSLIM CLAIMS

LORD MORLEY'S ANNOUNCEMENT ON PROPOSED REFORMS

(17 December, 1908)

I feel that I owe a very sincere apology to the House for the disturbance in the business arrangements of the House, of which I have been the cause, though the innocent cause. It has been said that in the delay in bringing forward this subject, I have been anxious to burke discussion. That is not in the least true. The reasons that made it seem desirable to me that the discussion on this most important and far-reaching range of topics should be postponed, were—I believe the House will agree with me—reasons of commonsense. In the first place, discussion without anybody having seen the Papers to be discussed, would evidently have been ineffective. In the second place, it would have been impossible to discuss those Papers with good effect—the Papers that I am going this afternoon to present to Parliament—until we know, at all events in some degree, what their reception has been in the country most immediately concerned. And thirdly, my Lords, I cannot but apprehend that discussion here—I mean in Parliament—would be calculated to prejudice the reception in India of the proposals that His Majesty's Government, in concert with the Government of India, are now making. My Lords, I submit those are three very essential reasons why discussion in my view, and I hope in the view of this House, was to be deprecated. This afternoon your Lordships will be presented with a very modest Blue-book of 100 or 150 pages, but I should like to promise noble Lords that tomorrow morning there will be ready for them a series of Papers

on the same subject, of a size so enormous that the most voracious or even carnivorous appetite for Blue-books will have ample food for augmenting the joys of the Christmas holidays.

The observations that I shall ask your Lordships to allow me to make, are the opening of a very important chapter in the history of the relations of Great Britain and India; and I shall ask the indulgence of the House if I take a little time, not so much in dissecting the contents of the Papers, which the House will be able to do for itself by and by, as in indicating the general spirit that animates His Majesty's Government here, and my noble friend the Governor-General, in making the proposals that I shall in a moment describe. I suppose, like other Secretaries of State for India, I found my first idea was to have what they used to have in the old days—a Parliamentary Committee to inquire into Indian Government. I see that a predecessor of mine in the India Office, Lord Randolph Churchill—he was there for too short a time—in 1885 had very strongly conceived that idea. On the whole, I think there is a great deal at the present day to be said against it.

Therefore what we have done was in concert with the Government of India, first to open a chapter of constitutional reform, of which I will speak in a moment, and next to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the internal relations between the Government of India and all its subordinate and co-ordinate parts. That Commission will report, I believe, in February or March next,—February, I hope,—and that again will involve the Government of India and the India Office in White Hall in pretty laborious and careful inquiries. It cannot be expected—and it ought not to be expected—that an Act passed as the organic Act of 1858 was passed, amidst intense excitement and most disturbing circumstances, should have been in existence for half a century without disclosing flaws and imperfections, or that its operations would not be the better for supervision, or incapable of improvement.

I spoke of delay in these observations, and unfortunately delay has not made the skies any brighter. But, my Lords, do

not let us make the Indian sky cloudier than it really is. Do not let us consider the clouds to be darker than they really are. Let me invite your Lordships to look at the formidable difficulties that now encumber us in India, with a due sense of proportion.

What is the state of things as it appears to persons of authority and of ample knowledge in India? One very important and well-known friend of mine in India says this—

‘The anarchists are few, but, on the other hand, they are apparently prepared to go any length and to run any risk. It must also be borne in mind that the ordinary man or lady in India has not too much courage, and that the loyal terrorised by the ruthless extremists.’

It is a curious incident that on the very day before the attempt to assassinate Sir Andrew Fraser was made, he had a reception in the college where the would-be assassin was educated, and his reception was of the most enthusiastic and spontaneous kind. I only mention that, to show the curious and subtle atmosphere in which things now are at Calcutta. I will not dwell on that, because although I have a mass of material, this is not the occasion for developing it. I will only add this from a correspondent of great authority—

‘There is no fear of anything in the nature of a rising, but if murders continue, a general panic may arise and greatly increase the danger of the situation. We cannot hope that any machinery will completely stop outrages at once. We must be prepared to meet them. There are growing indications that the native population itself is alarmed, and that we shall have the strong support of native public opinion.’

The view of important persons in the Government of India is that in substance the position of our Government in India is as sound and as well-founded as it has ever been.

I shall be asked, has not the Government of India been obliged to pass a measure introducing pretty drastic machinery? That is quite true, and I, for one, have no fault whatever to

find with them for introducing such machinery and for taking that step. On the contrary, my Lords, I wholly approve, and I share, of course, to the full the responsibility for it. I understand that I am exposed to some obloquy on this account—I am charged with inconsistency. That is a matter on which I am very well able to take care of myself, and I should be ashamed to detain your Lordships for one single moment in arguing about it. Quite early after my coming to the India Office, pressure was put on me to repeal the Regulation of 1818, under which men are now being summarily detained without trial and without charge, and without intention to try or to charge. That, of course, is a tremendous power to place in the hands of an Executive Government. But I said to myself then, and I say now, that I decline to take out the hands of the Government of India any weapon that they have got, in circumstances so formidable, so obscure, and so impenetrable as are the circumstances that surround British Government in India.

There are two paths of folly in these matters. One is to regard all Indian matters, Indian procedure and Indian policy, as if it were Great Britain or Ireland, and to insist that all the robes and apparels that suit Great Britain or Ireland must necessarily suit India. The other is to think that all you have got to do is what I see suggested, to my amazement, in English print—to blow a certain number of men from guns, and then your business will be done. Either of these paths of folly leads to as great disaster as the other. I would like to say this about the Summary Jurisdiction Bill—I have no illusions whatever. I do not ignore, and I do not believe that Lord Lansdowne opposite, or anyone else can ignore, the frightful risks involved in transferring in any form or degree what should be the ordinary power under the law, to arbitrary personal discretion. I am alive, too, to the temptation under summary procedure of various kinds, to the danger of mistaking a headstrong exercise of force for energy. Again, I do not for an instant forget, the tremendous price that you pay for all operations of this sort in the reaction and the excitement that they provoke. If there is

a man who knows all these drawbacks I think I am he. But there are situations in which a responsible Government is compelled to run these risks and to pay this possible price, however high it may appear to be.

It is like war, a hateful thing, from which, however, some of the most ardent lovers of peace, and so of those rulers of the world whose names the most ardent lovers of peace most honour and revere—it is one of the things from which these men have not shrunk. The only question for us is whether there is such a situation in India to-day as to warrant the passing of the Act the other day, and to justify resort to the Regulation of 1818. I cannot imagine anybody reading the speeches—especially the unexaggerated remarks of the Viceroy—and the list of crimes perpetrated, and attempted, that were read out last Friday in Calcutta—I cannot imagine that anybody reading that list and thinking what they stand for, would doubt for a single moment that summary procedure of some kind or another was justified and called for. I discern a tendency to criticise this legislation on grounds that strike me as extraordinary. After all, it is not our fault that we have had to bring in this measure. You must protect the lives of your officers. You must protect peaceful and harmless people, both Indian and European, from the blood-stained havoc of anarchic conspiracy. We deplore the necessity, but we are bound to face the facts. I myself recognise this necessity with infinite regret, and with something, perhaps, rather deeper than regret. But it is not the Government, either here or in India, who are the authors of this necessity, and I should not at all mind, if it is not impertinent and unbecoming in me to say so, standing up in another place and saying exactly what I say here, that I approve of these proceedings and will do my best to support the Government of India.

Now a very important question arises, for which I would for a moment ask for the close attention of your Lordship, because I am sure that both here and elsewhere it will be argued that the necessity, and the facts that called the necessity, of bringing

forward strong repressive machinery should arrest our policy of reforms. That has been stated, and I dare say many people will assert to it. Well, the Government of India and myself have from very first beginning of this unsettled state of things, never varied in our determination to persevere in the policy of reform.

I put two plain questions to your Lordships. I am sick of all the retrograde commonplaces about the weakness of concession to violence and so on. Presevering in our plan of reform is not a concession to violence. Reforms that we have publicly announced, adopted, and worked out for more than two years—how is it a concession to violence, to persist in those reforms? It is simply standing to your guns. A number of gentlemen, of whom I wish to speak with all respect, addressed a very courteous letter to me the other day that appeared in the public prints, exhorting me to remember that Oriental countries inevitably and invariably interpret kindness as fear. I do not believe it. The Founder of Christianity arose in an Oriental country, and when I am told that Orientals always mistake kindness for fear, I must repeat that I do not believe it, any more than I believe the stranger saying of Carlyle, that after all the fundamental question between any two human being is—Can I kill these, or canst thou kill me? I do not agree that any organised society has ever subsisted upon either of those principles, or that brutality is always present as a fundamental postulate in the relations between rulers and ruled.

My first question is this. There are alternative courses open to us. We can either withdraw our reforms, or can we persevere in them. Which would be the more flagrant sign of weakness—to go steadily on with your policy of reform in spite of bombs, or to let yourself openly be forced by bombs and murder clubs to drop your policy? My second question is—Who would be best pleased if I were to announce to your Lordships that the Government have determined to drop the reforms? Why, it is notorious that those who would be best pleased would be the extremists and irreconcilables, just because they

know well that for us to do anything to soften estrangement, and appease alienation between the European and native populations, would be the very best way that could be adopted to deprive them of fuel for their sinister and mischievous designs. I hope your Lordships will agree in that, and I should like to add one reason which I am sure will weigh very much with you. I do not know whether your Lordships have read the speech made last Friday by Sir Norman Baker, the new Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, in the Council at Calcutta, dealing with the point that I am endeavouring to present. In a speech of great power and force, he said that these repressive measures did not represent even the major part of the true policy dealing with the situation. The greater task, he said, was to adjust the machinery of Government, so that their Indian fellow-subjects might be allotted parts which a self-respecting people could fill, and that when the constitutional reforms were announced, as they would be shortly, he believed that the task of restoring order would be on the road to accomplishment. For a man holding such a position to make such a statement at that that moment, is all the corroboration that we need for persisting in our policy of reform. I have talked with Indian experts of all kinds concerning reforms. I admit that some have shaken their heads ; they did not like reforms very warmly. But when I have asked, 'Shall we stand still, then ?' There is not one of those experienced men who has not said, 'That is quite impossible. Whatever else we do, we cannot stand still.'

I should not be surprised if there are here some who say : You ought to have very strong machinery for putting down a free Press. A long time ago a great Indian authority, Sir Thomas Munro, used language which I will venture to quote, not merely for the purpose of this afternoon's exposition, but in order that everybody who listens and reads may feel the formidable difficulties that your predecessors have overcome, and that we in our turn mean to try to overcome. Sir Thomas Munro said :

'We are trying an experiment never yet tried in the world—maintaining a foreign dominion by means of a native army ; and teaching that army, through a free Press, that they ought to expel us, and deliver their country.'

He went on to say—'A tremendous revolution may overtake us, originating in a free Press.'

I recognise to all the full the enormous force of a declaration of that kind. But let us look at it as practical men, who have got to deal with the government of the country. Supposing you abolish freedom of the Press or suspend it, that will not end the business. You will have to shut up schools and colleges, for what would be the use of suppressing newspapers, if you do not shut the schools and colleges ? Nor will that be all. You will have to stop the printing of unlicensed books. The possession of a copy of Milton, or Burke, or Macaulay, or of Bright's speeches, and all that flashing array of writers and orators who are the glory of our grand, or noble English Tongue—the possession of one of these books will, on this peculiar and puerile notion of government, be like the possession of a bomb, and we shall have to direct the passing of an Explosives Books Act. All this and its various sequels and complements make a policy if you please. But after such a policy had produced a mute, sullen, muzzled, lifeless India, we could hardly call it, as we do now the brightest jewel in the Imperial Crown. No English Parliament will ever permit such a thing.

I do now think I need go through all the contents of the despatch of the Governor-General and my reply, containing the plan of His Majesty's Government which will be in your Lordships hands very shortly. I think your Lordships will find in them a well-guarded expansion of principles that were recognised in 1861, and are still more directly and closely connected with us now by the action of Lord Landsdowne in 1892. I have his words and they are really as true a key to the papers in our hands as they were to the policy of the noble Marquess at that date. He said :

“We hope, however, that we have succeeded in giving to our proposals a form sufficiently definite to secure a satisfactory advance in the representation of the people in our Legislative Councils and to give effect to the principle of selection as far as possible on the advice of such sections of the community as are likely to be capable of assisting us in that manner.”

Then you will find that another Governor-General in Council in India, whom I greatly rejoice to see still among us, my noble friend the Marquess of Ripon, said in 1882 :

“It is not primarily with a view to the improvement of administration, that this measure is put forward ; it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education.”

The doctrines announced by the noble Marquess opposite, and by my noble friend, are the standpoint from which we approached the situation and framed our proposals.

I will not trouble the House by going through the history of the course of the proceedings—that will be found in the Papers. I believe the House will be satisfied, just as I am satisfied with the candour and patience that have been bestowed on the preparation of the scheme in India, and I hope I may add it has been treated with equal patience and candour here ; and the end of it is that, though some points of difference arose, though the Government of India agreed to drop certain points of their scheme—the Advisory Councils, for example—on the whole there was remarkable agreement between the Government of India and myself as to the best way of dealing with these proceedings as to Legislative councils. I will enumerate the points very shortly, and though I am afraid it may be tedious, I hope your Lordship will not find the tedium unbearable because after all, what you are beginning to consider to-day, is the turning over of a fresh leaf in the history of British responsibility to India. There are only a handful of distinguished

members of this House who understand the details of Indian Administration, but I will explain them as shortly as I can.

This is a list of the powers which we shall have to acquire from Parliament when we bring in a Bill. I may say that we do not propose to bring in a Bill this session. That would be idle. I propose to bring in a Bill next year. This is the first power we shall come to Parliament for. At present the maximum and minimum numbers of Legislative Councils are fixed by statute. We shall come to Parliament to authorise an increase in the numbers of those Councils, both the Viceroy's Council and the Provincial Councils. Second, the members are now nominated by the head of the Government, either the Viceroy or the Lieutenant-Governor. No election takes place in the strict sense of the term. The nearest approach to it is the nomination by the Viceroy, upon the recommendation of a majority of voters of certain public bodies. We do not propose to ask Parliament, to abolish nomination. We do propose to ask Parliament, in a very definite way, to introduce election working alongside of nomination with a view to the aim admitted in all previous schemes, including that of the noble Marquess opposite—the due representation of the different classes of the community. Third, the Indian Councils Act of 1892 forbids—and this is no doubt a most important prohibition—either resolutions or divisions of the Council in financial discussions. We shall ask Parliament to repeal this prohibition. Fourth, we shall propose to invest Legislative Councils with power to discuss matters of public and general importance, and to pass recommendations or resolutions to the Indian Government. That Government will deal with them as carefully, or as carelessly, as they think fit—just as a Government does here. Fifth, to extend the power that at present exists, to appoint a Member of the Council to preside. Sixth, Bombay and Madras have now Executive Councils, numbering two. I propose to ask Parliament to double the number of ordinary members. Seventh, the Lieutenant-Governors have no Executive Council. We shall ask Parliament to sanction the creation of such Councils, consisting of not more than two ordinary members

and to define the power of the Lieutenant-Governor to overrule his Council. I am perfectly sure there may be differences of opinion as to these proposals. I only want your Lordships to believe that they are accepted by the Governor-General in Council.

There is one point of extreme importance which, no doubt though it may not be over-diplomatic for me to say so at this stage will create some controversy. I mean the matter of the official majority. The House knows what an official majority is. It is a device by which the Governor-General or the Governor of Bombay or Madras, may secure a majority in his Legislative Council by means of officials and nominees. And the officials of course, for very good reasons, just like a Cabinet Minister or an Under-Secretary, whatever the man's private opinion may be, would still vote for the best of reasons, and I am bound to think with perfect wisdom, with the Government. But anybody can see how directly, how palpably, how injuriously, an arrangement of this kind tends to weaken, and I think I may say even to deaden, the sense both of trust and responsibility in the non-official members of these councils. Anybody can see how the system tends to throw the non-official member into an attitude of peevish, sulky, and permanent opposition, and, therefore, has an injurious effect on the minds and characters of members of these Legislative Councils.

I know it will be said—I will not weary the House by arguing it, but I only desire to meet at once the objection that will be taken—that these councils will, if you take away the safeguard of the official majority, pass any number of wild-cat bills. The answer to that is that the head of the Government can veto the wild-cat Bills. The Governor-General can withhold his assent, and the withholding of the assent of the Governor-General disallowed a Bill passed by a Local Government which I need not name, with the most advantageous effect. I am quite convinced that if that Local Government had had an unofficial majority the Bill would never have been passed, and the Governor-General would not have had to refuse

his assent. But so he did and so he would if these gentlemen, whose numbers we propose to increase and whose powers we propose to widen, chose to pass wild-cat Bills. And it must be remembered that the range of subjects within the sphere of Provincial Legislative Council is rigorously limited by statutory exclusions. I will not labour the point now. Anybody who cares, in a short compass, can grasp the argument, of which we shall hear a great deal, in Paragraphs 17 to 20 of my reply to the Government of India, in the Papers that will speedily be in your Lordships' hands.

There is one proviso in this matter of the official majority, in which your Lordships may, perhaps, find a surprise. We are not prepared to divest the Governor-General in his Council of an official majority. In the Provincial Councils we propose to dispense with it, but in the Viceroy's Legislative Council we propose to adhere to it. Only let me say that here we may seem to lag a stage behind the Government of India themselves—so little violent are we—because that Government say, in their despatch—'On all ordinary occasions we are ready to dispense with an official majority in the Imperial Legislative Council, and to rely on the public spirit of non-official members to enable us to carry on the ordinary work of Legislation.' My Lords, that is what we propose to do in the Provincial Councils. But in the Imperial Council we consider an official majority essential. It may be said that this is a most flagrant logical inconsistency. So it would be, on one condition. If I were attempting to set up a Parliamentary system in India, or if it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily up to the establishment of Parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it. I do not believe—it is not of very great consequence what I believe, because the fulfilment of my vaticinations could not come off very soon—in spite of the attempts in Oriental countries at this moment, interesting attempts to which we all wish well, to set up some sort of Parliamentary system it is no ambition of mine, at all events, to have any share in beginning that operation in India. If my existence, either officially or cor-

porally, were prolonged twenty times longer than either of them is likely to be, a Parliamentary system in India is not at all the goal to which I would for one moment aspire.

One point more. It is the question of an Indian member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The absence of an Indian member from the Viceroy's Executive Council can no longer, I think, be defended. There is no legal obstacle or statutory exclusion. The Secretary of State can, to-morrow, if he likes, if there be a vacancy on the Viceroy's Council, recommend His Majesty to appoint an Indian member. All I want to say is that, if, during my tenure of office, there should be a vacancy on the Viceroy's Executive Council, I should feel it a duty to tender my advice to the King that an Indian member should be appointed. If it were on my own authority only, I might hesitate to take that step, because I am not very fond of innovations in dark and obscure ground, but here I have the absolute and the zealous approval and concurrence of Lord Minto himself. It was at Lord Minto's special instigation that I began to think seriously of this step. Any how, this is how it stands, that you have at this moment a Secretary of State and a Viceroy who both concur in such a recommendation. I suppose—if I may be allowed to give a personal turn to these matters—that Lord Minto and I have had as different experience of life and the world as possible, and we belong I dare say to different schools of national politics, because Lord Minto was appointed by the party opposite. It is a rather remarkable thing that two men, differing in this way in political antecedents, should agree in this proposal. We need not discuss what particular portfolio should be assigned to an Indian member. That will be settled by the Viceroy on the merits of the individual. The great object, the main object, is that the merits, of individuals are to be considered and to be decisive, irrespective and independent of race and colour.

We are not altogether without experience, because a year ago, or somewhat more, it was my good fortune to be able to appoint two Indian gentlemen to the Council of India sitting at

the Indian Office. Many apprehensions reached me as to what might happen. So far at all events, those apprehensions have been utterly dissipated. The concord between the two Indian members of the Council and their colleagues has been unbroken, their work has been excellent, and you will readily believe me when I say that the advantage to me of being able to ask one of these two gentlemen to come and tell me something about an Indian question from an Indian point of view, is enormous. I find in it a chance of getting the Indian angle of vision, and I feel sometimes as if I were actually in the streets of Calcutta.

I do not say there are not some arguments on the other side. But this, at all events, must be common sense—for the Governor-General and the European members of this Council to have at their side a man who knows the country well, who belongs to the country and who can give him the point of view of an Indian. Surely, my Lords, that cannot but prove an enormous advantage.

Let me say further, on the Judicial Bench in India everybody recognises the enormous service that it is to have Indian members of abundant learning, and who add to that abundant learning a complete knowledge of the conditions and life of the country. I propose at once, if Parliament agrees, to acquire powers to double the Executive Council in Bombay and Madras, and to appoint at least one Indian member in each of those cases, as well as in the Governor-General's Council. Nor, as the Papers will show, shall I be backward in advancing towards a similar step; as occasion may require, in respect of at least four of the major provinces.

I wish that this Chapter had been opened at a more fortunate moment; but as I said when I rose, I repeat—do not let us for a moment take too gloomy a view. There is not the slightest occasion. None of these who are responsible take gloomy views. They know the difficulties, they are prepared to grapple with them. They will do their best to keep down mutinous.

opposition. They hope to attract that good will which must, after all, be the real foundation of our prosperity and strength in India. We believe that this admission of the Indians to a larger and more direct share in the government of their country and in all the affairs of their country, without for a moment taking from the central power its authority, will fortify the foundations of our position. It will require great steadiness, constant pursuit of the same objects, and the maintenance of our authority, which will be all the more effective if we have, alongwith our authority, and the aid and assistance in responsible circumstances of the Indians themselves.

Military strength, material strength, we have in abundance. What we still want to acquire is moral strength—moral strength in guiding and controlling the people of India in the course on which time is launching them. I should like to read a few lines from a great orator about India. It was a speech delivered by Mr. Bright in 1858, when the Government of India Bill was in another place. Mr. Bright said :

‘We do not know how to leave India, and therefore let us see if we know how to govern it. Let us abandon all that system of calumny against natives of India which has lately prevailed. Had that people not been docile, the most governable race in the world, how could you have maintained your power there for 100 years ? Are they not industrious, are they not intelligent, are they not, upon the evidence of the most distinguished men the Indian service ever produced, endowed with many qualities which make them respected by all Englishmen who mix with them ?...I would not permit any man in my presence without rebuke to indulge in the calumnies and expressions of contempt which I have recently heard poured forth without measure upon the whole population of India... The people of India do not like us, but they would scarcely know where to turn if we left them. They are sheep, literally without a shepherd.’

However, that may be we at least at Westminster here have no choice and no option. As an illustrious Member of this House wrote :

‘We found a society in a state of decomposition, and we have undertaken the serious and stupendous process of reconstructing it.’

Macaulay, for it was he, who said—

‘India now is like Europe in the fifth century.’ Yes, a stupendous process indeed. The process has gone on with marvellous success, and if we all, according to our various lights, are true to our colours, that process will go on. Whatever is said, I for one—though I am not what is commonly called an Imperialist—so far from denying, I most emphatically affirm, that for us to preside over this transition from the fifth European century in some parts, in slow, uneven stages, up to the twentieth—so that you have before you all the centuries at once as it were—for us to preside over that, and to be the guide of peoples in that condition, is, if conducted with humanity and sympathy, with wisdom, with political courage, not only a human duty, but what has been often and most truly called one of the most glorious tasks ever confined to any powerful State in the history of civilised mankind.

MEMORANDUM ON THE PROPOSED REFORMS*

We are extremely obliged to your Lordship for granting us the opportunity to place before you the views of the Moslems of India on the question of the important reforms, which under your Lordship’s auspices, are to be introduced in India. We come, not only on behalf of the League in London, but also in India, for we have been authorised to represent their case before your Lordship. They deemed it advisable to send delegates over to cooperate with us in this matter, but, considering the difficulty and the delay it involved, they decided at present to leave representation of their case in our hands. We are conscious of their responsibility that has been imposed on us, and we only hope, my Lord, that we shall be able to

*Submitted by a deputation of the London Branch of the All-India Muslim League to the Secretary of State for India (Lord Morley) on 27 January, 1909.

do our duty satisfactorily to our people, and also to be of some assistance to your Lordship. Before proceeding to state our views on specific points, I shall ask permission to make one or two preliminary remarks. We welcome most cordially, most heartily, the extension of political privileges to His Majesty's Indian subjects. But to make the projected reforms a real success our cooperation with the servants of the Crown and our fellow-subjects is as much needed as it is in all matters concerning the progress and welfare of the country. My Lord, whilst we welcome these reforms, we welcome them in the conviction that, in their practical application, our status and interests will be kept in view. We do not wish, and cannot consent, to be placed in a disadvantageous position. We are anxious that whatever boons are conferred on, whatever political concessions are made to the people of India, we should have our legitimate share in those concessions. We ask for nothing in derogation of the just rights of any other people. We seek no special privileges; we want only our legitimate share in political rights and political privileges, and nothing more. If, in the language of the Royal Message to the princes and peoples of India, new avenues are opened out for the participation of educated Indians in the government of the country, our people wish that their share should be kept in view. If new elements are to be introduced into any of the great Departments of State, we expect in fairness and justice, that they should be equally balanced; and if any important departure is made in administrative policy, we want that the interests of the two great communities in India should be so coordinated that neither the one nor the other should be in a position to say its interests were sacrificed or subordinated to the interests of the other. That is the position we take up. The foundation of British rule in India rests upon the conviction among the people that equal justice is the chief policy of the British Government in its dealings with the varied races of that Continent. Speaking with the full consciousness of the responsibility imposed upon me, I say it would be an evil day for India if any class or any community comes to think that the interests of one community are in any way subordinated to the interests

of the other. It has been said that the Mahomedans form a minority among the population of India. There, they do not equal in numbers the other great community which inhabits India, but they are seventy million souls, fifty-three of whom are under British rule. They have common ideals, and by traditions of race and religion form a nationality apart from all other people in India. To call them a minority is a misapplication of the term, and to regard them in that light would be an injustice to the Mussulman people. We form a nationality as important as any other, and our wishes, sentiments and interests should, we conceive, form as important factors in the consideration of policy and measures as those of any other. If the vast masses of low-caste people who are nominally Hindus were excluded from the Hindu figures, certainly the disparity which now appears between the Hindu and Mahomedan populations would not strike as so great or so disproportionate. These tribes and communities, nominally Hindu for the purposes of census, have nothing in common with the real Hindu, to whom their touch, often their very shadow, is pollution. They can never rise out of the degraded state in which they live and have lived for centuries. Save the British Official, they have no representative or protector. Some of them have made desperate efforts to break the shackles that have bound them for ages, but they have been thrust back to their thralldom by, among other things, the judicial recognition of ancient usages. In the great reforms about to be introduced they will have no lot or place, nor are your Lordship's benevolent intentions ever likely to reach their ears. They have remained, and will remain for many decades, may be centuries, the degraded castes of India. But it would be disastrous if by placing all power and influence in the hands of privileged classes their emancipation should be made difficult in the future. To include these communities, however, in the Hindu population, and then to compare it with the Mahomedan population, does not appear to us just.

I now come on to the specific points which we wish to place before Your Lordship for consideration. The first is the question

of joint electorates. We feel that to confine the election of our representatives to joint electorates would be most detrimental to the Mussulman people. Your Lordship is aware of the sharp cleavage that has taken place recently between the political conceptions of the Mahommedan people and some section of the other communities. You are also aware of the other divergencies which exist between the Mahommedans and the non-Moslem people in India, divergencies which ramify in all directions. It might perhaps startle people in England if they were told of the trifling incidents which often inflame passions on both sides. I do not wish to dwell particularly on the character of these incidents. I only refer to them to show the gulf which still separates the rank and file and of the two communities, and which the administrator must always keep in view and the statesman take into consideration, when dealing with general questions affecting both the races. Having these divergencies in view and the cleavage which has recently taken place, the Mussulmans of India consider it extremely important that their representation should not be dependent on the goodwill of any other people. The important deputation that waited upon the Viceroy in 1906 emphatically urged upon His Excellency that the separate representation of the Mahommedans should begin from the lowest rung of the ladder and go up to the highest, namely, the Viceregal Council. In that way along will they get any benefit from the concessions which are so generously going to inaugurate in India. It is admitted that Mahommedan representation has been most meagre under the present system on rural and district boards and municipal corporations. They serve as practical illustrations of what will happen if the system of joint electorates for the Councils (is) introduced. The Government of India has admitted that Mahommedan representation has been most unsatisfactory so far, and for that reason, proposes a supplemental addition of Mahommedan members elected by Mahommedans. If it be admitted that the nominees of another body, not altogether in agreement with Mahommedan opinions, cannot really or effectively represent Mahommedan wishes and feelings, in that case the matter does not require further discussion.

We say, further, that the principle of proportional representation would be fatal to our interests. The Government of India recognises, if I am not mistaken, the difficulty of meeting the requirements of the Mussulman people, if its representation is to be based on a consideration of numbers. Whatever may be the value of the system of proportional representation in countries where the people are in the main homogeneous, we submit it is wholly unsuited to India. Save and except in the Punjab, where the Mussulmans preponderate in numbers, there is hardly any approximation between the two races. The Mahommedans say, that if proportional representation happens to be introduced into India their representation would be completely swamped. In answer to this, it is said the Government can hardly take into consideration the political and historical importance of any community in judging of the question of representation, and the Mahommedan position is compared to that of the Sikhs and the Parsees. We submit respectfully, but emphatically, that the position of the Mussulman people has no analogy to that of the minor communities of India. Neither in importance nor in numbers are they in any way analogous to them. We share the burden of defending the empire to the same extent as our fellow countrymen, and we probably supply to the Indian Army a larger number of soldiers than most others. It is easy to say, if representation is to be conceded to Mahommedans on considerations of political and historical importance, the Sikhs should also be taken into account. That is a false analogy. In the first place, the Sikhs are accounted as Hindus, and in the second place, they number not more than two million souls. The Mahommedans stand on a totally different footing, and we submit that their position should be considered on a totally different basis. That other element besides mere numbers must enter into consideration in determining the number of representatives from each community is clear from the case of Eastern Bengal. Here the Mahommedans are in overwhelming majority. Supposing they were to ask that Mohammedans representation should be preponderant, they would be met with the answers; look at the:

pleaders and lawyers, spread all over the country, who dominate the counsels of Government, they are Hindus, and come from Eastern Bengal ; look at the merchants, traders and landlords, who have taken the place of the Mahommedan zamindars and see how important they are. And the relative positions of the two communities would justly be taken into account in fixing their representation. If that argument is good for one people in Eastern Bengal, it applies with equal force in the United Provinces, the Mahommedans are 14 per cent of the population, whilst the Hindus are said to be 86 per cent, although if the degraded castes were eliminated from these figures the disparity would not be so great. Considering the admitted importance of the Mahommedans in the social economy of the province, they ought to have far greater representation than is proposed to be conceded to them. We say, therefore, that the principle of proportional representation is not applicable to India and, if introduced, would be most prejudicial to the interests of the Mahommedan community. We submit that the ratio of representation should be left to the executive authority, to be determined upon considerations of Imperial policy and local conditions and circumstances. Our representation, we beg to urge, should be not only adequate, but substantial in order to give us an effective voice in the deliberations of the various assemblies. Having in view the fact under these reforms the privileges of the non-official members will be considerably extended, it is extremely important that our community should be represented in sufficient numbers to be able to exercise some weight, some influence on the Councils. My people will not be content with any representation which is less than adequate and substantial. On general questions racial and religious differences will probably not enter into competition, but contingencies are certain to arise in which the interests or the views of the two communities do not coincide. On these occasions it would be necessary to take into account the balance of parties. We submit that in the constitution of the Councils it should be the aim of His Majesty's Government, and of the Government of India, to have them so balanced that not only the administrative

machinery should run smoothly, but also that no party should be able to outvote the just claims of a less powerful party. We, therefore, submit as a standard of adequate representation that the number of Mahommedan members on the several Councils should be so fixed that if the Mahommedans were to join a certain number of what may be called non-partisan members, or to receive their support on any particular question, the issue may be decide accordingly. Unless some standard of that kind is adopted, and our position sufficiently assured on the reformed Councils, our representation will be anomalous, and our representative will exercise little influence or weight. One other matter we wish to lay before your Lordship which is embodied in paragraph 21 of our Representation : 'The Committee further submit that as in the opinion of His Majesty's Government the time has arrived for the introduction of the Indian element into the Executive Councils, in the interests of the Empire, both the great communities should be represented. Consider that the introduction of a member from one community only will be regarded as seriously prejudicing the rights and interests of the other.' Our people believe, my Lord, that representatives from both communities as advisers to the Government of India—whatever may be the designation given to them—would be of great assistance in the administration of that country. But they consider it would give rise to serious difficulties if one community was represented and the other left out. We thank your Lordship for the patience with which you have listened to me. I know that the task you have undertaken is one of the most stupendous character which any Minister of the Crown in your position has undertaken, but our people feel sure that at this stage, which we consider to be the turning point in our national existence, the balance will be maintained fairly and equitably, and our interests will not be subordinated to that of any other community.

The following memorial was submitted :

'Whilst offering their loyal and cordial support to the general and animating principles of the Scheme, the Committee

feel bound to state that some of the proposals are viewed with serious apprehension and misgiving by their people as likely to prove detrimental to Muslim interests. They, therefore, beg to place before his Lordship as explicitly and clearly as possible the Muslim case.....

'The claim of the Muslim community to adequate representation on the Imperial and Provincial Councils, commensurate with its numbers and political and historic importance, has been admitted and urged with considerable force by the Government of India in its circular letter dated 24th August 1907, and its letter to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State, dated the 1st October 1908.

'In its circular letter referred to above, the Government of India further pointed out that under the system of election hitherto in force, Hindus largely predominate in all or almost all the electorates with this result that comparatively few Muslim members have been elected. These have been supplemented by nominations made by the Government. But the total representation thus effected has not been commensurate with the weight to which the Muslim community is entitled ; and it has, moreover, been strongly urged that even the system of nomination has frequently failed to secure the appointment of Muslims of the class by whom the community desires to be represented.

'In his despatch of the 27th November 1908, paragraph 9, his Lordship gives emphatic expression to his agreement with the opinion of the Government of India that the Muslims should be adequately represented on the enlarged Councils. His Lordship says : "I agree also that the Legislative Councils should reflect the leading elements of the population at large, and that not system of representation would be satisfactory, if it did not provide for the presence in the Councils of sufficient representatives of communities so important as are the Muslims and the landed class.

'The Committee beg respectfully to state that the entire Muslim people view his Lordship's suggestions with grave

misgiving as calculated to subject Muslim representation to the good will of a rival community—and place Muslim interests in their hands.

‘In common with other well-wishers of India the Committee look forward to a time when the development of a true spirit of compromise or the fusion of the races may make the principles indicated by his Lordship capable of practical application without sacrificing the interests of any of the nationalities or giving political ascendancy to one to the disadvantage of the others. But the Committee venture to think that, however ready the country may be for constitutional reforms, the interests of the two great communities of India must be considered and dealt with separately as is indeed admitted in theory by his Lordship.

‘In order that Muslim representation may be real and not merely nominal or illusory, it is essential that the Muslim representatives should voice their feelings and sentiments and advocate the policy which commends itself to the best minds of their own community. Under the system of an electoral college consisting of say 75 Hindus and 25 Muslims, the Muslim who would be elected would be a mere nominee of the majority.

‘Moreover, in places where the influence of the Mahajan and legal classes is preponderant it would, in any circumstances, be used in favour of Muslim candidates whose views are not acceptable to the general body of their people; the mischief would be intolerably aggravated in the case of joint electorates.

‘The Committee have noticed a statement that Muslim apprehensions in respect of joint electoral colleges are unfounded in as much as if one Muslim was returned by the collective votes of the Muslim electors, and another was returned by a large number of votes from the majority, the result would be that there would be two Muslim representatives instead of one. Whatever may have been the intention, the

Committee find no warrant for this contention in the wording of his Lordship's Despatch. Judging from the context they conceive the only effect of the Muslim having large number of votes either entirely composed of Hindu votes or partly Hindu and partly Muslim votes would be to put out of the field the candidate who relied on Muslim votes alone.

'Assuming, however, that the view suggested is correct it implies a serious danger to the Muslim people. A nominee of the majority professing to represent the Muslim community but out of harmony with their general sentiments and opinions would be the cause of constant friction and the advantages anticipated from the Electoral Colleges will be more than counter-balanced by the complaints and heart burnings that are certain to result therefrom.

'The Committee believe that if just and equitable considerations were to demand the grant to their community of a double vote, His Majesty's Government would not be deterred from that course by the apprehended resentment of other interested classes of the population. Save as regards University representation in which both communities have the privilege of double voting, the Muslim subjects of His Majesty, so long as they can obtain adequate and substantial communal representation on the Councils, the Rural and District Boards and Corporations, with the right of electing their own representatives, do not ask for double votes. Muslim representation on such basis is more likely to lead to concord between the two communities and harmonious working on representative bodies, than if it were merely nominal, for the majority would in such a case be more inclined to conciliate and regard Muslim opinion than when in a position to override it.

'The Committee, on behalf of the Muslims of India, wish to disclaim all idea of racial prejudice or any desire to seek special privileges. They wish to affirm their anxiety to work in cordial co-operation and harmony with all loyal classes of His Majesty's subjects in the promotion of the general interest of the country,

But they cannot ignore the divergencies which still divide the races of India, and which they believe time and general progress under a sympathetic and enlightened rule can alone remove.

‘The political and historical position of the Muslim community has been spoken of recently in somewhat slighting terms. With reference to that the Committee desire to offer no remarks. But they beg humbly to observe that the loyalty of the Muslim people is an asset to the Empire and merits some consideration. The Muslim population numbering 53 millions can hardly be dealt with as a minority, or have their status regarded as analogous to that of the minor communities of India. Though living inter-mixed with the non-Muslims they form a distinct nationality divided by traditions of race, religion and ideals. However, much their presence may be deprecated by some of their neighbours, they are important factors to be reckoned with in the administration of the country.

‘The principle of proportional representation, whatever its value to Western Europe where the people are in the main, homogeneous and animated by common ideals and sentiments, is unsuited, the Committee respectfully submit, to a country where the rank and file are still so sharply divided. What is part of the religion of one people is abhorred by the other, whilst in places, the touch of an outsider, if not his very shadow, amounts to pollution.’

‘The Committee beg to affirm most emphatically that their people ask for nothing in derogation of the just rights of any other class or community; they seek simply to obtain a fair and just recognition of the legitimate claims that they may in future occupy a position in the Councils of Government consistent with the numbers and political status. Whilst anxious to work in a spirit of compromise, and in concord, harmony and in co-ordination with the Hindu community, they are not disposed to place themselves in subordination to any class or people in India, or to consent to follow any policy that may be dictated by the majority.’

**MORLEY'S REPLY TO THE DEPUTATION OF
THE LONDON BRANCH OF THE ALL-INDIA
MOSLEM LEAGUE**

I am delighted to meet you to-day, because I have always felt in my political experience, now pretty long, that it is when face answers to face that you come best to points of controversial issue. I have listened to the able speech of my friend Mr. Ameer Ali and to the speech that followed, with close attention, not merely for the sake of the arguments upon the special points raised, but because the underlying feeling and the animating spirit of the two speeches are full of encouragement. Why? Because instead of any hostile attitude to our reforms: as a whole, I find that you welcome them cordially and with gratitude. I cannot say with what satisfaction I receive that announcement. If you will allow me, I will, before I come to the special points, say a few words upon the general position.

It is only five weeks, I think, since our scheme was launched, and I am bound to say that at the end of those five weeks the position may fairly be described as hopeful and promising. I do not think that the millennium will come in five more weeks, nor in fifty weeks; but I do say that for a scheme of so wide a scope to be received as this scheme has been received, is a highly encouraging sign. It does not follow that because we have launched our ship with a slant of fair wind, this means the same thing as getting into harbour. There are plenty of difficult points that we have got to settle. But when I try from my conning-tower in this office, to read the signs in the political skies, I am full of confidence. The great thing is that in every party both in India and at home in every party, and every section, and every group—there is a recognition of the magnitude and the gravity of the enterprise on which we have embarked. I studied very closely the proceedings at Madras, and the proceeding at Amritsar, and in able speeches made in both those places I find a truly political spirit in the right sense of the word—in the sense of perspective and proportion—which I sometimes wish could be imitated by some of my political

friends nearer home. I mean that issues, important enough but upon which there is some difference, are put aside—for the time only, if you like, but still put aside—in face of the magnitude of the issues that we present to you in these reforms. On Monday, in *The Times* newspaper, there was a long and most interesting communication from Bombay, written, I believe, by a gentleman of very wide Indian knowledge and level-headed humour. What does he say? He takes account of the general position as he found it in India shortly after my Despatch arrived. 'I might have dwelt,' he says, 'upon the fact that I have not met a single official who does not admit that some changes which should gratify Indian longings were necessary, and I might have expatiated upon the abounding evidence that Lord Morley's despatch and speech have unquestionably eased a tension which had become exceedingly alarming.' That is a most important thing, and I believe Parliament has fully recognised it.

We cannot fold our arms and say that things are to go on as they did before, and I rejoice to see what this gentleman says. He is talking of officials, and I always felt from the beginning that if we did not succeed in carrying with us the goodwill of that powerful service, there would be reason for suspecting that we were wrong upon the merits, and even if we were not wrong on the merits, there would be reason for apprehending formidable difficulties. I have myself complete confidence in them. I see in some journals of my own party suspicions thrown upon the loyalty of that service to His Majesty's Government of the day. It is absurd to think anything of the kind. If our policy and our proposals receive the approval of Parliament and the approval of officials, such as those spoken of in *The Times* the other day, I am perfectly sure there will be no more want of goodwill and zeal on the part of the Indian Civil Service, than there would be in the officers of his Majesty's Fleet, or his Majesty's Army. It would be just the same. I should like to read another passage from *The Times* letter: 'It would probably be incorrect to say that the bulk of the Civil Service in the Bombay Presidency are gravely apprehensive. Most of them

are not unnaturally anxious'—I agree ; it is perfectly natural that they should be anxious—“but the main officials in whose judgment most confidence can be placed, regard the future with the buoyant hopefulness without which an Englishman in India is lost indeed.’ All that is reassuring, and no sign nor whisper reaches me that any responsible man or any responsible section or creed, either in India or here, has any desire whatever to wreck our scheme. And let me go further. Statesmen abroad showing themselves capable of reflection, are watching us with interest and wishing us well. Take the remarkable utterance of President Roosevelt the other day at Washington. And if we turn from Washington to Eastern Europe, I know very well that any injustice, any suspicion that we were capable of being unjust, to Mahommedans in India, would certainly provoke a severe and injurious reaction in Constantinople. I am alive to all these things. Mr. Ameer Ali said he was very sure the Secretary of State would meet out just and equitable treatment to all interests, if their views were fairly laid before him. He did me no more than justice. The Government are zealous and in earnest, acting in thorough good faith, in the desire to press forward these proposals. I may tell you that our Bill is now quite ready. I shall introduce it at the first minute after the Address is over, and, when it reaches the Commons, it will be pressed forward with all the force and resolution that Parliamentary conditions permit. These are not mere pious opinions or academic reforms ; they are proposals that are to take Parliamentary shape at the earliest possible moment ; and after taking Parliamentary shape, no time will, I know, be lost in India in bringing them as rapidly as possible into practical operation.

Now the first point Mr. Ameer Ali made was upon the unfairness to the members of the Mahommedan community, caused by reckoning in the Hindu census a large multitude of men who are not entitled to be there. I submit that it is not very easy—and I have gone into the question very carefully—to divide these lower castes and to classify them. Statisticians would be charged will putting too many into either one or the

other division, wherever you choose to draw the line. I know the force of the argument, and am willing to attack to it whatever weight it deserves. I wish some of my friends in this country would study the figures of what are called the lower castes, because they would then see the enormous difficulty and absurdity of applying to India the same principles that are excellent guides to Westerners who have been bred on the pure milk of the Benthamite word—one man one vote and every man a vote. That dream, by the way, is not quite realised even in this country ; but the idea of insisting on a principle of that sort is irrational to anybody who reflects on this multiplicity and variety of races and castes.

Then there is the question of the joint electorate—what is called the mixed paragraph in the paper that you were good enough to send to me. You recognise the very principle that was at the back of our minds, when we came to the conclusion about mixed electoral college. You say : ‘In common with other well-wishers of India, the Committee look forward to a time when the development of a true spirit of compromise, or the fusion of the races, may make principles indicated by his Lordship capable of practical application without sacrificing the interests of any of the nationalities, or giving political ascendancy to one to the disadvantage of others. But the Committee venture to think that, however ready the country may be for constitutional reforms, the interests of the two great communities of India must be considered and dealt with separately.’ Therefore, to begin with, the difference between us in principle about the joint electorate is only this : we are guilty of nothing worse than that we were premature, in the views of these gentlemen—we were impatient idealists. You say to me, ‘It is very fine ; we hope it will all come true ; but you are premature ; we must wait.’ Still though premature, I observe that your own suggestion in one of those papers adopts and accepts the principle of the scheme outlined in our despatch. It is quite true to say, ‘Oh, but you are vague in your despatch’. Yes, a despatch is not a Bill. A Minister writing a despatch does not put in all the clauses and sections and subsections and schedules.

It is the business of a Minister composing a despatch like mine of 27 November 1908 to indicate only general lines—general enough to make the substance and body of the scheme intelligible, but still general. I should like to say a word about the despatch. It is constantly assumed that in the despatch we prescribed and ordered the introduction of the joint electoral college. If any of you will be good enough to look at the words, you will find that no language of that sort—no law of the Medes and Persians—is to be found in it. If you refer to paragraph 12 you will see that our language is this :

‘I suggest for your consideration that the object in view might be better secured, at any rate in the more advanced provinces in India, by a modification of the system of popular electorate founded on the principle of electoral colleges.’

You see it was merely a suggestion thrown out for the Government of India, not a direction of the Mede and Persian stamp. You say, ‘That for the purpose of electing members to the Provincial Councils, electoral colleges should be constituted on lines suggested by his Lordship, composed exclusively of Mahommedans whose numbers and mode of grouping should be fixed by executive authority.’ This comes within the principle of my despatch, and we shall see—I hope very speedily—whether the Government of India discover objections to its practicability. Mark, electoral colleges ‘composed exclusively of Mahommedans whose members and mode of grouping should be fixed by executive authority’—that is a proposition which is not outside the despatch. Whether practicable or not it is a matter for discussion between us here and the Government of India.

The aim of the Government and yours is identical—that there shall be (to quote Mr. Ameer Ali’s words) ‘adequate, real, and genuine Mahommedan representation.’ Now, where is the difference between us? The machinery we commended, you do not think possible. As I have told you, the language of the despatch does not insist upon a mixed electoral college. It

would be no departure in substance from the purpose of our suggestion, that there should be a separate Mahommedan electorate—as electorate exclusively Mahommedan ; and in view of the wise and remote distances, and difficulties of organisation in consequence of those distances in the area constituting a large province, I am not sure that this is not one of those cases where election by two stages would not be convenient, and so there might be a separate electoral college exclusively Mahommedan. That is, I take it, in accordance with your own proposal. There are various methods by which it could be done. In the first place an election exclusively Mahommedan might be direct into the Legislative Council. To this it may be said that it would be impossible by reason of distance. In the second place, you could have an election by separate communities to a local board, and the local board should be the electoral college, the Mahommedans separating themselves, from the other members of the board for that purpose. *Thirdly*, the members of the local board, the communities being separate in the same way, could return a member for the electoral college. *Fourthly*, you might have a direct election to an electoral college by the community, and this electoral college would return a representative to the Legislative Council. These, you see, are four different expedients which well deserve consideration for attaining our end.

I go to the next point, the apprehensions lest if we based our system on numerical strength alone, a great injustice would be done to your community. Of course, we all considered that from the Viceroy downwards. Whether your apprehensions are well founded or not, it is the business of those who call themselves statesmen to take those apprehensions into account, and to do the best we can in setting up a working system to allay and meet such apprehensions. If you take numerical strength as your basis, in the Punjab and Eastern Bengal Mahommedans are in a decisive majority. In the Punjab the Moslem population is 53 per cent to 38 per cent Hindu. In Eastern Bengal 58 per cent are Moslem and 37 per cent are Hindu. Therefore, in those two provinces, on the numerical

basis alone, the Mahommedans will secure sufficient representation. In Madras, on the other hand, the Hindus are 89 per cent, against 6 per cent of Moslems, and, therefore numbers would give no adequate representation to Moslem opinion. In Bombay the Moslems are in the ratio of $3\frac{1}{2}$ to 14 millions—20 per cent to 77 per cent. The conditions are very complex in Bombay, and I need not labour the details of this complexity. I am inclined to agree with those who think that it might be left to the local Government to take other elements into view required or suggested by local conditions. Coming to the United Provinces, there the Moslems are $6\frac{1}{2}$ millions to $40\frac{1}{2}$ Hindus—14 per cent to 85 per cent. This ratio of numerical strength no more represents the proportions in the elements of weight and importance, than in Eastern Bengal does the Hindu ratio of 37 per cent to 58 per cent of Moslems. You may set off each of those two cases against the other. Then there is the great province of Bengal, where the Moslems are one quarter of the Hindus—9 millions to 39 millions—18 per cent to 77 per cent.

We all see, then, that the problem presents extraordinary difficulty. How are you going in a case like the United Provinces, for example, to secure that adequate and substantial representation, which it is the interest and the desire of the Government for its own sake to secure. No fair-minded Moslem would deny in Eastern Bengal, and more than a fair-minded non-Moslem would deny it in the United Provinces, that there is no easy solution. You see, gentlemen, I do not despair of finding a fair-minded man in a controversy of this kind. From information that reaches me I do not at all despair of meeting fair-minded critics of both communities, in spite of the sharp antagonism that exists on many matters between them. But whatever may be the case with Mahommedans and Hindus, there is one body of men who are bound to keep a fair mind, and that is the Government. The Government are bound, whatever you may do among yourselves, strictly, and I will even say sternly, to insist on overcoming all obstacles in a spirit of absolute equity. Now, what is the object of the

Government ? It is that the Legislative Councils should represent truly and effectively, with a reasonable approach to the balance of real social forces, the wishes and needs of the communities themselves. That is the object of the Government, and in face of a great problem of that kind, algebra, arithmetic, geometry, logic – none of these things will do your business for you. You have to look at it widely and away from those sciences, excellent in their place, but not of much service when you are solving awkward political riddles. I think if you allow some method of leaving to a local authority the power of adding to the number of representatives from the Mahommedan community, or the Hindu community, as the case may be, that might be a possible and prudent way of getting through this embarrassment. Let us all be clear of one thing, namely and I thought of this when I heard one or two observations that fell from Mr. Ameer Ali—that no general proposition can be wisely based on the possession by either community, either of superior civil qualities or superior personal claims. If you begin to introduce that element, you perceive the perils to that peace and mutual goodwill which we hope to emerge by and by, though it may take longer than some think. I repeat that I see no harm from the point of view of a practical working compromise, in the principle that population, or numerical strength, should be the main factor in determining how many representatives should sit for this-or the other community ; but modifying influences may be both wisely and equitably taken into account in allotting the numbers of such representatives.

As regards Indian members on the Executive Council, if you will allow me to say so, I think it was dubious tactics in you to bring that question forward. We were told by those who object, for instance, to my recommending to the Crown an Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive—that it will never do ; that if you choose a man of one community, the other will demand a second. The Executive Council in all—this will not be in the Bill—consists of six members. Suppose there were to be two vacancies, and I were to recommend to the Crown the appointment of one Mahommedan and one Hindu, the

effect would be that of the six gentlemen one-third would be non-English. You may think that all right, but it would be a decidedly serious step. Suppose you say you will bring in a Bill, then for the purpose of appointing an extra member always to be an Indian. That is much more easily said than done. I am talking perfectly plainly. You would not get such a Bill. I want to talk even more plainly. I want to say that reference to the Hindu community or the Mahommedan community, in respect to the position of the Viceroy's Executive, is entirely wide off the mark in the view. I know, both of the Viceroy and of myself. If, as I have already said I expect, it may be my duty by and by to recommend to the Crown the name of an Indian member, it will not be solely for the sake of placing on the Viceroy's Executive Council an Indian member simply as either a Hindu or a Mahommedan. Decidedly we are of opinion that the Governor-General in Council will be all the more likely to transact business wisely, if he has a responsible Indian adviser at his elbow. But the principle in making such a recommendation to the Crown, would be to remove the apparent disability in practice—for here is no disability in law—of an Indian holding a certain appointment because he is an Indian. That is a principle we do not accept ; and the principle I should go upon—and I know Lord Minto would say exactly the same—is the desirability of demonstrating that we hold to the famous promise made in the proclamation of Queen Victoria in 1858, that if a man is fully qualified in proved ability and character to fill a certain post, he shall not be shut out by race or religious faith. There is a very great deal more to be said on this most important subject ; but to-day I need only tell you which I do with all respect, without complaining of what you have said, and without denying that in practical usage some day there may be means of alternation for meeting your difficulty—I see no chance whatever of our being able to comply with your present request.

I have endeavoured to meet you as fairly as I possibly could. I assure you again we are acting in earnest, with zeal and entire good faith ; and any suggestion that any member

of the Government, either in this office or the Government of India, has any prejudice whatever against Mahomedans, for the purposes of political administration in India, is one of the idlest and most wicked misapprehensions, that could possibly enter into the political mind. I am greatly encouraged by having met you. I am sure that you speak in the name of important bodies of your own countrymen and of your own community. I am sure that you are going to look at our proposals in a fair and reasonable spirit, and give us credit for a desire to do the best that we possibly can in the interests of all the communities in India, including also the interests of the British Government. I can only tell you further, that if this action of ours fails, miscarries, and is wrecked, it will take a considerable time before another opportunity occurs. You will never again—I do not care whether the time be long or be short—you will never again have the combination of a Secretary of State and a Viceroy, who are more thoroughly in earnest in their desire to improve Indian Government, and to do full justice to every element of the Indian population.

**MORLEY'S SPEECH ON THE SECOND READING
OF INDIAN COUNCILS BILL
(23 February, 1909)**

I invite the House to take to-day the first definite and operative step in carrying out the policy that I had the honour of describing to your Lordship just before Christmas, and that has occupied the active consideration both of the Home Government and of the Government of India for very nearly three years. The statement was awaited in India with an expectancy that with time became impatience, and it was received in India—and that, after all, is the point to which I looked with the most anxiety—with intense interest and attention and various degrees of approval, from warm enthusiasm to cool assent and acquiescence.

A few days after the arrival of my despatch, a deputation waited upon the Viceroy unique in its comprehensive character..

Both Hindus and Mahommedans were represented ; and they waited upon the Viceroy to offer warm expressions of gratitude for the scheme that was unfolded before them. A few days later at Madras the Congress met ; they, too expressed their thanks to the Home Government and to the Government of India. The Moslem League met at Amritsar ; they were warm in their approval of the policy which they took to be foreshadowed in the despatch, though they found fault with the defects they thought they had discovered in the scheme, and implored the Government, both in India and here, to remedy those defects. So far as I know and I do beg your Lordships to note these details of the reception of our policy in India—there has been no sign in any quarter, save in the irreconcilable camp, of anything like organised hostile opinion among either Indians or Anglo-Indians.

The Indian Civil Service I will speak of very shortly. I will pass them by for the moment. Lord Lansdowne said truly the other night that when I spoke at the end of December, I used the words 'formidable and obscure' as describing the situation, and he desired to know whether I thought the situation was still obscure and formidable. I will not abandon the words, but I think the situation is less formidable and less obscure. Neither repression on the one hand, nor reform on the other, could possibly be expected to cut the roots of anarchical crime in a few weeks. But with unfaltering repression on the one hand, and vigour and good faith in reform on the other, we see solid reason to hope that we shall weaken, even if we can destroy, those baleful forces.

There are, I take it, three classes of people that we have to consider in dealing with a scheme of this kind. There are the extremists, who nurse fantastic dreams that some day they will drive us out of India. In this group there are academic extremists and physical force extremists, and I have seen it stated on a certain authority—it cannot be more than a guess—that they do not number, whether academic or physical force extremists, more than one-tenth, or even three per cent, of

what are called the educated class in India. The second group nourish no hopes of this sort ; they hope for autonomy or self-government of the colonial species and pattern. The third section in this classification asks for no more than to be admitted to co-operation in our administration, and to find a free and effective voice in expressing the interests and needs of their people. I believe the effect of the reforms has been, is being, and will be, to draw the second class, who hope for colonial autonomy, into the ranks of the third class, who will be content with admission to a fair and workable co-operation. A correspondent wrote to me the other day and said :

‘We seem to have caught many discontented people on the rebound, and to have given them an excuse for a loyalty which they have badly wanted.’

In spite of all this, it is a difficult and critical situation. Still, by almost universal admission it has lost the tension that strained India two or three months ago, and public feeling is tranquillised, certainly beyond any expectation that either I or the Viceroy ventured to entertain.

The atmosphere has changed from dark and sullen to hopeful, and I am sure your Lordship will allow me to be equally confident that nothing will be done at Westminster to overcloud that promising sky. The noble Marquess the other day said—and I was delighted to hear it—that he, at all events, would give us, with all the reservations that examination of the scheme might demand from him, a whole-hearted support here, and his best encouragement to the men in India. I accept that, and I lean upon it, because if anything was done at Westminster, either by delay or otherwise, to show a breach in what ought to be the substantial unity of Parliamentary opinion in face of the Indian situation, it would be a marked disaster. I would venture on the point of delay to say this. Your Lordship will not suspect me of having any desire to hurry the Bill, but I remember that when Lord Cross brought in the Bill of 1892 Lord Kimberley, so well known and so popular in this

House, used language which I venture to borrow from him, and to press, upon your Lordship to-day.

‘I think it almost dangerous to leave a subject of this kind hung up to be perpetually discussed by all manner of persons, and, having once allowed that, at all events, some amendment is necessary in regard to the mode of constituting the Legislative Councils, it is incumbent upon the Government and Parliament to pass the Bill which they may think expedient as speedily as possible into law.’

Consideration of social order and social urgency in India make that just as useful to be remembered to-day, as it was useful then.

The noble Marquess the other day, in a very courteous manner, administered to me an exhortation and an admonition—I had almost said a lecture—as to the property of deferring to the man on the spot, and the danger of quarrelling with the man on the spot. I listened with becoming meekness and humility, but then it occurred to me that the language of the noble Marquess was not original. Those noble Lords who share the Bench with him, gave deep murmurs of approval to the homily that was administered to me. They forgot that they once had a man on the spot, the man then being that eminent and distinguished personage whom I may be allowed to congratulate upon his restoration to health and to his place in this Assembly. He said this, which the noble Marquess will see is a fair original for his own little discourse; it was said after the noble Lord had thrown up the reins :

‘What I wish to say to high officers of State and members of Government is this, as far as you can trust the man on the spot. Do not weary or fret or nag him with your superior wisdom. They claim no immunity from errors of opinion or judgment, but their errors are nothing compared with yours.’

The remonstrance, therefore, of Lord Curzon, addressed to the noble Lords sitting near him, is identical with the warning which I have laid to heart from the noble Marquess.

The House will pardon me if for a moment I dwell upon what by application is an innuendo conveyed in the admonition of the noble Marquess. I have a suspicion that he considered his advice was needed ; he expressed the hope that all who were responsible for administration in India would have all the power for which they had a right to ask. Upon that I can—though I am half reluctant to do it—completely clear my character. In December last, shortly before I addressed your Lordships, Lord Minto, having observed there was some talk of my interference with him and his Council, telegraphed these words, and desired that I should make use of them whenever I thought fit :

‘I hope you will say from me in as strong language as you may choose to use, that in all our dealings with sedition I could not be more strongly supported than I have been by you. The question of the control of Indian administration by the Secretary of State, mixed up as it is with the old difficulties of centralisation, we may very possibly look at from different point of view. But that has nothing to do with the support the Secretary of State gives to the Viceroy, and which you have given to me in a time of great difficulty, and for which I shall always be warmly grateful.’

The Marquess of Lansdowne

I think the noble Viscount will see from the report of my speech, that the part he has quoted had reference to measures of repression, and that what I said was that justice should be prompt, that it was undesirable that there should be appeals from one Court to another, or from provincial Governments to the Government in Calcutta, or from the Government at Calcutta to the Secretary of State for India. I did not mean to imply merely the Viceroy, but the men responsible for local government.

Viscount Morley

I do not think that when the noble Marquess refers to the report of his speech he will find I have misrepresented him.

At all events, he will, I do believe, gladly agree that, in dealing with sedition, I have on the whole given all the support the Government of India or anybody else concerned had a right to ask for.

I will now say a word about the Indian Civil Service. Three years ago, when we began these operations, I felt that a vital condition of success was that we should carry the Indian Civil Service with us, and that if we did not do this, we should fail. But human nature being what it is, and temperaments varying as they do, it is natural to expect a certain amount of criticism, minute criticism, and observation, I have had that, but will content myself with one quotation from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, well-known to the noble Lord opposite. What did he say, addressing the Legislative Council a few weeks ago ?

‘I hold that a solemn duty rests upon the officers of Government in all branches, and more particularly upon the officers of the Civil Service, so to comfort themselves in the conception and working of the new measures as to make the task of the people and their leaders easy. It is incumbent upon them loyally to accept the principle that these measures involve the surrender of some portion of the authority and control which they now exercise, and some modifications of the methods of administration. If that task is approached in a grudging or reluctant spirit, we shall be sowing the seeds of failure, and shall forfeit our claim to receive the friendly cooperation of the representatives of the people. We must be prepared to support, defend, and carry through the administrative policy, and in a certain degree even the executive acts of the Government in the Council, in much the same way as is now prescribed in regard to measures of legislation ; and we must further be prepared to discharge this task without the aid of a standing majority behind us. We will have to resort to the more difficult arts of persuasion and conciliation, in the place of the easier methods of autocracy. This is no small demand to make on the resources of a service whose training and traditions have hitherto led its

members rather to work for the people, than through the people or their representatives. But I am nevertheless confident that the demand will not be made in vain. For more than a hundred years, in the time of the Company and under the rule of the Crown, the Indian Civil Service has never failed to respond to whatever call has been made upon it or to adapt itself to the changing environment of the time. I feel no doubt that officers will be found who possess the natural gifts, the loyalty ; the imagination, and the force of character which will be requisite for the conduct of the administration under the more advanced form of Government to which we are about to succeed.'

These words I commend to your Lordships. They breathe a fine and high spirit ; they admirably express the feeling of a sincere man ; and I do not believe anybody who is acquainted with the Service doubts that this spirit, so admirably expressed, will pervade the Service in the admittedly difficult task that now confronts them.

The Bill is a short one, and will speak for itself. I shall be brief in referring to it, for in December last I made what was practically a Second-Reading speech. I may point out that there are two rival schools, and that the noble Lord opposite (Lord Curzon) may be said to represent one of them. There are two rival schools, one of which believes that better Government of India depends on efficiency, and that efficiency is in fact the main end of our rule in India. The other school, while not neglecting efficiency, looks also to what is called political concession, I think I am doing the noble Lord no justice in saying that, during his remarkable Viceroyalty, he did not accept the necessity for political concession, but trusted to efficiency. I hope it will not be bad taste to say in the noble Lords' presence, that you will never send to India, and you have never sent to India, a Viceroy his superior, if, indeed, his equal, in force of mind, in unsparing and remorseless industry, in passionate and devoted interest in all that concerns the well-being of India with an imagination fired by the grandeur

of the political problem that India presents—you never sent a man with more of all these attributes than when you send Lord Curzon. Both splendidly designed as was his work from the point of view of efficiency, he still left in India a state of things, when we look back upon it, that could not be held a satisfactory crowning of a brilliant and ambitious career.

I am as much for efficiency as the noble Lord, but I do not believe—and this is the difference between him and myself—that you can now have true, solid, enduring efficiency without what are called political concessions. I know the risks. The late Lord Salisbury, speaking on the last Indian Councils Bill, spoke of the risk of applying accidental machinery in India. Well, we ought to have thought of that before we applied occidental education, we applied that, and a measure of occidental machinery must follow. Legislative Councils once called into existence, than it was inevitable that you would have gradually, in Lord Salisbury's own phrase, to popularise them, so as to bring them into harmony with the dominant sentiments of the people in India. The Bill of 1892 admittedly contained the elective principle, and our Bill to-day extends that principle. The noble Lord (Viscount Cross) will remember the Bill of 1892, of which he had charge in the House of Commons. I want the House to be good enough to follow the line taken by Mr. Gladstone, because I base myself on that. There was an amendment moved and it was going to a division, But Mr. Gladstone begged his friends not to divide, because, he said, it was very important that we should present a substantial unity to India. This is upon the question of either House considering a Bill like the Bill that is now on the Table—a mere skeleton of a Bill if you like. I see it has been called vague and sketchy. It cannot be anything else, on the broad principle set out by Mr. Gladstone—

'It is the intention of the Government (that is, the Conservative Government) that a serious effort shall be made to consider carefully those elements which India in its present condition may furnish, for the introduction into the Councils

of India of the elective principle. If that effort is seriously to be made, by whom is it to be made? I do not think it can be made by this House, except through the medium of empowering provisions. The best course we could take would be to commend to the authorities of India what is a clear indication of the principles on which we desire them to proceed. It is not our business to devise machinery for the purpose of Indian Government. It is our business to give to those who represent Her Majesty in India ample information as to what we believe to be sound principles of Government; and it is, of course, the function of this House to comment upon any case in which we may think they have failed to give due effect to those principles.'

I only allude to Mr. Gladstone's words, in order to let the House know that I am taking no unusual course in leaving the bulk of the work, the details of the work, to the Government of India. Discussion, therefore, in Parliament will necessarily not, and cannot, turn substantially upon details. But no doubt it is desirable that the main heads of the regulations, rules, and proclamations to be made by the Government of India under sanction of the India Office, should be more or less placed within the reach and knowledge of the House so far as they are complete. The principles of the bill are in the Bill, and will be affirmed, if your Lordships are placed to read it a second time. The Committee points, important as they are, can well be dealt with in Committee. The view of Mr. Gladstone was cheerfully accepted by the House of Commons then, and I hope it will be accepted by your Lordship to-day.

There is one very important chapter in these regulations, which I think now on the Second Reading of the Bill, without waiting for Committee, I ought to say a few words to your Lordship about, I mean the Mahommedans. That is a part of the Bill and scheme that has no doubt attracted a great deal of criticism, and excited a great deal of feeling in that important community. We suggested to the Government of India a certain

plan. We did not prescribe it, we did not order it, but we suggested and recommended this plan for their consideration—no more than that. It was the plan of a mixed or composite Electoral College, in which Mahommedans and Hindus should pool their votes, so to say. The wording of the recommendation in my despatch was, as I soon discovered, an ambiguous—a grievous defect, of which I make bold to hope I am not very often in public business guilty. But to the best of my belief, under any construction the plan of Hindus and Mahommedans voting together, in a mixed and composite electorate, would have secured to the Mahommedan electors, wherever they were so minded, the chance of returning their own representative in their due proportion. The political idea at the bottom of this recommendation, which has found so little favour, was that such composite action would bring the two great communities more closely together and this hope of promoting harmony was held by men of high Indian authority and experience who were among my advisers at the India Office. But the Mahommedans protested that the Hindus would elect a pro-Hindu upon it, just as I suppose in a mixed college of say seventy-five Catholics and twenty-five Protestants voting together, the Protestants might suspect that the Catholics voting for the Protestant would choose what is called a Romanising Protestant, and as a little of a Protestant, as they could find. Suppose the other way, in Ireland there is an expression, a 'shoneen'—that is to say, a Catholic who, though a Catholic, is too friendly with English Conservatism and other influences which the Nationalists dislike. And it might be said, if there were seventy-five protestants against twenty-five Catholics, that the Protestants when giving a vote in the way of Catholic representation, would return 'shoneens'. I am not going to take Your Lordship's time up by arguing this to-day. With regard to scheme of proportional representation, as Calvin said of another study, 'Excessive study of the Apocalypse either finds a man mad, or makes him so.' At any rate, the Government of India doubted whether our plan would work and we have abandoned it. I do not think it was a bad plan, but it is of no use, if you are making an earnest attempt in good faith at a

general pacification, to let parental fondness for a clause interrupt that good process by sitting obstinately tight.

The Mahommedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them, and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahommedans have three or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore we are not without a precedent and a parallel, for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number of seats somewhat in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full. There is a third demand that, if there is a Hindu on the Viceroy's Executive Council—a subject on which I will venture to say something to your Lordships before I sit down—there should be two Indian members on the Viceroy's Council and one should be a Mahommedan. Well, as I told them and as I now tell your Lordships, I see no chance whatever of meeting their views in that way.

To go back to the point of the registers, some may be shocked at the idea of a religious register at all, a register framed on the principle of religious belief. We may wish—we do wish—that it were otherwise. We hope that time, with careful and impartial statesmanship, will make things otherwise. Only let us now forget that the difference between Mahommedanism and Hinduism is not a mere difference of articles of religious faith or dogma. It is a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in all the social things as well as articles of belief, that constitute a community. Do not let us forget what makes it interesting and even exciting. Do not let us forget that, in talking of Hindus and Mahommedans, we are dealing with, and are brought face to face with, vast historic issues. We are dealing with the very mightiest forces that through all the centuries and ages have moulded the fortunes of great states and the destinies of countless millions of man-

kind. Thoughts of that kind, my Lords, are what give to Indian politics and to Indian work extraordinary fascination, though at the same time they impose the weight of an extraordinary burden.

I come to the question which, I think, has excited, certainly in this country, more interest than anything else in the scheme before you—I mean the question of an Indian member on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The noble Marquess said here the other day that he hoped an opportunity would be given for discussing it. Whether it is in order or not—I am too little aversed in your Lordships' procedure to be quite sure but I am told that the rules of order in this House are of an elastic description and that I shall not be trespassing beyond what is right, if I introduce the point tonight. I thoroughly understand Lord Lansdowne's anxiety for a chance of discussion. It is quite true, and the House should not forget it, that this question is in no way whatever touched by the Bill. If this Bill were rejected by Parliament, it would be grievous disaster to peace and contentment in India, but it would not prevent the Secretary of State the very next morning from advising His Majesty to appoint an Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

The noble Marquess the other day fell into a slight error, if he will forgive me for saying so. He said that the Government of India had used cautious and tentative words, indicating that it would be premature to decide at once this question of the Indian member until after further experience had been gained. I think the noble Marquess must have lost his way in the mazes of that enormous Blue-Book which, as he told us, caused him so much inconvenience, and added so much to his excess luggage during the Christmas holidays. The despatch, as far as I can discover, is silent altogether on the topic of the Indian member of the Viceroy's Council, and deals only with the Councils of Bombay and Madras and the proposed Councils for the Lieutenant-Governorships.

Perhaps I might be allowed to remind your Lordships of the Act of 1833—certainly the most extensive and important measure of Indian government between Mr. Pitt's famous Act of 1784, and Queen Victoria's assumption of the government of India in 1858. There is nothing more important than that Act. It lays down in the broadest way possible the desire of Parliament that there should be no difference in appointing to offices in India between one race and another, and the covering despatch written by that memorable man, James Mill, wound up by saying that—

'For the future, fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility.'

I need not quote the famous paragraph in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. Every Member of the House who takes an interest in India, knows that by heart. Now, the noble Marquess says that his anxiety is that nothing shall be done to impair the efficiency of the Viceroy's Council. I share that anxiety with all my heart. I hope the noble Marquess will do me the justice to remember that in these plans I have gone beyond the Government of India, in resolving that a permanent official majority shall remain in the Viceroy's. Lord MacDonnel said the other day :

'I believe you cannot find any individual native gentleman who is enjoying general confidence, who would be able to give advice and assistance to the Governor-General in Council.'

Well, for that matter, it has been my lot twice to fill the not very exhilarating post of Chief Secretary for Ireland, and I do not believe I can truly say I ever met in Ireland a single individual native gentleman who 'enjoyed general confidence'. And yet I received at Dublin Castle most excellent and competent advice. Therefore I am not much impressed by that argument. The question is whether there is no one of the 300 millions of the population of India, who is competent to be the officially constituted adviser of the Governor-General in Council in the administration of Indian affairs. You make an Indian a judge of the High Court, and Indians have even been acting Chief

Justices. As to capacity, who can deny that they have distinguished themselves as administrators of native States, where a very full demand is made on their resources, intellectual and moral? It is said that the presence of an Indian member would cause restraint in the language of discussion. For a year and a half we have had two Indians on the Council of India, and we have none of us ever found the slightest restraint.

Then there is the question, what are you going to do about the Hindu and the Mahommedan? When Indians were first admitted to the High Courts, for a long time the Hindus were more fit and competent than the Mahommedans; but now I am told the Mahommedans have their full share. The same sort of operation would go on in quinquennial period in respect of the Viceroy's Council. Opinion amongst the great Anglo-Indian officers now at home is divided, but I know at least one, not at all behind Lord McDonnell in experience or mental grasp, who is strongly in favour of this proposal. One circumstance that cannot but strike your Lordships as remarkable, is the comparative absence of hostile criticism of this idea by the Anglo-Indian Press, and, as I am told, in Calcutta society. I was apprehensive at one time that it might be otherwise. I should like to give a concrete illustration of my case. The noble Marquess opposite said the other day that there was going to be a vacancy in one of the posts on the Viceroy's Executive Council—that is, the legal member's time would soon be up. Now, suppose there were in Calcutta an Indian lawyer of large practice and great experience in his profession—a man of unstained professional and personal repute, in close touch with European society, and much respected, and the actual holder of important legal office. Am I to say to this man—'In spite of all these excellent circumstances to your credit; in spite of the emphatic declaration of 1833 that fitness is undisputed, fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility; in spite of the noble promise in Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858—a promise of which every Englishman ought to be for ever proud if he tries to adhere to it, and ashamed if he tries to

betray or to mock it—in spite of all this, usage and prejudice are so strong, that I dare now appoint you, but must instead fish up a stranger to India from Lincoln's Inn or the Temple ?' Is there one of your Lordships who would envy the Secretary of State, who had to hold language of that kind to a meritorious candidate, one of the King's equal subjects ? I press it on your Lordships in that concrete way. Abstract general arguments are slippery. I do not say that there is no force in them, but there are deeper questions at issue to which both I and the Governor-General attach the greatest importance. My Lords, I thank you for your attention, and I beg to move the second readings.

THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY ON SEPARATE ELECTORATE FOR THE MUSLIMS*

The Earl of Ronaldshay moved, in sub-section (1), after the words 'with regulations made under this Act.' to insert the words 'provided that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation on all representative bodies, from the rural boards upwards to the Viceregal Council, be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahommedan community is to be filled by election, the necessary electorate be composed exclusively of Mahommedans.'

The object of moving this Amendment, as Hon. Members will see from the Paper, is to ensure the carrying out of a promise which was given to the Mahommedan community two and a-half years ago by the Viceroy, a promise which was subsequently reiterated and emphasised by the Secretary of State on the second reading of the Bill. The promise was to the effect that in the event of political privileges being extended to the peoples of India the Mahommedan community would be secured a share in those privileges commensurate not only with their numbers but with their historical and political importance. As to the methods by which it is proposed, or was

*Speech in the House of Commons, April-May, 1909.

proposed, to secure those ends, I shall have something to say in a moment, but I should like first of all to associate myself entirely with the Viceroy and the Government of India in their decision to grant to the Mahommedan community a share in those new privileges in excess of their actual numerical strength. The claim based upon historical reasons I do not think can be ignored. Hon. Members will recollect that it was from a Mahommedan sovereign that the East India Company acquired their rights in three of the richest provinces in India. It was a Mahommedan sovereign whose paramount influence was recognised by the East India Company, and many of the Hindu Chiefs are very proud of the titles presented to them by Mahommedan kings. The political importance of all this cannot be gainsaid, and in attempting to form a just estimate of the political importance of the Mahommedans we must cast our eyes far beyond the confines of the Indian Empire. We must remember that countries with whose destiny the destinies of our own country as an Eastern Power are indissolubly woven—Afghanistan, Persia, and Turkey—are countries peopled by Mahommedans, and are centres of Mahommedan power. But the influence of Mahommedans does not stop there, for we find that this race spreads itself over Africa, Central Asia, and some parts of China. Therefore, upon historical and political grounds alone, Mahommedans have a just claim to a substantial share in any political privileges which may be granted to the peoples of India.

But there is a further reason why the Mahommedans should be granted representation in excess of their actual number, and I think it is one which will appeal to Hon. Members as having greater practical validity than those reasons which I have already mentioned. The reason I allude to is that there are millions of people included for statistical purposes among the Hindus, who as a matter of fact, are not Hindus at all. If Hon. Members can bring themselves to delve into the Monstrous Blue Book presented by the India Office not very long ago—which, so far as arrangement is concerned, may be justly claimed to be the triumph of chaos over order—they will find

the following memorial from the Dravidians to the Government of Madras :

'The differences between the Hindu and the community of the memorialists are so great that it is a deplorable mistake to regard them as forming a part of the Hindus. There has been existing for centuries enmity and hatred between their community and that of the Hindus.'

That is only a single example, but I think it shows that it would be absurd to class these men, who number something like one-sixth of the total population of Madras, among the Hindus for representation purposes, though I have no doubt they are classed amongst them by the statistician. I quite agree that it is a very difficult thing to arrive at any accurate conclusion as to what the number of this class may be. One authority estimates them at 5,00,00,000, while the statisticians of the India Office estimate them at 3,80,00,000. That is sufficient to show that it would be grievously unjust to the Mahommedans to base their amount of representation upon a purely numerical basis. That being so, and the Government having come to the conclusion that the Mahommedans ought to be granted representation in excess of their actual numbers, it remains to be decided how this change is to be brought about. Upon that point the Mahommedans themselves had, and still have, very distinct and definite ideas. They maintain, and I think they very justly maintain, that this need cannot be supplied unless the Government accept two main principles, which are as follows : In the first place, the Mahommedans should be assigned a number of seats on the representative bodies in excess of their numerical strength, that number in all cases to be fixed by the Executive authority. The second principle is that whenever one of these seats assigned to the Mahommedans by Executive authority is to be filled by election the electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahommedans. I understand that the Government of India and the Government at home have accepted those two principles. I think the speech of the Viceroy and the speech made on the

second reading by the Secretary of State for India puts that matter absolutely beyond dispute. May I remind the House of the words used by the Viceroy two and a half years ago in replying to the Mahommedan deputation which waited upon him ? He said :

‘The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that in any system of representation whether it affects a municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahommedan community should be represented as a community, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community, and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you’.

That is a pretty definite expression of the Viceroy’s opinion, and he was entirely in accord with the Mahommedan deputation when they demanded from him these two principles. The words of the Secretary of State were no less definite, indeed, I think, they were more definite, and I will therefore venture to read to the House the words used by the Secretary of State for India upon the second reading of this Bill in another place. He said :

‘The Mahommedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them, and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mohammedans vote by themselves...Secondly, they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.’

I do not think even such a master of lucid explanation as the Prime Minister could have improved upon the lucidity of that pledge which was given by the Secretary of State for

India in another place. It may be asked why, after those definite pledges, I should have thought it necessary to move my amendment. It is because something like consternation has been created in the minds of Mahommedans here and in India by the speech made in this House last week on the Committee stage of the Bill by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury. He read a telegram as to the methods by which it was proposed to secure elections to these various bodies, and the telegram read as follows : 'The method proposed is simply that in general electorates, such as municipalities, district boards, and members of provincial councils, such as classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together.' I ask the particular attention of Hon. Members to these words : 'All sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together.' The words appear to me to constitute a direct reversal of the pledge given by the Viceroy. How the Government propose to reconcile their action with their promises passes my comprehension ; but that is not all. The Hon. Gentleman went on to say, 'By this means some, but not sufficient, representation will be obtained for Mahommedans, and in addition a certain number of seats will be reserved for the Mahommedans, and nobody but the Mahommedans.' That is in force at the present time. What does the Government of India say as to this system ? In a circular of 24th August 1907, paragraph 16, the Government of India said : 'Under the system of election hitherto in force, Hindus largely predominate in all, or almost all, the electorates, with the result that comparatively few Mahommedans members have been elected. These have been supplemented by nomination made by the Government.' But even so, 'the total representation thus effected has not been commensurate with the weight to which the Mahommedan community is entitled.' I should like to ask the Government how, by this mixed electorate, the Mahommedans will secure representation ? How do they know ? They do not know. They cannot know. If you take the United Provinces, in which there is a large and important Mahommedan community approximating 70,00,000 in number, you will find that under the system hitherto in force no single Mahommedan represen-

tative under a mixed electorate has ever found his way to a provincial council. May I take the case of proposed reconstituted council of the Viceroy as an example? As I understand it from the information at our disposal, there are 28 seats to be filled under a mixed electorate. The Government of India tell us that under a mixed electorate Mahommedans will secure 12 per cent of the seats on the legislative council. If the system works as the Government think it will work, the Mahommedans may possibly get seven elected members out of the 28 elected members. No one would regard that number as an adequate representation for the Mahommedans, still less as an adequate representation if they are promised to have a representation in excess of their numbers. May I add that the leaders of Mahommedan thought would not recognise a representative who is elected by others than Mahommedans. Every Mahommedan would say that every elected person of an electorate not exclusively Mahommedan will not be in the least the sort of man to represent real Mahommedan interests. I have one other thing to say. What Mahommedans say is that as far as every elected Mahommedan is concerned they require an exclusively Mahommedan electorate, as promised by the Viceroy. If they receive that they are quite willing, and are even anxious, to forego the privilege of voting for the election of every other electoral body. They would be quite content to have their own members and elect their own members to the councils. If an Hon. Member thinks that I have put an exaggerated case, or that I have said more than is really in the minds of the Mahommedan leaders, I ask his careful attention to this cable from India, which was received during the past week in reply to a speech of the Financial Secretary of the Treasury. *The Times* Correspondent at Lucknow cables as follows :

‘The Mahommedans are indignant at what they conceive to be the violation of the pledges given by Lord Minto and Lord Morley guaranteeing separate electorates. They consider Mr. Hobhouse’s statement in the House to mean that the Government accepts Mr. Gokhale’s proposals, which would

virtually place the Mahommedans absolutely in Hindu hands. Under mixed general electorates Congress Mohammedans will be freely elected to count as genuine Mahommedan representatives. Mahommedans protest against the surrender of their rights at the dictation of political agitators and are demanding separate electorates throughout.'

I commend these words also to the attention of Hon. Members :

'Meetings of protest have been arranged everywhere.' This telegram was dated 21st April.

The second telegram to which I will call attention is from a Mahommedan of great influence amongst his co-religionists in India, a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and one of the leading Talukadars of Oudh (Rajah of Mahmudabad), and this telegram is as follows :

'Protest against supplementary election. Demand separate electorate, otherwise reforms unless.'

And the third telegram is also from a Mahommedan of influence (Nawab of Dacca), and his telegram reads as follows :

'A mass meeting of 6,000 Mahommedans held here under my presidentship, three resolutions passed : the first opposing nomination, the second insisting upon separate election, and the third upon representation in excess of numerical proportion.'

I think anybody who reads these telegrams, which are the result of the speech of Hon. Gentleman last week, must realise that the Mahommedans throughout India are at present suffering under a sense of grievous wrong and of grievous injustice. They consider that the pledges which were given to them in the most explicit language by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State are being broken. And may I say this, in conclusion, that I personally have to desire whatsoever to identify myself with one of the great communities of India rather than with another. I have no reasons for espousing the cause of the

Mahommedans except this, that I believe, in the first place, that their demands are not only just, but that they are expedient under the present circumstances ; I believe, in the second place, that the Government have told them that they intend to meet the two demands to the full ; and, thirdly, I espouse their cause on this occasion because I foresee that if the Government of this country follow on a course which is in any way calculated to shake the faith of any great community in India in the inviolability of their pledged word they are going far to undermine the whole fabric of British supermacy in India.

**PRIVATE TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY MINTO TO
MORLEY, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA**

(2 May, 1909)

I have just arrived Simla and have consulted with H.D. who are in possession of all Mohammedan petitions. In their letter of 4th February the special Committees of All-India Moslem League expressed themselves as follows : 'The Despatch of the Government of India on the reform scheme, dated 1st October 1908, had carefully considered claim of Mahommedans and had provided for them the means of securing ten seats on Imperial Council, five by special electorate and almost certainly atleast five by general electorate out of 28 seats to be filled by elected members. This arrangement was in keeping with maintenance of principle of elective Mahommedan representation and had also the virtue of linking various class-interests together in the rural and territorial electorates'. The Mahommedans are under a heavy debt of gratitude to your Excellency and your Executive Council for the Despatch, which was characterised not only by foresighted statesmanship, but had great virtues of adjusting divergent claims and interests on considerate and equitable bases, and unless, in some form or other, the reform scheme is carried on the principles on which your Excellency's Despatch was based, I cannot foretell its grateful acceptance by the Mahommedans or any other minority great or small. These views were shared

by Deccan Moslem League, Bombay, and the Madras Presidency Moslem League also intimated general approval. In fact, the Government of India have received no representations from Mahommedans taking exception to any essential feature of proposals made in their despatch. The misunderstanding arising out of Hobhouse's speech is more complicated. The speech has been interpreted as meaning that major portion of representation accorded to Mahommedans is to be given through the mixed electorates, such as district boards and municipalities, on which they will vote conjointly with other classes and that the special electorate in which Mahommedans will vote separately are only intended to supplement general elections and will carry only a small number of seats. On that assumption it is urged that Mahommedans chosen by the mixed electorates will represent Hindu majority and not the Mahommedan community and that results will be similar to those apprehended in case of mixed electoral colleges. I need hardly say that this is not at all what we contemplated. Our intention was that Mahommedans should have by means of separate electorates, a number of seats closely approaching that to which their numerical proportion in the population would entitle them and that over and above this they would obtain some seats in mixed electorates such as district boards and municipalities, universities, Presidency corporations, and the landholders. In Bombay for example under the scheme detailed in my telegram of 8th February four seats are specially assigned to Mahommedans, and, in addition to these two Mahommedans will be elected by landholders and district bodies of Sind, so that they will secure a certain minimum of 6 or 28 per cent, their ratio to the general population being only 20. In the United Provinces, where they number only 14 per cent, they will have four special seats, or nearly 20 per cent of the seats assigned for election. Of course, the same ratio cannot be applied in all provinces, and allowances must be made for the status, character, and educational attainments of Mahommedan population in each case. There has been misapprehension of our views regarding nomination which

are intended to be merely a temporary expedient to be resorted to until the community should be ripe for election. I do not understand any Mahommedan here to claim concession suggested by Hobhouse namely that wherever elections are found possible they should be conducted on basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community. If interpreted literally that would involve having separate Mahommedan electotates within the various electorates proposed, such as Presidency corporations, district boards and municipalities, universities, landholders and the commercial community. This is manifestly impracticable, and has never been suggested. It could only be effected by re-casting the entire scheme and increasing maximum strength of all councils as fixed by bill, on the whole case my view is that present proposals, as now explained, do reasonably fulfil pledges given to Mahommedans.

MAHOMMEDAN REPRESENTATION ON THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS (1909)

The separate representation accorded to the Mahommedans by the Government of India in the Depatch under consideration is as follows :

<i>Legislative Councils</i>	<i>Total Number of Elected Members</i>	<i>Mahommedan Representatives</i>	<i>Percentage Col. 3 to Col. 2</i>	<i>Percentage of Mahommedans to total population</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Viceroy	28	6	21.4	23
Bombay	21	4	19	20
Bengal	26	4	15.3	18
Eastern Bengal and Assam	19	4	21	58
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14

Separate Mahommedan representation therefore is not, as was promised, in excess of their ratio to population in the four following Councils, *viz.*, the Viceroy's, Bombay, Bengal and Eastern Bengal and Assam. But in my opinion the Secretary of State is not pledged to give special representation to the Mahommedans in those provinces in which they are a majority of the population; special representation was demanded, and, as I understood, promised only as a means of safeguarding the interest of minorities. As the Mahommedans are in a majority in Eastern Bengal they need no special measures to protect their interests, and therefore no change need be made in the numbers assigned to the Legislative Council of Eastern Bengal and Assam, at least from the point of view of protecting Mahommedan interests.

There remain, therefore, three Councils—Bengal, Bombay, and the Viceroy's in the proposed constitution of which the pledges have not been kept. I proceed to make recommendations regarding them in order.

Bengal

The Government of India would assign to the Mahommedans four seats, or 15.3 per cent of the elected seats: the proportion of Mahommedans to the total population of Bengal is 18 per cent. In order to satisfy the pledges given the number of Mahommedan seats filled by separate election should be raised by one, *i.e.*, from four to five. Supposing the number of elected seats to remain the same, *viz.*, 26 Mahommedans would then have 19.2 per cent of the elected seats specially reserved for them. This would satisfy (but only just satisfy) the pledge that Mahommedan representation should be in excess of their numerical ratio to the population, I will move that the Local Government be directed to increase the separate Mahommedan representation in Bengal by the addition of one seat, and I would have to the Local Government to devise the means by which this redistribution of seats should be effected. It is clear there is considerable elasticity in the electorates (a), (b) and (c) of Head B. To the Municipalities and District Boards the

Lieutenant-Governor originally proposed to assign seven seats ; at the request of the Government of India, who thought the Council too small, this was raised to eight ; since then, owing to the introduction of an unofficial majority, the number has been raised to ten. In the same manner, since the inception of the scheme, the representation proposed for the landholders has been at different time two, four and five. I should think it probable that the Local Government, which originally believed that the relative importance of Municipalities and District Boards was fairly represented by the figures three and four, would be satisfied to allot four seats to the Municipalities and five to the District Boards, and thus save one seat under sub-head (b) wherewith to increase Mahommedan representation.

Bombay

On the Bombay Legislative Council the Government of India would assign to the Mahommedans four seats out of 21 elected seats, or 19 per cent. The ratio of Mahommedans to the total population is 20 per cent. In order to satisfy the pledges, the number of seats filled by separate Mahommedan electorates in Bombay should be raised by one, *i.e.*, from four to five. Supposing the number of elected seats to remain the same, *viz.*, 21 Mahommedans would then have 23.8 per cent of the elected seats specially reserved to them ; if the additional Mahommedan seats were to be taken from the unofficial nominated members and the number of elected seats thereby increased to 22, the ratio of specially reserved Mahommedan seats would be 22.7 per cent of the elected seats. I will move that the Local Government be directed to increase the separate Mahommedan representation on the Bombay Legislative Council by the addition of one seat, and I would leave to the Local Government to devise the means by which this redistribution of seats should be effected.

If these proposals are accepted the figures for the four Provincial Councils in which Mahommedan interests require special protection would be.

<i>Legislative Councils</i>	<i>Elected Seats</i>	<i>Mahommedan Seats</i>	<i>Percentage Col. 3 to 2</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	5	19	14
Bengal	26	5	19.2	18
Bombay	21	5	23.8	2

Assuming that the Local Government would keep the number of elected seats the same as proposed by the Government of India in the present despatch.

The Viceroy's Council

There remains the very difficult question of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. The Government of India assign to the Mahommedans six seats out of 28 elected seats, or 21.4 per cent ; the proportion of Mahommedans to the population of all India is 23 per cent. The Government of India assert that, in consideration of their numerical strength and historical and political importance, the Mahommedans are entitled to eight seats, that is 28.5 per cent, of the seats filled by election.

How can these two extra seats be secured ? Clearly not by deduction from the nominated unofficials, who are only four, a very small number for the Imperial Council. The two seats must, therefore, come from Head D, but obviously not from sub-head (c) Mahommedans nor (d) Chambers of Commerce, nor (e) Indian Commercial Community. They must therefore be taken from sub-head :

- (a) Delegates from the Provincial Councils, or from
- (b) The Landholders of seven provinces.

The latter seems the proper group from which to secure two additional seats for the Mahommedans and the plan to be

adopted is one which has actually been put forward by some of the Mahommedan leaders, notably the Raja of Mahmudabad and Mr. Ali Imam.

The plan is that the landholders of four provinces, *viz.*, Bombay, Eastern Bengal, the Punjab, and the United Provinces should each elect a Hindu and a Mahommedan at alternate elections. The procedure would be as follows : At the first election the Mahommedan landholders of Bombay and Eastern Bengal would elect two representatives (one for each province), and the Hindu landholders of the Punjab and the United Provinces would elect two representatives (one for each province); at the next election the Hindu landholders of Bombay and Eastern Bengal would elect their representatives and the Mahommedan landholders of the Punjab and the United Provinces would elect their representatives so that in each province the representative landholder would be selected alternately by Hindus and Mahommedans. By this device there would from these four provinces always be two Mahommedans and two Hindus to represent the landholders' interests. A scheme practically identical with this was part of the proposals which Mr. Ali Imam wished to move at Lucknow on 11th July. As I understand the report in the *Pioneer* of 16 July 1909, the resolution was as follows :

'That considering the representation from among the landholders of the Punjab and Eastern Bengal by mixed electorates is calculated to leave the Hindu landlords of these two provinces in a permanent minority, and that similarly such representation is calculated to leave the Mahommedan landlords in Bombay and the United Provinces in a like permanent minority, and that, in as much as the social relations of landlords in these four provinces necessitate the representation to be on a more harmonious basis, the two seats returnable by Mahommedans may be so arranged as to be taken in rotation by the landholders of the four provinces of the Punjab, Bombay, Eastern Bengal and the United Provinces.

According to the *Times* of 27th July, the Raja of Mahmudabad approved of this scheme, and said that

'This would be a method of election marked by a true spirit of compromise, and giving representation to both Hindu and Mahommedan landholders (the former preponderating in the United Provinces and Bombay, and the latter in the Punjab and Eastern Bengal) without giving rise to racial jealousy.'

The *Times* correspondent went on to add—

'It is said that there is some chance that this scheme may go through, and if it does it will do a great deal towards making the forthcoming reforms more acceptable to the Mahommedans than they are at present.

If these proposals are accepted by the Committee, Mahommedan representation would be as given in the table below :

<i>Legislative Councils</i>	<i>Total Number of Elected Members</i>	<i>Mahommedan Representatives</i>	<i>Percentage of Col. 3 to 2</i>	<i>Percentage of Mahommedans to total population</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Viceroy's	28	8	28.5	23
Bombay	21	5	23.8	20
Bengal	26	5	19.2	18
Eastern Bengal and Assam	19	4	21	58
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14

The Councils of the Punjab and Burma are almost entirely nominated, and therefore the question here under discussion does not arise in them.

**THEODORE MORISON'S NOTE ON THE PLEDGES
GIVEN TO THE MAHOMMEDANS**

The first pledge was given by the Viceroy in reply to the Mahomedan deputation which waited upon him at Simla on 1st October 1906. The relevant passage in that speech is :

'The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that, in any system of representation, whether it affects a Municipality, a District Board, or a Legislative Council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mahomedan community should be represented as a community. You point out that in many cases electoral bodies as now constituted cannot be expected to return a Mahomedan candidate, and that, if by chance they did so, it could only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in no way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire, I am entirely in accord with you. Please do not misunderstand me ; I make no attempt to indicate by what means the representation of communities can be obtained, but I am as firmly convinced as I believe you to be, that any electoral representation in India would be doomed to mischievous failure which aimed at granting a personal enfranchisement regardless of the beliefs and traditions of the communities composing the population of this continent.'

On 27th January, 1909 Lord Morley received at the India Office a deputation of the London Branch of the All-India Moslem League ; his reply to the deputation was cautiously worded, and I do not think that any sentence in it can be fastened upon as constituting a definite pledge, though he made use of several phrases which indicated a disposition to accede to their requests. He said, for instance :

'It would be no departure in substance from the principle of our suggestion that there should be a separate Mahomedan

electorate—an electorate exclusively Mahommedan ; and in view of wide and remote distances and difficulties in organisation, in consequence of those distances in the area constituting a large province, I am not sure that this is not one of those cases where election by two stages would not be in the highest degree convenient and so there might be a separate electoral college exclusively Mahommedan.'

Later on he referred to the amount of representation to be extended to Mahommedans in these words :

'I repeat, I see no harm, from the point of view of a practical working compromise, in the principle that population, numerical strength, should be the main factor in determining how many representatives should sit for this or the other community ; but modifying influences may be taken into account in allotting the numbers of such representatives.'

When, however, the Secretary of State moved the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill in the House of Lords on 23 February he made a much more definite statement, and gave an unequivocal pledge ; he said :

'The Mahommedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mahommedans vote by themselves. They have nine votes and the non-Mahommedans have three, or the other way about. So in Bohemia, where the Germans vote alone and have their own register. Therefore, we are not without a precedent and a parallel for the idea of a separate register. Secondly, they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. Those two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.'

The reference to the deputation is important, because it proves that when Lord Morley promised 'to meet the Mahommedan demands in full', he had in his mind the demands

which the Mahommedan deputation had made to him, and his statement must be read in connection with written petition which they had submitted to him. As an appendix to their petition the Mahommedans had submitted suggestions for a scheme of Mahommedan representation which is based upon the principle of the separate (or double) register for Hindu and Mahommedan voters, whereby all the Mahommedan representatives would be returned by Mahommedan voters. In the body of their petition the deputation made use of the following phrase :

‘Save as regards University representation in which both communities have the privilege of double voting, the Mahommedan subjects of His Majesty, so long as they can obtain adequate and substantial communal representation on the Councils, the Rural and District Boards and Corporations, with the rights of electing their own representatives, do not ask for double votes.’

It is, I think, clear from this that what the Mahommedans had demanded and what Lord Morley had conceded was that the Mahommedans were to have more representatives than they were entitled to upon a calculation of their bare numerical strength, and that all those representatives were to be returned by separate Mahommedan electorates.

The pledge was reiterated by Mr. Buchanan when he moved the second reading in the House of Commons on 1st April 1909. He said :

‘And more than that, particularly with regard to the Mahommedans, they have a special and overwhelming claim upon us, namely, the solemn promises, given by those who are entitled with full responsibility to speak for us, that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want a promise given to them by Lord Minto specifically in October 1906, repeated in a Despatch by the Secretary of State in 1907, and again repeated by the Secretary of State to a deputation here and in a speech in another place. From that promise we

cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.'

It may be confessed (in the privacy of this Office) that Mr. Buchanan did not realise the full significance of these 'solemn pledges', for he proceeded to unfold to the House of Commons the Government of India's scheme. But the point was immediately taken by Lord Percy, who pointed out that if the Government of India's scheme was adhered to, and the pledges made to the Mahommedans redeemed, the maximum numbers mentioned in the schedule to the Bill would have to be increased; the point was further pressed by Lord Ronaldshay and Mr. Balfour, the latter asking for a more definite reply to the question raised by Lord Percy. Lord Percy returned to the charge on 19th April in Committee, and pointed out the number of seats to be assigned to the Mahommedans were the same as originally proposed by the Government of India :

'A proposal which was denounced as entirely inadequate by the Mahommedan deputation which waited on the Secretary of State at the India Office, and I think that the pledge of the Secretary of State in the House of Lords was understood by them to mean that he would revise that proportion as originally suggested.'

Later on Lord Percy said :

'If that is the case, I cannot help feeling that if matters are left in their present state, and that the representation assigned to the Mahommedans is not increased, it will lead to very serious disappointment, and probably even to charges of breach of faith.'

Mr. Hobhouse in reply read a telegram from the Government of India as follows :

'The method proposed is simply that in general electorates such as municipalities, district boards and members of provincial councils, all sects and classes, including Mahommedans, will vote together. By this means some, but not sufficient,

representation will be obtained for Mahommedans. In addition a certain number of seats will be reserved for Mahommedans, and none but Mahommedans will have a voice in filling these. They may be filled in many ways, by election pure and simple, by election, by associations, by electoral college, or by nomination, as the circumstances of each province require. Methods will vary in different provinces, and will be subject to alternations from time to time in individual provinces as experience may dictate.'

But in spite of this exposition of the Government of India's view Mr. Hobhouse closed his remarks with a reiteration of one of Lord Morley's pledges :

'With regard to numbers, the Secretary of State does not depart in any way from the pledge which he has given in another place as to the sufficient, and, indeed, over-sufficient representation from the numerical standpoint of the Mahommedan.'

Lord Percy immediately pointed out the inconsistency of those two statements by Mr. Hobhouse, and he was followed by Lord Ronaldshay who complained that Mr. Hobhouse 'has not in the least met the point of the noble Lord below me who asked how the apportionment of seats on the Provincial Council is to be altered in order to give the Mahommedans not only a fair share, but the additional share which the Secretary of State has promised them, the share over and above their actual numerical proportion. The promise of the Secretary of State in another place appeared to me to be perfectly definite. He said that the Mahommedans were to elect their own representatives, as they do in Crete and other places. That does not in the least tally with what has just fallen from the lips of the honourable gentlemen opposite. He says that this is not the case, that the Mahommedans are to continue to endeavour to secure seats under a mixed electorate. How can he reconcile that statement with the promise given by the Secretary of State

to the Mahommedan community in the second reading of the Bill in another place ?'

In order to secure the exact fulfilment of the pledges given to the Mahommedans, Lord Ronaldshay, on 26th April, moved an amendment upon the report stage of the Bill providing that the ratio of Mussulman and Hindu representation should be fixed by executive authority, and that in every case in which any seat on a representative body thus assigned to the Mahommedan community was to be filled by election, the necessary electorate should be composed exclusively of Mahommedans. He closed his speech with these words :

'I believe, in the second place, that the Government have told them that they intend to meet the two demands to the full ; and, thirdly, I espouse their cause on this occasion because I foresee that if the Government of this country follow on a course which is in any way calculated to shake the faith of any great community in India they are going far to undermine the whole effect of British supremacy in India.'

I draw attention to these remarks of the Opposition, not so much because they show what interpretation was placed upon Lord Morley's pledge by independent witnesses, but because they make it clear that the very point which we are now discussing was prominently brought to the notice of His Majesty's Ministers, and the answer given subsequently by Mr. Hobhouse was given with full knowledge of the point in dispute and that his answer is therefore full of significance. Mr. Hobhouse practically admitted that there was some divergence between the pledges given by the Viceroy and Secretary of State and the views expressed in the telegram from the Government of India, and he went on to say :

'That does not mean that the telegram necessarily closes discussion. It does not mean that they have done more than propose to the Secretary of State certain things. It does not follow that because there are difficulties experienced in the Government of India that those difficulties are either perma-

ment or fundamental, and I can assure the noble Lord opposite that every endeavour will be made by the Government of India and by the Government at home to remove any sort or kind of obstacle which may be found to lie within our power to the carrying out of the pledges which have been given before this House.'

Mr. Hobhouse closed his remarks with a very emphatic observation, which in view of the points raised by the Opposition cannot be explained away.

'Before I sit down I would add one sentence, and it is that wherever elections are found possible they shall be conducted on the basis of separate representation, of the Mahommedan community.'

There have therefore been four important official declarations regarding Mahommedan representation, all increasing in exactness as the controversy proceeded :

(1) From the Viceroy in answer to the Mahommedan deputation on 1st October 1906.

(2) From the Secretary of State at the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords, in which, after recapitulating Mahommedan demands, he said, 'these two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.'

(3) From the Under-Secretary of State for India (Mr. Buchanan) on 1st April, stating that the pledges to the Mahommedans were that they would get adequate representation to the amount and of a kind they want, and then saying from that promise we cannot go back, we ought not to go back, and we will not go back.'

(4) From Mr. Hobhouse on 26 April, speaking for the Under-Secretary of State for India, and declaring 'wherever elections are found possible they shall be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mahommedan community.'

The proposals now submitted by the Government of India are absolutely inconsistent with these pledges ; to demonstrate this it is sufficient to quote in their words the plan which they recommend, the third solution of the problem of Mahommedan representation, viz. :

‘Separate electorates supplemented to the full extent of their legitimate claims by further representation through mixed electorates (on some of which the Mahommedans would have a majority) or by nomination were they to fail to obtain a fair share of elective seats.’

This means that the second pledge (that they should have representation in excess of their numerical strength) can only be secured by ignoring the first (that they should elect their own representatives). As the proposals are put forward the separate representation of Mahommedans, far from being in excess of their ratio to population, is actually below it in all but two Councils, as the following table shows :

<i>Legislative Councils</i>	<i>Total Number of Elected Members</i>	<i>Mahommedan Representatives</i>	<i>Percentage of Col. 3 to 2</i>	<i>Percentage of Mahommedans to total population</i>
<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
Viceroy's	28	6	21.4	23
Bombay	21	4	19	20
Bengal	26	4	15.3	18
Eastern Bengal and Assam	19	4	21	38
Madras	20	2	10	6
United Provinces	21	4	19	14

The Councils of the Punjab and Burma are almost entirely nominated, and therefore the question here under discussion does not arise in them.

To satisfy the pledges given in this country the figures in column 4 ought always to have been in excess of the figures in column 5. The Councils of Madras and the United Provinces

satisfy this condition ; in all other cases they are actually less. The device of supplementing separate (or communal) representation by further representation from mixed electorates is inconsistent with Lord Morley's pledges ; indeed, the Mahommedans contend that Mahommedans so elected would not be their representatives at all ; the only genuine Mahommedan representatives are those whom they elect themselves, and these it has been shown are less, not more, than they were promised. But there is yet another point ; inconsistent as this device is with the promises given to the Mahommedans it is very doubtful whether it will secure what the Government of India expect. They themselves say that 'it is impossible at the present moment to forecast the working of untried political machinery, but we trust that when the new electoral system comes into operation it will be found compatible with the adequate representation of the other interests and communities which it is incumbent upon us to safeguard, and trust our proposals will be generally accepted as an equitable settlement of a very grave difficulty.' In other words, the Government of India would leave the fulfilment of the pledges to the hazard of elections ; whether they are fulfilled or not under this scheme depends upon whether the Hindus or the Mahommedans prove themselves the greatest adepts in electioneering tactics in the constituencies where the two communities are evenly balanced, and where the Mahommedans are in a minority the fulfilment of the promises made to them by His Majesty's Ministers in Parliament will depend upon the forbearance of their political opponents.

P.S.—In preparing this note at the request of the Committee, I have confined myself to the one point upon which I was asked to make a report, *viz.*, the promises made to the Mahommedans and the extent to which they are met by the proposals of the Government of India. I have cut the quotations out of the official reports and pasted them on to this note to secure myself against errors of transcription, except in a solitary instance in which the official report was inaccurate or where I had but a few words to copy. I hope in a later note to

lay before the Committee the specific amendments which I propose to move.

MORISON'S POSTSCRIPTS TO THE NOTE ON THE PLEDGES

I regret that I did not deal with the point raised by Mr. Gupta in my first note. It may expedite the disposal of business if I deal with it now in the form of a postscript to my original summary of the pledges given to the Mahommedans.

Mr. Gupta's contention is that the pledges given to the Mahommedans 'apply only so far as the general, mixed or popular franchise is concerned, and cannot extend to seats representing certain strictly limited interests.' I should like to say, in the first place, that this is not the sense in which the pledges were ever interpreted in the very full debates upon the subject in the House of Commons. It was conceded by Sir H. Cotton that the Secretary of State had committed himself 'to the statement that the Mahommedans should be granted a larger representation than they would be entitled to by their numbers,' and proceeded to argue that that pledge had been redeemed by the Government of India inasmuch as the seats which the Mahommedans would win in the mixed electorates, added to these which were specially reserved to them would give them a total representation in excess of their numerical ratio to the population. In other words Sir H. Cotton realised that the pledge regarding the amount of representation to be given to the Mahommedans was not kept by the number of seats specially assigned to them by the Government of India unless these were supplemented by seats won in the mixed electorate. The Prime Minister, on 1st April, had put forward exactly the same defence. His words were :

'The number of Mahommedans on the Viceroy's Council are only five, but on the other hand, as the Noble Lord knows, on the Viceroy's Council there will be 20 nominated members, of whom 17 are to be officials, and there is no reason why Mahommedans should not come into that category. In addi-

tion there are to be Mahommedans elected by other communities, Chambers of Commerce, and so forth, and it is not improbable that among this category Mahommedan representatives might be found. I do not think there is any serious danger or any danger at all of the Mahommedans not being adequately represented on the Viceroy's Council.

I have no intention of attempting to take advantage of the Prime Minister's inevitable ignorance of Indian electorates, but I contend that the general trend of his argument is unmistakable; he maintained that Mahommedan representation would be sufficient when supplemented by the seats gained in the general or mixed constituencies; he did not contend, as Mr. Gupta does, that it was already sufficient without being so supplemented. Had His Majesty's Ministers ever had the intention of putting forward the plea which Mr. Gupta advances it would have been quite open for them to do so on the unamended figures proposed by the Government of India in their Despatch of 1 October 1908. By adopting Mr. Gupta's plan of leaving out one-third to one-half of the Council and calculating the proportion which Mahommedan seats bear to the remainder they could have produced the following striking table (which is constructed upon the same principle as Mr. Gupta's) :

<i>Councils</i>	<i>Mahommedan representation per cent</i>	<i>Percentage of Mahommedans to population</i>
Viceroy's	29.4	23
Madras	20.0	6
Bombay	27.2	20
Bengal	20.0	18
United Provinces	28.1	14

So that without the additions to Mahommedan representation which the Government of India has since made, and without reckoning the anticipated results of the mixed elections, His Majesty's ministers might have claimed, as Mr. Gupta

does now that 'the proposals of the Government of India amply redeem whatever pledges may have been given.' The fact that they did not do so, but resorted to a perfectly different line of defence is, I submit, conclusive evidence that it never occurred to them to interpret the pledges in the qualified sense which is now proposed.

Nor can it be argued that the point was not before them, for on 19th April Lord Percy based his charges of breach of faith upon the very method of calculation which I have employed. He complained that the Mahommedans were only to have five seats on the Viceroy's Council, that is one-twelfth of the whole 'bodies (sic) of members, and one-fifth if you take the elected members only. In the case of Eastern Bengal the figures are very striking. There the Mahommedans actually number three-fifths of the whole population according to the statement of the Secretary of State. Well in Eastern Bengal they are only to have two seats reserved—that is one-third* of the whole Council and only one-seventh of the elected members.' Lord Percy's calculations were not challenged by Mr. Hobhouse when he spoke in reply on behalf of the Under-Secretary (Mr. Buchanan). If His Majesty's Ministers had ever meant that Mahommedan representation was not to be calculated in proportion to the whole Council, but only in proportion to fraction of it, they would presumably have questioned Lord Percy's figures. But they did nothing of the kind; they accepted them and pointed out by reading the telegram of the Government of India, that the deficiency in Mahommedan representation would be supplemented by seats won in the mixed electorates, a line of argument which is inconsistent with the plea advanced by Mr. Gupta.

But after all, the House of Commons is not here our main concern. The important point is to satisfy the Mahommedans

*The one-third in above must be either a slip or incorrect report, the figure should be one-eighteenth. One seventh is correct, or sufficiently near to represent the speaker's meaning, two fifteenth is the exact fraction.

in India, the bulk of whom are rather ignorant, rather slow witted, that the pledges made to them have been loyally kept. Subtleties will be thrown away upon them ; even if they cannot detect the argumentative error they will feel that they have been over-reached. If they articulate their grievance they will, I suspect say, as the man in the street would say, that the words 'ratio' and 'fraction', unless specially qualified, mean ratio or fraction of the whole, and that as Mahommedans were told that they were to elect members in the ratio which Mahommedans bear to the whole population they understood that promise to mean that the ratio of Mahommedan seats to the total of elected seats would be the same as the ratio which the Mahommedans bear to the total population.

If I shared Mr. Gupta's views that the proposals of the Government of India amply redeem the pledges given, I should still strongly deprecate the official adoption of the line of argument which he has followed in his note. A charge of ingenuity of subtlety in the interpretation of pledges is not one which the Government of India can afford to have levelled against it. All its dealing should be of such transparent candour as not to stand in need of elaborate justification ; I should much rather see the Government of India err on the side of native simplicity than of sophistical cleverness. If ever the time should come when a pledge cannot be kept, which is fortunately not now the case, it would be far better for the Government to say roundly that it had changed its mind than to resort to ingenious explanations which breed so uneasy suspicion among the people that word of the Government cannot be accepted at its face value.

LORD CURZON'S REACTION*

As to the future of Calcutta, I am not one of those who think that the removal of the Government will seriously or detrimentally affect it. The importance of Calcutta results from its position on the sea, from its proximity to the great

*Speech in the House of Lords on 21 February, 1912.

sources of supply of jute and coal and tea in Eastern India, and from the enterprise of its merchants. I dare say there will be some displacement of trade, some depreciation of property, perhaps some loss of money to individual firms ; but I have little doubt that the mercantile community in Calcutta will show the patriotism and public spirit which they have displayed all along, and that, sore as they are at the displacement of their metropolitan city, they will bend their backs to win for Calcutta in the future as great and famous a place as it has had in the past. Personally I think the removal of the Government from Calcutta much more injurious to the Government than it will be to Calcutta. Of course, this displacement will be welcomed elsewhere in India. I have never been able to understand why it is that rival cities regard each other with a jealousy to which rival lovers and even rival politicians seldom attain. But so it is, Glasgow and Edinburgh, Manchester and Liverpool, Milan and Turin, Petersburg and Moscow—in none of these cases is there any great warmth of affection between the two cities or their inhabitants. And it is quite true that the supremacy of Calcutta has always excited very poignant emotions in the breasts of Madras and Bombay. Every year there is a sort of struggle when the Census figures come out to try and prove that Calcutta is or is not a premier city in India, and, though I do not wish to do my friends who have been Governors of Madras an injustice, I believe that at the bottom of their hearts there is a sort of sneaking satisfaction at the dethronement of Calcutta.

But you have not merely dethroned Calcutta, you have accompanied that act with the reversal of the so-called partition of Bengal. It is six and a half years since the measure was carried. I use the phrase 'partition' for brevity sake ; I do not think it at all describes the fact. During that time I have seen the most extraordinary descriptions of the object of the Government of India which have made me sometimes rub my eyes and wonder whether I was living in a world of reality.. Everyone knows that that was an administrative measure which had been called for so many years. I was not the man to start

it. It had been discussed for twenty years before my day. I took it up because half way through my time in India I became acquainted with the scandalous maladministration which was going on in the Eastern Province of Bengal, and the shocking neglect of education and public works and all that goes to make the contented life of a people, and with the oppression of the Mahommedans by their neighbours. That was a blot upon the Government of India. It was due to the fact that you were trying to administer the affairs of eighty millions of people through one Government and one man, and the only way to remedy it was to divide the Province and duplicate the machinery of government. What was the particular line to be drawn when the division was made was a matter not for the Viceroy. The Viceroy does not settle such issues. The line was settled by consultation and discussion between the local Governments and officials, representative bodies, and so on. They agreed upon a line, and that line was based upon ethnical and geographical considerations, the importance of which could not be denied. I gladly accepted it. I knew the obloquy with which I should be overwhelmed, because I was aware that the line of division would run counter to the personal interests of journalists, pleaders, and landlords whose head-quarters were Calcutta. But I was willing to run the risk. I decided to bear the brunt because I believed the decision to be right, and because I was certain that in the long run—I hoped in the short run—truth would prevail.

The partition was promulgated in October 1905. I came home the month after, and the Liberal Government came into office in December. They might have disowned my act, the act of my Government, and I should not have complained if they had done so. I might have regretted it, but I could not have complained. But no, they accepted it. The noble Viscount will bear me out that never on a single occasion, public or private, did I ever put any pressure upon him. I do not think I ever mentioned it to him. They decided on their own initiative to carry on that policy. The noble Viscount said he disapproved of the methods by which it had been carried. I never knew

what he meant by that. But he said over and over again in this House and elsewhere that he and his colleagues regarded it as a settled fact. That reply was repeated over and over again by your officials in India. Now what happened? As time went on the Bengalis began to realise that their agitation was futile. The fruits of partition became manifest. The new Province advanced in education, in good government, in every mark of prosperity. Your officers there did the most admirable work in creating this new fabric, and over and over again, acting on your instructions, they repeated the assurance to the population that this was a settled fact and that the good faith of the British Government was pledged to its continuance. It is true that outside a fitful and sputtering agitation was kept up by the Bengali community, but that was done more for form than for anything else, and there was neither substance nor life in the agitation.

Your Lordships may think I am an interested party. Let me therefore give you the opinions, not of myself, but of important natives of India. There is a well-known Bengali writer, Mr. Mitra, who wrote in 1908 a book called *Indian Problems*, and this is what he said :

'The cut-and-dried phrases of the professional agitator should not confuse the British public. It is clear that the partition does not make the Bengali a farthing the worse in person, reputation, or pocket. It was an admirable move, calculated to benefit millions.'

Then there was a discussion in the Imperial Legislative Council. My noble friend Lord Minto was in the Chair and will recall what I am going to say. One of the most conspicuous Congress representatives had repeated the familiar charges against the Partition, and a native member for the Province got up and said (this was on 30 March 1910) :

'On the strength of the views of Lord MacDonnell the Partition of Bengal has been called a blunder, and your Excellency has been invited to undo it. I, on the other hand,

knowing the realising full well the responsibility that attaches to a member of this Council, most emphatically assert that if the government meddled with this beneficent measure it would be committing an act of supreme folly ; it would be creating serious discontent and unrest where none exists now.'

Lord MacDonnell of Swinford : Will the noble Earl mention the speaker's name ?

Earl Curzon of Kedleston : Yes. He was Mr. Mazharul Haque, Mahommedan member for Eastern Bengal ; and this gentleman was followed by Mr. Shamsul Huda, another native member, who said he had once signed a petition against Partition but had grown wiser as years rolled by, and he described the Partition as greatly beneficial to the Province. I should like to quote one other authority, that of the distinguished Correspondent of *The Times*. I quote this authority because *The Times* is, as I gather, one of the leading supporters of His Majesty's Government in this case, and it is interesting therefore to know what their Correspondent and when he was in India three years ago. He wrote :

'The agitation against Partition is dying, even in Bengal, and is almost unregarded in the other Provinces. The authorities are too firmly convinced of the administrative value of the division to attempt any modification now, and there is no further fact that any reversal of policy might have dangerous results. The eighteen millions of Mahommedans would bitterly resent any suggestion of the repeal of Partition. It stands in no need of renewed vindication, for it has been entirely justified by results.'

The second passage is even stronger. This was written in Bengal on 15 February 1909 :

'I have yet to meet anybody, English or Indian, who can tell me in what respect the Partition has injured a single living soul, while one has only to visit the Province, invigorated with new life and inspired by new aspirations, to realise the benefits

which the severance has conferred upon millions of neglected people. To alter or to modify it now would be suicidal folly. It would be worse, for it would be a criminal blunder.'

That is very strong language—it is not mine, it comes from an authority much greater than myself—and I leave His Majesty's Government to dispose of it as best they can. This is the moment, when this spurious and vexatious agitation has died down, when the benefits of Partition have been conclusively vindicated, when everything is going well in the new Province, that a new Viceroy appears on the scene and in a few weeks is enabled to inform the world that all of us have been entirely wrong.

The Government of India say in their Despatch that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the Partition of Bengal is very widespread, that the resentment among the Bengalis is as strong as ever though less vocal, and the Government of India make the astonishing discovery that the Partition has been responsible for the growing estrangement in many parts of the country between Mohammedans and Hindus. *Finally*, comes the Secretary of State, also new to his office, and he tells us that the Viceroy has depicted the consequences of Partition with accuracy and fairness. I deny everyone of those propositions and I challenge the noble Marquess to produce any competent or reliable evidence in support of the assertions which he contends are characterised by accuracy and fairness. Can he quote the authority of a single Lieutenant-Governor who has served in Bengal in recent years? Can he quote the authority of the last or the present Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal? Can he name a single representative body of institution in India that will support his view? I have heard of none, and I am not aware that they exist. I think I can quote the highest authority of all, and that is the Secretary of State himself. If you look at the White Paper you will see that on 1 November the Secretary of State put his signature to the Despatch in which he congratulates the Government of India on the accuracy and fairness of their statement—this statement

about the ill-feeling and unrest existing in Bengal about Partition. But on 2 November we had a debate in this House about some Indian matters, and the Secretary of State then used a different line of argument. He wanted to show how well things were going on, and he said :

‘There is nothing now in the general temper, not merely of the people of India as a whole, but of any race or section of the people of India, which ought to cause anything which can be described by the word ‘anxiety.’

When the Secretary of State made that remark, which I believed to be true. I loudly cheered, and I should have cheered all the more had I known that he was cutting away the ground from his own statement of the day before, and that he was about so effectually to demolish his own case.

I dare say the Secretary of State will try to console me by saying that partition has not been revoked—that my Government divided Bengal into two Provinces, and that he has divided Bengal into three, and that therefore he is carrying further the principle which I adopted. In fact that is true. There is no reversion to the status quo ante. Nobody would be foolish or insane enough to propose such a thing. But to all intents and purposes the old partition has been reversed. For the Province I have described has ceased to exist, and the Mahommedans in it, who were for the first time given a chance of asserting their independent existence, are once again merged in a great Hindu province, the fortunes of which will be dictated from Calcutta. Perhaps the best judges of whether partition is reversed or not will be found in India herself. Directly after the announcement was made at Delhi the Congress Committee met and passed a vote of thanks to the Government for the fulfilment of their political aspirations ; and subsequently, at the meeting of the Congress, the President spoke of the annulment of partition as a triumph in the most momentous constitutional struggle in modern times. Not in any part of India is there any doubt that agitation has won the

day. You may disclaim that was your intention, but so it is universally regarded, and if so no one is really responsible but yourselves. If you declare a measure to be a settled fact and instruct your officials so to inform the people, and if then, six years later, your turn round and throw to the winds what you have said, can you be surprised that this is regarded on your part as an exhibition of weakness or that it is thought and said that agitation has won the day ?

Now as regards the Mahommedans, what do they say ? Do they agree that partition has not been reversed ? My Lords, I think the position of the Mahommedans in Eastern Bengal is one of the saddest features of the present situation. For six years or more they have held aloof from agitation and have occupied themselves with building up their province. Dacca, the capital, had started upon a new life ; they looked forward to having a University and High Court there ; over and over again they have been to the Government and have been assured by the officers of Government that the thing was a settled fact and was going to remain. Now that policy is reversed. No wonder they feel bitter ! I speak from having seen letters from their leading men and from a knowledge of resolutions which have been passed in all their cities. It is a matter of common knowledge throughout India that their leading nobleman, when he was decorated the other day at Delhi, said :

‘The ribbon which you hang round my neck is a halter with which I am to hang myself.’

The Marquess of Crewe : May I ask the noble Earl’s authority for that singular statement ?

Earl Curzon of Kedleston : I can give the noble Marquess the authority privately. It has been constantly repeated and is well-known to be the fact. All these resolutions speak of the Government having gone back on its word, and the face of Government as being blackened. If I were the Secretary of State handing an olive branch to India I confess that I should feel some pang of compunction at this sacrifice of Mahommedan

interests. It is a bad thing for the Government of India when its word is broken. It is a bad thing for the prestige of Government. It is a bad thing for your officers, too. I wonder if you have paused to think what are the sentiments of your officials in this Province who for years past have been assuring the people that you would be true to your word, and who now see—I will not say their work thrown away, because good work is never thrown away, but see the pledges which they have given with your authority broken.

The Government of India are, I know, conscious of this feelings, and they have sought in their Despatch to allay the fears of the Mahommedans. In their Despatch the Government of India say that the numbers of the Mahommedans will be about equal to those of the Bengalis in the new Province, and they will have special representation in the Council. I do not think there is much comfort to be derived from that. The Mahommedans in India know very well that they cannot compete with the Bengalis in organisation, in education, or in wealth. Influence in India is not a question of numbers ; it is a question of ability and character and organisation. Nothing, I am afraid, can alter the fact that whereas up to 12 December last the Mahommedans of Eastern Bengal were the predominant element in the Province now the balance has swung round and once more they are under Calcutta.

The Government of India in their Despatch say that the new Governor of Bengal is to reside at Dacca from time to time, and the Secretary of State goes rather further and says that the Governor should regard Dacca as a second capital with a claim on his attention and residence for an appreciable part of the year. What does that mean ? Is residence at Dacca to be optional ? What in practice will happen ? I know very well that in the winter months Calcutta will pull him in one direction, that in the summer months Darjiling will pull him in another, and that Dacca stands the risk of being squeezed out between these two. I do not think that assurances in the Despatch are enough. There is a strong feeling in India that it

would be well to place some statutory obligation upon the Governor of Bengal to spend a certain part of the year at Dacca. I do not give an opinion on that point, but I do say we ought to instruct him to spend at least three months of the year in Dacca, and if possible to take with him the Council and the whole machinery of Government. This is the only way in which you can derive any return for the enormous sums spent on establishing a capital at Dacca—between £ 500,000 and £ 10,00,000—and which you can salve the wounded feelings of Mahommedans and give them some guarantee of fair treatment in future.

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