

## Twelfth Congress—Calcutta—1896.

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Hon. Mr. R. M. SAYANI.

I beg to thank you most heartily for the great honor you have conferred upon me by electing me President of this your Twelfth Congress. It is the highest honor which my fellow-countrymen can bestow upon me. I am aware that is also an honor which carries with it a serious responsibility, as it is by no means a light task to guide the deliberations of so large, so varied and so distinguished an assembly, representing as it does all that is loyal and patriotic, enlightened and influential, progressive and disinterested, in the country. I am further conscious of the fact that the position to which you have elected me has been invariably occupied in the past by extremely able leaders enjoying the full confidence of the people at large, and that under any circumstances, it will be beyond my power to come up to the standard of my immediate predecessor in this chair, who is so well known as one of the brightest ornaments of the country generally and especially of the province of Bengal. Relying, however, upon merciful Providence and on your indulgence and forbearance as also on your sympathy and support, I hope I may be able to discharge the duty you have entrusted me with to your satisfaction.

Some time prior to the Christian year 1885, certain Indian gentlemen who had received their education in the English language and been trained to English methods, and who had moreover derived their ideals of political institutions from English philosophers and statesmen, met together to deliberate amongst themselves on the advisability of convening a meeting of some of the most enlightened men of each province for the purpose of discussing the moral and material condition of the country and taking practical steps for its amelioration. A meeting was accordingly resolved upon; and as its conveners were God-fearing, law-abiding, peace-loving and peaceful subjects, distinguished for their independence, for the purity of their public lives, for the honesty of their purpose and for their political sagacity, their invitation was largely and cordially responded to. The meeting was attended by delegates deputed from each province and by some Europeans who warmly sympathised with the object. The discussion unmistakably emphasised the fact that there was a general consensus of opinion amongst the educated Indians that the existing political condition of the country was susceptible of a vast improvement. Then there was no doubt that the people had well-founded grievances which required to be redressed and serious disabilities which needed removal. All were agreed that, in order to achieve those objects, so conducive to the greater happiness and contentment of the people, it was advisable to adopt all legitimate and constitutional means and proceed on the methods employed by Englishmen themselves for agitation, that if agitation was carried on on such principles, never mind however long, there was a fair and reasonable chance

of success, especially with the co-operation of such Europeans as were ready and willing to extend their sympathy and moral support to a movement so legitimate and national. It was accordingly decided that a Congress should be held of all educated and eminent Indians, leaders of various centres, and all admirers of the political institutions of England, with the express purpose of appealing to Government to redress grievances and remove disabilities from which the people suffered, and to secure such other reforms as the exigencies of the time and the progress of the country demanded, consistently of course with the liberal principles and the declared policy of the British Government as laid down years ago in statutes and charters, in Royal proclamations, and resolutions of Parliament. Accordingly, the necessary steps for organizing such a Congress were taken. The principal promoters of that organisation were themselves the products of English education, while the persons invited to attend from the different Presidencies and Provinces were similarly the products of that same vivifying agency. There was also the facility of travel on account of the rapidity and cheapness of communication, the result of railways, one of the most important boons which English civilisation has conferred on our country. There was also the security to person and property assured by the Pax Britannica. Thus the call to attend fell upon willing ears and the invitees readily complied. All the elements necessary to secure a full attendance were combined, leading to cordial co-operation in the noble work thus initiated. In short, the country was ripe for the movement, so that delegates from the principal centres eagerly flocked to give expression to the "sober second thoughts of the people." They were all responsible citizens assembled to focus the manifold political grievances of the people and give them their needed articulation. For the first time they met on a common platform to achieve a common object, namely, to represent in the name of their countrymen the grievances under which they suffered and to give voice to their political sentiment and aspirations. They keenly felt the desire for wholesome reform and discussed with freedom and candour their political condition which they considered to be degrading. Their intellectual attainments recoiled against what they considered to be political subservience; their educated notions revolted against political disabilities; and their hearts aspired to attain a higher national ideal of citizenship under the beneficent rule of the British which they fully appreciated. It was an ideal worthy to be encouraged and fostered by all right-minded and justice-loving Englishmen, and took complete hold of them. The habitual lethargy of the Indian disappeared under the potent influence of this new and lofty standard of political regeneration. Ideas of a fair share in the management of the affairs of their own country and the enjoyment of greater constitutional freedom pervaded all minds. It was not a mere sentimental cooing between loving cousins nor a mere stage-show got up for the amusement of the public at Christmas time, but a very serious organisation of combined intellectual strength, intended for the discussion of very serious matters. Surely they thought,

and thought honestly, they were not mere theorists or sentimental dreamers, but intelligent, loyal, patriotic, well meaning, public-spirited men, representing the collective wisdom and ability of what was soon to become a United India. Feelings of sympathy and brotherhood pervaded the members, and every one was prepared to give anxious thought and patient consideration to what each other had to advance and urge. They felt that the Congress was but the first rich harvest of what had been sown long before by wise and beneficent British statesmen in the shape of Schools and Colleges. They further felt that the Congress was but the visible embodiment of a new education and a new awakening such as the country had not seen for some centuries before—the strong impact of Western civilisation on Eastern thought. In fact, they felt that there could be no doubt of the strength and depth of this awakening having national regeneration as its ultimate aim and object. They felt that their object was rational and practical—that under the vivifying influence of the Congress, all the various peoples of the country could slowly and steadily be welded into one inseparable, indissoluble whole, to the everlasting benefit of India and the glory of England, and that those who attended them as members of the first Congress would in the fulness of time be recognised as the great pioneers of the movement.

The following is a brief analysis of the declarations of the Congress leaders :—

(a) To remember that we are all children of our mother-country, India, and that as such we are bound to love and respect each other and have common fellow-feeling for each other, and that each one of us should regard as his own the interests of the rest of us.

(b) That we should endeavour to promote personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the great communities of India, to develop and consolidate sentiments of national growth and unity, to weld them together into one nationality, to effect a moral union amongst them, to remove the taunt that we are not a nation, but only a congeries of races and creeds which have no cohesion in them, and to bring about stronger and stronger friendly ties of common nationality.

(c) That we should endeavour specially to promote personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the earnest workers in the cause of India, to eradicate by direct friendly personal intercourse, all possible racial or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of India, and to develop and consolidate sentiments of national unity, to effect a moral union amongst them which may stand as a solid bulwark against all external elements likely to divide or separate.

(d) That we should work together for our common elevation ; that we should work in the spirit that we are Indians and owe a duty to our country and to all our countrymen ; that we should all work with a singleness of purpose for the amelioration of our country.

(e) That in carrying out our work, we should take care that no questions should be decided without full previous preparation and detailed discussion of it all over the country ; that no point should be pressed unless there prevails an absolute

or an almost absolute unanimity of opinion amongst the thinking and educated classes of our countrymen.

(f) That we should confine our attention to those questions only in which the entire nation has a direct participation ; that we should pass only such resolutions as are not the issue of the brain of a single individual but are the result of the best thoughts of many minds during a long period ; that we should give due deference to the views and feelings of each other amongst the whole people of our country ; that we should deal with those questions alone on which the whole of the educated and thinking portion of British India is substantially agreed.

(g) That we should conduct our proceedings with moderation and dignity so as to disarm all adverse criticism ; that every member should be afforded an opportunity of maturely and gravely considering each question in all its bearings ; that we should conduct our proceedings in such a way that whenever any resolution or decision has been come to, it should proceed from the Congress with authority and be received outside with respect ; that we should conduct our proceedings in such a way that we may acquire and maintain a character for moderation, sagacity, and practical good sense ; that we should be moderate in our language and in our demands ; that we should remember that it is only by patience, perseverance, and long effort that we can hope to succeed.

(h) That we should remember that right and truth must ever prevail in the end ; that it is not by violence or by noise that great things are achieved, nor by ambition or self-seeking ; that it is by calm, indomitable reliance on that moral force, which is the supreme reason, that a nation's life can be regenerated ; that we should avoid taking jumps into the unknown.

(i) That the best interests of the Indian tax-payer lie in peace, economy and reform ; that his motto should be peace, loyalty, and progress. That the first most essential requisite for his happiness is the assurance of permanent peace and the rigid maintenance of law and order.

(j) That our business is to represent to Government our reasonable grievances and our political disabilities and aspirations.

The following is a brief summary of the subjects discussed by the various Congresses held up to date :—Working of Indian Administration. The Council of the Secretary of State for India, Legislative Councils, Simultaneous Examinations, Annexation of Upper Burma, Poverty of India, Public Service, Trial by Jury, Separation of Executive and Judicial Functions, Volunteering, Education, Industrial Condition of India, Arms Act, Police Administration, Abkari, State Regulation of Vice, Permanent Settlement, Plate Duties, Salt Duty, Forest Laws, Currency, Military and Civil Expenditure, Medical Service, Compensation Allowance, Forced Labor, Cotton Duty, Financial Condition of India, Recruitment of Higher Judicial Service, Freedom of the Press, Water Cess, South Africa, Legal Practitioners' Bill, and Grievances of Railway Passengers.

The following are the places where the Congress has held its sittings :—

Bombay	..	(twice)
Calcutta	..	(twice)
Madras	..	(twice)
Allahabad	..	(twice)
Nagpur	..	(once)
Lahore	..	(once)
Poona	..	(once)

The following are the names of the gentlemen who have presided at Congress Meetings:—

Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee	..	(twice)
Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji	..	(twice)
Mr. Budrudin Tyabjee	..	(once)
Mr. George Yule	..	(once)
Sir W. Wedderburn Bart.	..	(once)
Mr. P. M. Mehta	..	(once)
Mr. P. Ananda Charlu	..	(once)
Mr. Alfred Webb	..	(once)
Mr. Surendranath Bannerjee	..	(once)

From the brief outlines of the history of the origin of the Congress herein given, of the declarations of its leaders, of the subjects it has discussed, of the places in which it has held its sittings, and of the persons who have presided over its deliberations, it is clear that the Congress was the direct outcome of the noble policy of England in introducing English education in India, and diffusing knowledge over the length and breadth of this country by means of schools and colleges and thus awakening the rising young men of our country to a sense of the duties they owed to themselves, to their neighbours, and to their countrymen generally. That although most of these young men had not travelled to Europe nor even crossed the ocean that separates their country from the rest of the world, indeed some of them had hardly travelled in their own country, and a few of them had never left even the confines of the towns which had given them birth, all of them had by studying all that is best and ennobling in English literature and freely conversing with noble-minded Englishmen, acquired a knowledge of the events that had happened and were happening in Europe, and especially in England, that thrice happy island, the home of liberty and progress. They had amongst other things learnt how the existing political institutions of England had obtained their present form; how English patriots, through adverse circumstances, had, by never-failing courage and indomitable perseverance, acquired one after another, their present privileges of liberty of thought and freedom of action both in the field of religion and politics. We all know how in ancient times noble persons who resolved to devote their lives to the beautifying of their mother cities, used to travel far and wide, and in their extensive travels used to come across the beauties of other cities, and from such beauties to form general

notions of beauty, and how, on their return to their native cities, used to endeavour to beautify their own cities in accordance with the notions of beauty thus formed by them. In a similar manner our educated young men, whilst mentally travelling through the realms of the History of Europe generally, and particularly the History of England, had their attention drawn to the political history of England, and thus acquired ideas of liberty, which, in course of time, they thought of applying to their own country. In short, they became anxious to regenerate the political condition of India. They felt, however, that the vast majority of their own countrymen, among whom higher education had not yet permeated, would at first give them no support but rather ridicule, and would obstruct them. At the same time they anticipated that the ruling class might misunderstand them. They felt they had serious difficulties to contend with in the initial stage. Misrepresentation and misunderstanding are elements which every new movement has to combat with. They resolved, therefore, to be cautious and circumspect, and at every step to feel the ground before they actually put their foot thereon. They were, of course, prepared to face adverse and hostile criticism, obloquy and accusations. The English martyrs, they knew, had undergone all this, nay, even suffered tortures and death. But our young men felt they had certain advantages which English martyrs had not. The Government had educated them, had in a manner sown the seeds of and fostered their new ideas. Some Englishmen themselves sympathised with them. Under the ægis of English Rule they had toleration, and, believing in their new faith and resolved to go through all trials, all struggles, all vicissitudes, they started to put their ideas into execution.

The origin of the Congress was thus an epoch in the history of the country, and with the establishment of the Congress began a new era in the political history of India, and during the years that have followed, the movement has extended from a comparatively few persons to the whole of the educated classes and has already begun to agitate the masses, and if it is guided in the future, as it has been guided in the past, by moderation, prudence, and sagacity, is bound to have a decisive influence on the destinies of British India for the good of the country and for the glory of England. The Congress is now favoured with the presence of about two thousand members from as many hundred places, all speaking the "sober second thoughts" of the people and counting amongst them the foremost leaders of opinion in the country, and all the culture, the intelligence, and the public spirit—indeed, the collective wisdom of the united, educated, and thinking portion of British India. It holds its sittings in the most important cities in the empire, under the presidency of the most prominent Indians of the day as well as of Englishmen of the genuine sympathy of the late Mr. George Yule, Sir William Wedderburn, and Mr. Alfred Webb.

The first President of the Congress was an able representative of Bengal, Mr. W. C. Bonnerji, an able and experienced member of our legal profession (who is known to have more than once refused a High Court Judgeship) whose devotion to his country is well-known.

The second President was my fellow-citizen, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, whose invaluable and disinterested services to his country for nearly half a century, not forgetting the work recently done in Parliament, are now matter of history. In fact, he may be said to be the principal maker of the political history of the country.

The third President was my honored and distinguished co-religionist, Mr. Justice Budrudin Tyabji, an educated and cultured Mussulman of catholic views.

The fourth President was the late Mr. George Yule, a distinguished Anglo-Indian merchant, who had taken a deep interest in the welfare of this country and its people.

The fifth President was again an Anglo-Indian, a member of the Indian Civil Service, a distinguished champion of the Congress movement, Sir W. Wedderburn, Baronet, M.P., who has worked both in and out of Parliament with a devotion which has commanded the admiration of all India.

The sixth President was my valued friend, Mr. P. M. Mehta, one of the most enthusiastic and devoted adherents of the cause of India, whose record of services for the last thirty years is one of which every one of my countrymen ought to be proud.

The seventh President was Rai Bahadur P. Anandacharlu, a distinguished representative from Madras, an eminent leader in his own Presidency.

The eighth President was again Mr. W. C. Bonnerji, of whom I have already spoken.

The ninth President was again Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the self-denying, unique patriot of India, whose advent to Lahore was the cause of those unparalleled demonstrations which are already historical.

The tenth President, Mr. Webb, was a warm-hearted and reflective Irish Member of Parliament in deep sympathy with our aspirations.

The eleventh President was the Hon. Surendranath Bannerji, whom I have already referred to. This brief record shows the cosmopolitan character of this great movement. It also indicates how representative it has been of all the communities of this great empire, Hindus, Mahomedans, Parsis and Anglo-Indians. Their addresses prove that the Congress is not a party organisation or a political caucus, but an assembly representative of the light and leading of this vast Empire, dealing with public matters and serving public interests generally in a broad and catholic spirit, with the view not of supplanting as is often erroneously and absurdly alleged, but of supporting the Government of this country.

The only communities that remain yet unhonoured in this matter are the Eurasians, the Portuguese, and the Jews. It is not, I presume, from any lack of desire on the part of this Congress that they have not yet been honored with the election of one of them as President, but because the communities are small, and it is difficult to find from them representative men. In the case of the Eurasians, this opportunity would have been gladly availed of had not the late Mr. D. S. White, the President of the Eurasian Association, been

snatched away from us by the cruel hand of death soon after the date of the first Congress held in Bombay, at which he was present. I hope, and this assembly will, I trust, share my hope, that these communities also will have their turn in proper time.

With a record of such illustrious Presidents before me, and coming, as I had to do immediately after one of the most eloquent modern Indian orators and leading spirits of the wealthy and educated province of Bengal, I naturally felt diffident of my ability to discharge the onerous and responsible duties devolving upon the occupant of this chair, but counting, as I have already stated, upon your indulgence, forbearance, and generosity, your sympathy and support, I consented to preside, resolved to follow the example of my esteemed friend Mr. Justice Budrudin Tyabji, who has had the benefit of eight years' residence in England, is a gentleman of manifold experience, moderate and considerate views on public affairs, and who has been eminently successful, but is nevertheless an orthodox Mussulman commanding the confidence and respect of his co-religionists. The one great object-lesson which his example teaches, is, that Mussulmans, with benefit to themselves, and consistently with Mussulman interests,—even assuming the Mussulman interests, as unthinkingly alleged, are in conflict with interests of the rest of the Indians,—can and ought to take part in this national movement.

I now proceed to point out how far in unison with the declared policy of Great Britain and British statesmen is the programme of the Indian National Congress. From the following few extracts it will be seen that the Congress is doing nothing but nobly endeavouring to practically pursue the very policy which the statesmen whose views I give in these extracts, laid down for the better Government of India during the best part of the present century.

Sir John Shore, in 1787: "Whatever allowance we may make for the increased industry of the subjects of the State, owing to the enhanced demand for the produce of it (supposing the demand to be enhanced), there is reason to conclude that the benefits are more than counterbalanced by evils inseparable from the system of a remote foreign dominion."

Mr. Charles Grant, in 1792: "Whatever diversity of opinion may have prevailed respecting the past conduct of the English in the East, all parties will concur in one sentiment that we ought to study the happiness of the vast body of subjects which we have acquired there. Upon this proposition taken as a truth of the highest sincerity and importance, the following observations. . . . are founded. . . . Although in theory it never can have been denied that the welfare of our Asiatic subjects ought to be the object of our solicitude, yet, in practice, this acknowledged truth has been but slowly followed up. . . . Of late undoubtedly much has been done, and excellently done, to improve the condition of our subjects in the East, yet, upon an attentive examination, it may perhaps be found, that much yet remains to be performed." Amongst measures of improvement, Mr. Grant advocates that no force but reason should be employed; that knowledge should be communicated to the natives of India through the medium of the

English language; extension of printing for dissemination of English ideas; enlightening Indians by promoting mechanical industry; improvement in agriculture by introduction of machinery.

The Act of 1813: "That is the duty of this country to promote the interest and happiness of the native inhabitants of the British Dominions in India, and such means ought to be adopted as may tend to the introduction among them of useful knowledge and of religious and moral improvement, and in furtherance of the above objects sufficient facilities ought to be afforded by law to persons desirous of going to and remaining in India for the purpose of accomplishing the benevolent designs, so as the authority of the local Governments respecting the intercourse of the Europeans, with the interior of the country be preserved, and the principles of the British Government on which the natives of India have hitherto relied for the free exercise of their religion be unavoidably maintained."

By clause 43 of this Act it was ordered that the sum of £10,000 should be appropriated to the education of the natives in all the three Presidencies. This was the *first* statutory declaration enjoining on the East India Company to spend a lakh of rupees on education. The sum, however, was not spent till 1824, which is the first year in which the State spent some money on education.

On the 2nd October, 1815, Lord Moira issued a minute declaring his solicitude for the moral and intellectual condition of the natives and his anxiety to see established and maintained some system of public education.

In 1817 Lord Hastings announced that the Government in India did not consider it necessary to keep the natives in a state of ignorance in order to retain its own power; consequent on this announcement the Calcutta Text-book Society and the Hindu College were immediately founded.

Elphinstone, in 1823:—"It is difficult to imagine an undertaking in which our duty, our interest and our honour are more immediately concerned. It is now well understood that in all countries the happiness of the poor depends in a great measure on their education. It is by means of it alone that they can acquire those habits of prudence and self-reliance from which all other good qualities spring, and if ever there was a country where such habits are required, it is this. We have all often heard of the ills of early marriages and overflowing population, of the savings of a life squandered on some one occasion of festivity, of the helplessness of the ryots which renders them a prey to money-lenders, of their indifference to good clothes or houses which has been used on some occasions as an argument against lowering the public demands on them, and finally of the vanity of the laws to protect them when no individual can be found who had spirit enough to take advantage of those enacted in their favour; there is but one remedy for all this, which is education. If there be a wish to contribute to the abolition of the horrors of self-immolation and of infanticide, and ultimately to the destruction of superstition in India, it is scarcely necessary now to prove that the only means of success lie in the diffusion of knowledge."

Sir John Malcolm in 1828:—"One of the chief objects, I expect from diffusing

education among the natives of India, is our increased power of associating them in every part of the administration. This I deem essential on grounds of economy, of improvement, and of security. I further look to the employment of the natives in such duties of trust and responsibility as the only mode in which we can promote their improvement; and I must deem the instruction we are giving them dangerous, instead of useful, unless the road is opened wide to those who receive it to every prospect of honest ambition and honorable distinction."

The Court of Directors in 1830:—"In the meantime we wish you to be fully assured, not only of our anxiety that the Judicial offices to which natives are at present eligible should be properly filled, but of our earnest wish and hope to see them qualified for situations of higher importance and trust. There is no point of view in which we look with greater interest at the exertions you are now making for the instruction of the natives than as being calculated to raise up a class of persons qualified, by their intelligence and morality, for high employments in the Civil administration of India. As the means of bringing about this most desirable object, we rely chiefly on their becoming, through a familiarity with European literature and science, imbued with the ideas and feelings of civilized Europe, on the general cultivation of their understandings, and specifically on their instruction in the principles of morals and general jurisprudence. We wish you to consider this as our deliberate view of the scope and end to which all our endeavours with respect to the education of the natives should refer. And the active spirit of benevolence, guided by judgment, which has hitherto characterized your exertions, assures us of your ready and zealous co-operation towards an end which we have so deeply at heart.

"The improvements in education however which most effectually contribute to elevate the moral and intellectual condition of a people, are those which concern the education of the higher classes, of the persons possessing leisure and important influence over the minds of their countrymen. By raising the standard of instruction among the classes you would eventually produce a much greater and more beneficial change in the ideas and feelings of the community than you can hope to produce by acting directly on the more numerous class.

"You are, moreover, acquainted with our anxious desire to have at our disposal a body of natives qualified by their habits and acquirements to take a large share and occupy higher situations in the Civil Administration of their country than has hitherto been the practice under our Indian Governments."

Lord Macaulay in 1831:—"It would be far better for us that the people of India were well-governed and independent of us than ill-governed and subject to us; that they were ruled by their own kings and wearing our broadcloth, and working with our cutlery, than that they were performing their salaams to English Collectors and English Magistrates, but were too ignorant to value, or too poor to buy, English manufactures. To trade with civilized men is infinitely more profitable than to govern savages. That would indeed be a doting wisdom which would keep a hundred millions of men

from being our customers in order that they might continue to be our slaves."

Mr. Charles Grant in 1833:—Resolution moved by him in the House of Commons:—

"That it is expedient that the Government of the British possessions in India be entrusted to the said company under such conditions and regulations as Parliament shall enact, for the purpose of extending the commerce of this country and of securing the good government and promoting the religious and moral improvement of the people of India."

The Act of 1833:—"That no native of the said territories (India) nor any natural born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, color, or any of them be disabled from holding any place office, or any employment under the said Government." That the policy of British Rule in India should be a policy of justice and advancement of the people. India was to be regarded as a Trust placed by God in the hands of Englishmen and they would follow the "plain path of duty."

1835:—Free press was conceded.

Mr. Gladstone:—"It will not do for us to treat with contempt or even with indifference the rising aspirations of this great people."

Lord Roberts:—"Our greatest strength must ever rest on the firm base of a united and a contented India."

Lord Northbrook in 1874:—"There is one simple test which we may apply to all Indian questions; let us never forget that it is our duty to govern India, not for our own profit and advantage, but for the benefit of the natives of India."

Lord Lytton in 1877:—"But you the natives of India, whatever your race and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian statesmen and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honor and consistent with the aims of its policy."

Lord Ripon in 1882:—"The document (Her Majesty's Proclamation) is not a treaty, it is not a diplomatic instrument, it is a declaration of principles of Government, which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to all to whom it is addressed. The doctrine, therefore, to which Sir Fitz-James Stephen has given the sanction of his authority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honor of my country, and if it were free to be received and acted upon by the Government of England it would do more harm than anything else could possibly do to strike at the very root of our power and to destroy our just influence, because that power and that influence rest upon the conviction of our good faith more than upon any other foundation, aye, more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our armies."

"My study of History has led me to the conclusion that it is not by force of her armies or by the might of her soldiery that a great empire is permanently maintained, but it is by the righteousness of her laws, by her respect for the principles of her justice."

Lord Dufferin in 1887:—"Glad and happy should I be if, during my sojourn among them (the people of India), circumstances permitted me to extend and to place upon a wider and more logical footing the political status which was so wisely given, a generation ago, by that great statesman, Lord Halifax, to such Indian gentlemen, as by their influence, by their acquirements and the confidence they inspired in their fellow countrymen, were marked out as useful adjuncts to our Legislative Councils."

The principles of policy, which may be deduced from the above extracts are—

(a) That it is the duty of England to study the interest, the happiness and the welfare of the people of India.

(b) That it was not necessary to keep the people of India in a state of ignorance in order to retain the power of England over India.

(c) That the people of India should be educated. That this education should be given to them through the medium of the English language and that English ideas should be disseminated broadcast amongst them.

(d) That the people of India should be associated in the administration of the country and that every prospect of honest ambition and honorable distinction should be open to them.

(e) That all disabilities in regard to public employment should be removed.

(f) That the policy of British Rule in India should be a policy of justice, good faith and righteousness and of advancement of the people.

I now pass on to the gracious Proclamation of the Queen in 1858—a Proclamation which is rightly held to be the Magna Charta of the Indian people. It will be observed that it is to secure the fulfilment of the solemn pledges of the Proclamation that the Congress is strenuously endeavouring. It is because some of the pledges remain unfulfilled and others are violated that the Congress is obliged to appeal to our rulers. Let me now repeat some of the extracts.

"We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and those obligations by the blessings of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil."

"And it is our further wish, that, so far as may be, our subjects of whatever race or creed, be truly and impartially admitted to offices in our service, the duties of which they may be qualified by their education, ability and integrity to discharge."

This document is, as stated by Lord Ripon, a Declaration of Principles of Government. It is the Magna Charta of British India. It was not the result of agitation or even of petition. It was granted by the free will and pleasure of the Sovereign, and truly displays the generosity of the Royal nature. It was given after the suppression of the mutiny, and is a remarkable proof of the clemency of the British Crown. It is characteristic of the Noble Lady, the Mother of her subjects, whose reign has been an epoch in the history of the world. Deep reliance on merciful

Providence and true sincerity pervade the document. It is stated that this century, which is rapidly approaching its end, has been the humanitarian century *par excellence*, and has seen the end of many injustices and of many follies, that deserved to be wiped off the face of creation. But of all the mementoes of this humanitarian century, so far as India is concerned, the Proclamation will stand the highest and will be cherished the deepest and the longest by a grateful people.

It will be observed from the above extracts, both from the opinions of the English statesmen and from the proclamation, that the people of England, possessing, as they do, a genuine admiration for their own constitution, and jealous as they are for their own liberty, are not the people to view with disfavor the political aspirations of the people of India, aspirations forsooth, which the people of England themselves have deliberately inspired in the hearts of the people of India by purposely educating them in the English language by disseminating amongst them English ideals of political life and by encouraging them to raise themselves by education, intelligence and integrity, so as to become qualified to occupy positions of importance and trust in the service of the Government, as also to take part in the administration of the country. Under the circumstances those persons—and I regret to say some such do exist amongst my community—who imagine that the people of England are at heart against the people of India are certainly doing a great injustice to the people of England. It may be that such wrongheaded persons may have been led into committing the mistake by the insular rigidity of England and the stiff-and stand-off attitude of some Englishmen and their rough refusal at time to budge or bend an inch. But surely such persons should not be carried away by outward appearances or by false inferences derived from such outward appearances. If such people will go a little deeper into things, their minds will soon be disabused of these pure delusions. In fact, a more honest or sturdy nation does not exist under the sun than this English nation; and there ought to be no doubt whatever as to the ultimate concession of our demands, founded, as such demands are, on reason and justice on the one hand, as on the declared policy and the plighted word of the people of England on the other—provided always that the people of India are true to themselves. I repeat that there can be no doubt whatever as to these reasonable demands being ultimately conceded.

Sir William Wilson Hunter, in his article dealing with "the effects of a strongly constructed and vigorously enforced system of Western instruction upon an Asiatic population," says "India is now going through a quicker and more striking metamorphosis. We sometimes hear its marvellous awakening compared to the renaissance of Europe four hundred years ago. But in India the change is not only taking place on a greater scale it also goes deeper. It derives its motive power, moreover, not from the individual impulse of isolated men of genius or of cultured popes and princes, but from the mighty centralising force of a Government which, as an engine of human unification, has had nothing to compare with it since the days of Imperial Rome. English rule in India is however calmly carrying out processes of consolidation that never entered the brain of Roman statesman or emperor. While maintaining a policy of cold non-interference towards the rival religions, the domestic institutions, and the local usages of the Indian peoples, it is silently undermining those

ancient separatist influences which made for the isolation of races. It has created a new nexus for the active intellectual elements in the population,—a nexus which is beginning to be recognised as a bond between man and man and between province and province, apart from the ties of religion, of geographical propinquity, or of caste, a nexus interwoven of three strong cords, a common language, common political aims, and a sense of the power of action in common, the products of a common system of education.

"I may therefore briefly say that those political movements are the legitimate and inevitable results of Western education in India. The men who conduct them are the men to whom in all other respects, intellectual and moral, we are accustomed to point as the highest products of British rule in India. They are the men who form the natural interpreters of our rule to the masses of the people. To speak of such men, when their activity takes a political direction as disaffected, would be equally unjust and untrue; for they are the men who, of all our Indian fellow-subjects, realise most clearly that their interests, present and future, are identified with the permanence of British rule.

"But brief as this survey has unavoidably been, it suffices to show that the present political movements among the Indian races are only one aspect of a general advance, moral, intellectual, and industrial, that is now going on. The most significant fact connected with the late Indian National Congress at Bombay was not its marvellous assemblage of 1889 representatives from every province of India. It was rather that this great gathering for political purposes was held side by side with a still greater meeting in the same city for ameliorating the condition of women in India, the Social Reform Conference, attended by 6,000 persons, chiefly Hindus. A political movement which is purely political—may be wise or unwise; but a political movement which forms part of the general advance of a people to a higher state of society and to a nobler ideal of domestic and individual life, is irresistible. It may be guided, it may be moderated, but it must assuredly be reckoned with."

At a meeting held on the 10th May 1866 at Aligarh, Syed Ahmed Khan, in a deliberate speech, said;—

"It is with great regret that we view the indifference and want of knowledge evinced by the people of India with regard to the British Parliament. Can you expect that body, Gentlemen, to take a deep interest in your affairs if you do not lay your affairs before it?.....There are many men now composing it, liberal in their views, just and virtuous in their dealings, who take a deep interest in all that affects the welfare of the human race. To excite this interest however it is necessary that the requirements and wishes of that portion of mankind on whose behalf they are to exert themselves be made clearly known to them. Their interest and philanthropy once excited, you may feel assured, Gentlemen, that the wants, be the wants of the Jew, the Hindu, the Christian or the Mahomedan, of the black-man or of the white, will be attentively studied and duly cared for. India, with that slowness to avail herself of that which would benefit her.....so characteristic of Eastern races, has hitherto looked on Parliament with a dreamy, apathetic eye, content to have her affairs, in the shape of her budget brought before it in an annual and generally inaudible speech, by Her Majesty's Secretary of state for India. Is this state of things to continue, or has the time now come when the interests of this great dependency are to be properly represented in the governing body of the British nation? It has come, Gentlemen, and I entreat you to interest yourselves for your country. The European section of the community in India, now grown so large, have set on foot an association in London with branch associations in India, in order to have Indian affairs and the wants and desires of all classes of her inhabitants brought prominently to the notice of Parliament.....but unless

the entire native community out here co-operate with them, place funds at their disposal, and take such measures as may conduce to place the scheme on a permanent basis, the opportunity will be lost, the natives of India will be unrepresented, and you will only have yourselves to reproach when in after years you see the European section of the community enjoying their well-earned concessions, whilst your wants remain still unmet.

"I am afraid that a feeling of fear, that the Government or the district authorities would esteem you factious and discontented, were you to inaugurate a measure like this, deters you from coming forward for your country's good. Are the Europeans thought factious and discontented? Believe me, that this moral cowardice is wrong, this apprehension unfounded: and that there is not an Englishman of a liberal turn of mind in India who would regard with feelings other than those of pleasure and hope such a healthy sign of increased civilization on the part of its inhabitants. If you will only show yourselves possessed of zeal and self-reliance, you are far more likely to gain the esteem of an independent race like the English than if you remain, as you now are, apathetic and dependent. The actions and laws of every Government, even the wisest that ever existed, although done or enacted from the most upright and patriotic motives, have at times proved inconsistent with the requirements of the people or opposed to real justice. The natives have at present little or no voice in the management of the affairs of their country, and should any measure of Government prove obnoxious to them they brood over it, appearing outwardly satisfied and happy, whilst discontent is rankling in their minds. I hope you, my native hearers, will not be angry with me for speaking the truth. You know that you are in the habit of inveighing against various acts of Government in your own homes and amongst your own families, and that you, in the course of your visits to European gentlemen, represent yourselves as quite satisfied with the justice and wisdom of these very acts. Such a state of affairs is inimical to the well-being of the country. Far better would it be for India were her people to speak out openly and honestly their opinions as to the justice or otherwise of the acts of Government." Syed Ahmed Khan then quotes from Mr. John Stuart Mill the following passage: "The rights and interests of every or of any person are only secure from being disregarded when the person interested is himself able and habitually disposed to stand up for them. The second is that the general prosperity attains a greater height and is more widely diffused in proportion to the personal energies enlisted in promoting it." Syed Ahmed Khan then proceeds: "These principles, my friends, are as applicable to the people of India as they are to those of any other nation, and it is in your power, it now rests with you alone, to put them into practice. If you will not help yourselves, you may be quite certain no one else will. Why should you be afraid? Here am I, a servant of Government, speaking out plainly to you in this public meeting. My attachment to Government was proved, as many of you know, in the eventful year of the Mutiny. It is my firm conviction—one which I have invariably expressed, both in public and in private—that the greater the confidence of the people of India in the Government, the more solid the foundation upon which the present Government rests, and the more mutual friendship is cultivated between your rulers and yourselves, the greater will be the future benefit to your country. Be loyal in your hearts, place every reliance upon your rulers speak out openly, honestly, and respectfully all your grievances, hopes and fears, and you may be quite sure that such a course of conduct will place you in the enjoyment of all your legitimate rights, and that this is compatible, nay synonymous, with true loyalty to the State will be upheld by all whose opinion is worth hearing."

It is imagined by some persons that all, or almost all the Mussulmans of India, are against the Congress movement. That is not true. Indeed, by far the largest part do not know what the Congress movement is. Education of any sort or kind is

conspicuous by its absence amongst them, and their habitual apathy has kept them from understanding the movement at all. In fact they are blissfully ignorant. What the causes of such ignorance and apathy are, will be presently inquired into. It will be sufficient here to state that one infinitely small class of persons who have received liberal education through the medium of the English language, and another equally infinitely small class of persons who have received no education whatever through the medium of the English language, but who have acquired a smattering of what they are pleased to consider education through the Hindustani language, have considered it a fashionable thing to abuse the Congress and Congressmen as such. There being thus two different classes of malcontents, if they may be so called, the grounds of their opposition, are naturally different, nay even inconsistent, with each other. There is a third class, also a small one at present, who have recently risen from their apathy and are honestly endeavouring to educate themselves in the right direction and are destined soon to come to the front, and, it may safely be surmised, will become as enthusiastic supporters of the Congress movement as any; but with this last-mentioned class we have no immediate concern, and this address will confine itself to the two classes first mentioned. Before going, however, through the grounds of opposition on the part of these two classes it is desirable to revert to the causes of ignorance and apathy aforesaid. An advocate of the views of the first two classes might will be supposed, if he ever cared to put his views systematically, to place the case for the Mahomedans in the following way:—

Before the advent of the British in India, the Mussulmans were the rulers of the country. The Mussulmans had, therefore, all the advantages appertaining to the ruling class. The Sovereigns and the chiefs were their co-religionists, and so were the great landlords and the great officials. The court language was their own. Every place of trust and responsibility, or carrying influence and high emoluments was by birth-right theirs. The Hindu did occupy some positions, but the Hindu holders of position were but the tenants-at-will of the Mussulmans. The Mussulmans had complete access to the Sovereigns and to the chiefs. They could, and did, often eat at the same table with them. They could also, and often did, intermarry. The Hindus stood in awe of them. Enjoyment and influence and all the good things of the world were theirs. Into the best-regulated kingdoms, however, as into the best-regulated societies and families, misfortunes would intrude and misfortunes did intrude into this happy Mussulman rule. By a stroke of misfortune, the Mussulmans had to abdicate their position and descend to the level of their Hindu fellow-countrymen. The Hindus who had before stood in awe of their Mussulman masters were thus raised a step by the fall of their said masters and with their former awe dropped their courtesy also. The Mussulmans who are a very sensitive race, naturally resented the treatment and would have nothing to do either with their rulers or with their fellow-subjects. Meanwhile the noble policy of the new rulers of the country introduced English education into the country

The learning of an entirely unknown and foreign language, of course, required hard application and industry. The Hindus were accustomed to this, as even under the Mussulman rule, they had practically to master a foreign tongue, and so easily took to the new education. But the Mussulmans had not yet become accustomed to this sort of thing, and were, moreover, not then in a mood to learn, much less to learn anything that required hard work and application, especially as they had to work harder than their former subjects, the Hindus. Moreover, they resented competing with the Hindus, whom they had till recently regarded as their inferiors. The result was that so far as education was concerned, the Mussulmans who were once superior to the Hindus now actually became their inferiors.<sup>67</sup> Of course, they grumbled and groaned, but the irony of fate was inexorable. The stern realities of life were stranger than fiction. The Mussulmans were gradually ousted from their lands, their offices; in fact everything was lost save their honor. The Hindus, from a subservient state, came into the lands, offices and other worldly advantages of their former masters. Their exultation knew no bounds and they trod upon the heels of their former masters. The Mussulmans would have nothing to do with anything in which they might have to come into contact with the Hindus. They were soon reduced to a state of utter poverty. Ignorance and apathy seized hold of them while the fall of their former greatness rankled in their hearts. This represents the train of thought which pre-occupies the mind of many who would otherwise be well disposed towards this movement: all will admit that though they might object to particular statements, on the whole there is an element of truth which explains the Mahomedan depression.

"Almost everywhere" says Sir W. W. Hunter, "it was found that the Hindu population seized with avidity on the opportunities afforded by State education or bettering themselves in life; while the Mahomedan community, excepting in certain localities, failed as a whole to do so. State education thus put the finishing stroke to the influence of the Mahomedans, as the former ruling race in India. That position they had inherited from the time of the Mogul Empire, and during the first period of the Company's administration they still held an undue proportion of official posts. In the last century Mussulman Collectors gathered the Company's land-tax in Bengal, Mussulman Foujdars and Ghatwals officered its police. A great Mussulman department, with its head-quarters in the Nawab Nizam's palace at Murshidabad, and a net-work of Mussulman officials over every district in Lower Bengal, administered the Criminal Law. Mussulman jailors kept ward over the prison population of Northern India; Kazis or Mahomedan Doctors of law presided in the civil and domestic courts. When the Company first attempted to administer justice by means of trained English officers in its Bengal possessions, the Mahomedan Law Doctors still sat with them as their authoritative advisers on points of law. The Code of Islam remained for many purposes the law of the land, and the ministerial and subordinate offices of Government continued to be the almost hereditary property of the Mussalmans." But with the introduction of English education, "the Hindus began to pour into every grade

of official life ; and the state system of education in 1854 completed the revolution." Teaching disappeared everywhere, even in the mosques. After the Mahomedan conquest of India the mosque had become "the centres of educational activity, and were supported by imperial or local grants of land." But the mosques now ceased teaching, even in Lower Bengal, the Province which, "a hundred years previously, was officered by a few Englishmen, a sprinkling of Hindus, and a multitude of Mahomedans." The Mussalmans lost all ground...

"It became apparent that western instruction was producing not only a redistribution of employments but also an upheaval of races."

The Government of India, that is, the English gentlemen, both in England and in India, directly concerned in carrying on the administration of India, became alarmed at this state of things. The English people, generally, were grieved at the mistaken, yet noble, race of Indian Mussulmans thus going fast to ruin. Despatch after despatch was sent to India to do something for the Mussulmans. Special facilities were ordered. Some Mussulmans were after all found willing to receive liberal education, and these in their turn organized themselves into a body to educate others, and thus arose the educated class of Mussulmans. Now, the Mussulmans are noted for their gratitude. Some persons seem to have put it into their heads that Government as a body disapproved of their subjects criticising the measures of the administration. Hence that educated class, honestly, though mistakenly, opposes the Congress movement. As to the second class, their interest lies in keeping the Mussulmans ignorant, so as to turn such ignorance and the consequent credulity to their own advantage.

The following appear to be the objections of the Mussulmans to the Congress :—

1. That it is against their religion to join the Congress, as by joining the Congress they will be joining the Hindus who are not Mussulmans.
2. That it is against their religion to join the Congress, as by joining the Congress they will be joining a movement opposed to Government, a thing which is opposed to their religion, which directs obedience and loyalty to Government, albeit Government may not be treating them properly.
3. That it is against their religion to learn the English language.
4. That the success of the Congress would weaken the British rule, and might eventually end in the overthrow of British power and the substitution of Hindu rule.
5. That Government is against the Congress movement ; that in addition to the duty of loyalty, the Mussulmans owe the duty of gratitude to Government for giving them a liberal education ; therefore by joining the Congress, the Mussulmans would be guilty of the sin of ingratitude towards Government.
6. That the Congress does not adequately represent all the races of India.
7. That the motives of the persons constituting the Congress are not honest.

8. That the aims and objects of the Congress are not practical.

9. That the Congress is not important enough to deal satisfactorily with the subjects it takes up.

10. That the modes of Government prevailing in the West, namely, examination, representation, and election, are not adapted to India.

11. That such modes are not adapted to Mussulmans.

12. That the result of the application of Western methods to India would be to place all offices under Government in the power of the Hindus, and the Mussulmans would be completely ousted from Government employment.

13. That Government employment should be conferred not on the test of examinations, but by selection on the ground of race, position of the family, and other social and local considerations.

14. That public distinctions, such as seats on the Legislative Councils, Municipal Boards, and other Public Bodies, should be conferred not by the test of election, but by nomination based on the ground of race, and social influence and importance.

15. That inasmuch as the Congress is a representative body, and inasmuch as the Hindus formed the majority of the population, the Congress will necessarily be swamped by the Hindus, and the resolutions of the Congress will, to all intents and purposes, be the resolutions of the Hindus, and the Mussulman's voice will be drowned, and, therefore, if the Mussulmans join the Congress they will not only not be heard, but will be actually assisting in supporting Hindus to pass resolutions against the interest of the Mussulmans, and to give color to such resolutions as the resolutions of Hindus and Mussulmans combined, and thus aiding in passing resolutions against themselves and misleading Government into believing that the Mussulmans are in favour of such resolutions.

16. That Mussulman boys have to learn the languages appertaining to their religion, before joining schools; they are, therefore, at a disadvantage in the start for English education as compared with the Hindus. That the result is, that the Hindus pass the examinations, and as Government employment is given upon the test of examinations, the Mussulmans are necessarily ousted from Government employment, and it follows that the test of examination is not a fair test.

17. That as employments are given on the test of examinations, the result is that Hindus get such employment, and even in districts where the majority of the population are Mussulmans, the Hindus form the subordinate officialdom. That the Hindus being hostile to the Mussulmans, lord it over them, and the Mussulmans are naturally grieved to be lorded over by the Hindus; that in many cases these Hindus are from the lower strata of society, and in that case they tyrannise the more and thus aggravate the harsh treatment of the Mussulmans. That the result is that the Mussulmans, and amongst them Mussulmans descended from royal and noble families, are mortified at being not only ruled over, but even molested by and tyrannised over, in all manner of ways by Hindus, and Hindus of the lowest orders.

I now proceed to answer these objections.

1. Mussulmans in the past—Mussulmans not in name only, but orthodox, true Mussulmans—constantly travelled in foreign lands and mixed with all the nations of the world. The Mussulmans in India are the descendants of the Mussulmans who thus travelled to and settled in India, and of the Hindus whom such Mussulmans converted to Islam. All the Mussulmans in India have always lived side by side with the Hindus and mixed with them and even co-operated with them, both during the period of the Mussulman rule, as also since then. In fact, both the Mussulmans and the Hindus, as also other races residing in this country, are all equally the inhabitants of one and the same country, and are thus bound to each other by ties of a common nativity. They are all sharers in the benefits and advantages, as also in the ills, consequent on common residence; and, so far as natural and climatic conditions are concerned, all the inhabitants, irrespective of all other considerations, are subject to common joys and common sorrows and must necessarily co-operate with each other, as humanity is imperfect and dependent on co-operation. Again, both the Mussulmans and the Hindus are subjects of the same sovereign and living under the protection of the same laws, and are equally affected by the same administration. The object of the Congress is to give expression to the political demands of the subject, and to pray that their political grievances may be redressed and their political disabilities may be removed; that the political burdens of the country may be lightened and its political conditions may be ameliorated; that the political status of millions of human beings who are their fellow-countrymen may be improved, and their general condition may be rendered more tolerable. It is a most meritorious work, a work of the highest charity. No nobler or more charitable work could possibly be conceived. The only question is whether there should be two separate organisations, Mussulman and non-Mussulman, both simultaneously doing the same work, separate in name, but identical in nature and interest; or whether there should be a joint organisation. Obviously, the latter is preferable, especially as the Congress has no concern whatever with the religion or the religious convictions of any of its members.

2. It is not true that the Congress movement is a movement in opposition to Government. It is a movement for the purpose of expressing the grievances of the subjects to Government in a legal and constitutional manner, and for the purpose of asking Government to fulfil promises made by Government, of its own free will and pleasure; in fact, it is the duty of all truly loyal subjects—subjects desirous of seeing the Government maintained in its power—to inform Government of their own wants and wishes as it is also the duty of Government to ascertain the wants and wishes of the subjects and, indeed, those subjects who will not keep the Government well informed of their own wants and wishes cannot be called true friends of Government. We are all aware that the English nation, our common fellow-subjects, always makes it a point to inform Government of its own wants and wishes, so that

Government may be able to fulfil such wants and wishes. In the case of India, moreover, promises have been made from time to time by Government to concede certain privileges ; indeed, we have the plighted word of our most Gracious Sovereign herself confirming those promises. It is our duty, therefore, to remind Government of such promises and to ask it to fulfil them.

3. Language is but the medium of expression. Orthodox and true Mussulmans have in their time learned the Greek, the Latin, and other languages. There is, therefore, nothing against learning any language. In fact, many Mussulmans of India, indeed, most of them, learn and speak languages other than the language of their religion. The objection, therefore, against learning the English language, which is moreover the language of our rulers, is so absurd on the face of it, that it need not be further adverted to.

4. The object of the Congress has already been stated. The success of the Congress, as has also been stated, instead of weakening Government, will only contribute towards the greater permanence of British rule in India. The Mussulmans, therefore, need not be frightened by phantoms created by their own imagination.

5. It is the duty of all good boys, who have by the liberal policy of their fathers been enabled to receive a liberal education, to repay the kindness of their fathers, by assisting their fathers in the management of their affairs with the aid of such education and by contributing to the maintenance and welfare of the family by all honest means in their power. Similarly, it is the duty of those subjects who have received a liberal education with the aid of Government, to repay the kindness of Government by assisting Government in the proper discharge of its high functions by informing Government of the shoals and rocks lying ahead in its path and thus enabling Government to steer clear of such shoals and rocks, and not to lie by quietly with a false sense of gratitude and leaving Government to run against such shoals and rocks and thus unintentionally, of course, but nevertheless contribute to its grounding ashore. True gratitude lies in true good wishes and true good assistance and not in false modesty and indolence.

6. If the Congress does not, as is alleged, adequately represent all the races, surely the fault lies, not on the shoulders of the Congress leaders who invite all the races, but on the shoulders of those races themselves who turn a deaf ear to such invitation, and prefer not to respond to it. It is the duty of such races, in response to such invitation, to attend the Congress and not to blame the Congress when, in fact, they ought to blame themselves.

7. All public bodies, assembled in public meetings, desirous of giving every publicity to their proceedings and even keeping a public record of its transactions, ought to be judged by their sayings and doings. It is not right or proper to attribute to such bodies improper motives, unless such motives can be fairly and reasonably inferred from their sayings or doings or both. In fact, no person, having any sense of self-respect, ought to attribute improper motives,

unless he is prepared to prove the same, and it is to be hoped, for the honor of the Mussulmans, to cease from making reckless charges which they are not prepared to substantiate.

8. As to the aims and objects of the Congress not being practical, it is a well-known fact that public attention has been drawn to the demands of the Congress, and not only the classes but even the masses have already been awakened to a sense of their political grievances and disabilities. Government has also been pleased to take into its favourable consideration the demands of the Congress, and has partially conceded the expansion of the Legislative Councils and introduced the element of election therein. Indeed, if the Congress movement is continued with the same ability, prudence and sagacity that have characterized it in the past, and especially if those who have hitherto contented themselves with simply throwing out objections begin in right earnest to take part in the movement, the movement is certain to bear fruit in the very near future and to end in practical results.

9. As to the Congress not being important enough to deal with the subjects it takes up, it will not be denied that the Congress contains in its ranks some of the most educated, most wealthy and most influential men of the day, some of whom have occupied—and occupied honorably—public offices of trust and importance, and most of whom are leaders of their respective centres. In fact, in the Congress camp one comes across legislators, municipal councillors, rich zamindars, extensive merchants, renowned lawyers, eminent doctors, experienced publicists, indeed, representatives of every industry and every profession in the land. In fact, it will be hard—nay impossible—to name any other non-official public body equally important with the Congress.

10. As to the modes of government prevailing in the West not being adapted to India, the position stands as follows: In a primary state of society, whilst a particular small nation, confined to a narrow strip of territory, is governed by a single ruler, who generally belongs to that nation and is residing in that territory, as the nation is not a numerous one and the territory not a large one, the ruler is necessarily in daily and constant touch with his subjects. The affairs of the State are of a very limited nature and do not occupy much time of the ruler. Moreover, there are not special or local circumstances of sufficient importance to be taken into consideration. The affairs of the State are of a simple nature. The offices are not many and do not require special merits for their proper performance. Whenever, therefore, the ruler has to appoint to a post, the ruler himself is qualified to do so. He does not find it necessary to resort to any complicated method for the performance of this part of his duty. Hence the posts are filled without compelling the candidates to undergo the trouble of going through any definite or complicated course of instruction or examination. As the nation, however, increases in numbers, as the territory is enlarged and the needs of society become more numerous and more complicated, the number of the posts to be filled becomes greater, and the qualifications

required for the proper performance of the posts grow higher and are of diverse character. The touch of the ruler with each one of the ruled gets less and less, and the ruler cannot possibly keep himself personally abreast of a knowledge of the increase and complicated needs of his people. He becomes, in fact, less qualified to properly fill up all the posts, and he is compelled to delegate this part of his duty to others. In course of time, he discovers that it is not a very satisfactory thing to nominate to posts by means of deputies and that some definite method of selection must be substituted. The considerations which formerly guided him when he alone had personally to nominate, are of such a vague character when placed in the hands of his deputies, that he finds that it is not only not useful but even mischievous to resort to them as, instead of such considerations being in fact given weight to, they simply open a wide door to undue influence and even bribery, and he finds it necessary to discard them and is compelled to limit himself to selection by a public examination of candidates, after they have gone through a course of instruction laid down for the purpose. Thus it happens that all other qualifications such as of family, standing and position and others come to be dispensed with, and the test of public examinations, that is, of personal merit alone, as tested by such examinations, is substituted. It may be conceded at once that it is not a perfect or infallible test. It is a choice of evils. In order however, to guard so far as possible against the evil of dispensing with the other considerations, a certain proportion of the posts is reserved to be filled up by the original method of nomination and the examination test is resorted to for filling up initial posts alone, and promotion is guided by seniority and merit combined. The circumstances above set forth are not peculiar to any particular country or climate, but are equally applicable to all, and it is not correct to say that the above method is a peculiarly Western method and not applicable or adapted to India. In fact, in China which is peculiarly an Eastern country the same method has been of universal application for many centuries past. Moreover, the present rulers of India happen to be foreigners, and in their case, therefore, the considerations, which have led to the method of examination being adopted, apply with even greater force. The above considerations also apply to the method of election and representation, though not with the same force or to the same extent. Hence, election and also nomination in the case of Local Boards, Municipal Corporations, Legislative Councils, and the like. It has been suggested by the Honorable Haji Mohamed Ismail Khan, of the North-West Provinces, that the Congress should pass a resolution "recognizing the absolute necessity of equality of number of Hindu and Mahomedan elected members in Legislative Councils, District Boards and Municipalities . . ." and "wishing all Hindus and Mahomedans to elect" accordingly. It is a good suggestion, but so long as Mussulmans do not join the Congress movement in the same numbers and with the same enthusiasm as the Hindus do, the Congress cannot in fairness be asked to carry out such a suggestion in the manner and to the extent indicated in the suggestion.

11. As to the modes of government prevailing in the West not being adapted to Mussulmans, the observations in answer to objection No. 10 also apply to this objection. The Mussulmans may be reminded that our Holy Prophet did not name a successor. He left it to the believers to elect one for themselves. The Caliph or the successor was originally freely chosen by the free suffrages of the believers and was responsible to them for his acts. In later times this practice was altered, and the Caliphs were made hereditary; but this was done by the confidence and the consent of the believers. But even to this day, the sanction of the believers in the shape of Biat, is deemed necessary. "The Government of Islam," says Mr. Ahmed Risa, "is therefore in the hands of an elective monarch, limited in the exercise of his powers by prescriptive religious traditions. According to Mussulman Law, if the Caliph departs from these traditions, the body of the learned (Ulema) is armed with the right of remonstrating, and is even able to depose him. Amongst these traditions, there is one which makes it obligatory on the Caliph not to do, or even to resolve on, any act without first seeking the advice of the chiefs of the tribes and the doctors of the law—a principle very characteristic of Representative Government. According to Mussulman Law, the Caliph is bound to be just, to respect the liberties of the people, to love his subjects, *to consider their needs, and listen to their grievances.*" . . . . , "It is clear that Islam knew how to determine and regulate the rights and duties of the sovereign, even before England essayed the task." Islamism has no caste. "Let all your subjects," said Frederick the Great, "have the right to address you directly both in speech and writing." "The Mussulmans," says Mr. Ahmed Riza, "are free from clerical domination, and know nothing of rank or social grade." Said Ali, the fourth Caliph, "Superiority in knowledge is the highest title of honor." "The spirit of self-sacrifice and devotion" of the Mussulmans was remarkable, Mussulman cities were "full of savants and men of letters." "Roman Law and Greek Science continued their evolution among the Arabs." "The best of Holy wars," said our Holy Prophet, "is the righteous word spoken to a monarch who is acting tyrannically." "Islam knows no master: the Commander of the Faithful is only the chosen servant of the people." "Obedience to a Chief is limited; it is founded on the presumption that the Chief commands in the name of the law and in the interests of him who obeys." "'Obey me' said Abu Bekr (the first Caliph,) so long as I go on in good practices. If I deceive myself, warn me. If you do not, you will be responsible." The Government of Islam is a collective authority in which every free citizen, in possession of his mental faculties, is bound by a common destiny, and shares its responsibilities." "Islamism is not occupied with supra-mundane interests alone. It does not say, 'Leave to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' It teaches its adepts that they have a civil duty to fulfil here below, and especially the duty of controlling the conduct of Cæsar." Election and Representation as also Universal Brotherhood are the characteristics of Islam and ought not to be objected to by Mussulmans. All

Mussulmans are equal, and if they want any employment, they must like the rest pass public examinations. If they want any position of rank, they must endeavour to be fit for such position and resort to election, like the rest. Of course, if they can gain such position by nomination, they must thank their good fortune, but if they cannot, they have no right to grumble. They may contend, however, that so far as examinations are concerned, they are at a disadvantage, as compared with the Hindus. If that is so, it is no doubt a misfortune. But surely they must rely on merciful Providence and put their own shoulders to the wheel and by the grace of God they are bound to succeed in their efforts; nay even more, if they have more difficulties to overcome than the Hindus, so much the more creditable will be their success to them, and so much the more will they be qualified, not only for the initial posts, but for higher promotion. In fact, even in India, we find that when Mussulmans do really take to liberal education, they generally equal, if not even surpass the other races, and that Mussulmans are good not only in matters requiring muscle and valour, but also mental powers and intellectual vigor, and the Mussulman community of India can produce distinguished and deeply learned scholars, such as Mr. Justice Budruddin, Mr. Justice Amear Ali and Mr. Justice Mahmood, and here it may be remarked in passing that if Mussulmans in India have a few more leaders of educational advancement, of the calibre and energy, and persistence and devotion, of the type of Syed Sir Ahmed Khan, who has by his life-long services done a great deal for Mussulmans in this matter, and whose name will be remembered with gratitude and admiration for a long time to come, Mussulman education is bound to prosper. The Mussulmans may further contend that in elections they will be swamped. All that may be said here is that they are mistaken in thinking so. They have simply to try, and they will find that they will have no reason to complain. Assuming, however, that they are unsuccessful, notwithstanding their honest endeavours and notwithstanding their fitfulness, why, then Government will, for its own safety, be compelled to come to their help. Objections 12, 13, 14 and 16 have already been answered.

15. It does not follow that, because the Hindus form the majority of the Congress, that the Resolutions of the Congress will be the resolutions of the Hindus. It is a standing rule of the Congress, solemnly passed and recorded that if any proposal is disapproved of by the bulk of either the Hindus or the Mussulmans, the same shall not be carried. Again the Congress is not a meeting of shareholders in a Joint-Stock Company or any other body formed for the gain of profit or for private interests, and a numerical majority does not and cannot influence its decisions—decisions by the bye, which cannot affect anybody as they are simply expressions of opinion, and as such must necessarily depend on their intrinsic sense and reasonableness to carry any weight with Government for whose benefit they are passed. Again, so long as the Congress leaders happen to be men of education and enlightenment, men of approved conduct and wide experience, men, in fact, who have a reputation to lose, the Congress

will never be allowed to run its course for the benefit of sectional, private or party purposes. Again, if the Mussulmans attend Congress meetings, surely the Congress shall be bound to hear and to give careful consideration to Mussulman views, and arguments founded on facts and reason are bound to prevail. Assuming, however, that the Congress is reduced to a rabble meeting, which is not probable, why, then it will lose its position and nobody will pay any attention to its resolutions.

The Mussulmans, however, instead of raising puerile and imaginary objections from a distance, should attend Congress meetings and see for themselves what is going on in such meetings. Indeed, they will find that even when one member puts forward cogent reasons in opposition to the proposal, such proposal is eventually dropped.

17. If the complaint in regard to the conduct referred to in the objection be correct, it may be mentioned that such conduct is not peculiar to any particular race.

It is in the nature of things that persons of low origin, born and brought up in the atmosphere of low morals should on finding themselves suddenly clothed with the authority of the Sircar, get their heads turned and be led into playing the tyrant. The less the education they have received, and the smaller the emoluments their posts carry, the greater their superciliousness, the more marked their contempt for others. Cringing to superior authority and lording it over the people who have anything to do officially with them, are the distinguishing traits of these pests of society. Persons of high birth and culture, who have seen better days and better days and better society, may sometimes be naturally inclined to give to these supercilious tyrants a sound thrashing so as to make them remember it to the end of their days and prevent them from reverting to their evil ways. But persons of high birth and culture naturally recoil from doing anything which may savour of vulgarity, and hence their silent sufferings. Government has been ever ready and willing to check high-handedness and insulting conduct on the part of their native subordinate officials. Europeans, both official and non-official, lovers of manliness and justice as they are, strongly disapprove their hauteur. But no Government, however watchful, and however anxious it may be, can possibly completely eradicate the evil, the true remedies for the removal of which are as follows. The standard of education required of candidates for subordinate official posts should be gradually raised higher and higher so as to compel the candidates to have better education and better culture, in order to make them forget the evil surroundings of their previous life and to take to a better appreciation of the moral law of nature. At the same time education should be disseminated all over the land, and the standard of education of the masses should be gradually and steadily raised, so that the masses, armed with the weapon of Education, may not have meekly to submit to petty tyrannies, but may know how to protect themselves against them and to bring the offenders to a proper sense of their puniness and the impropriety of their conduct by means of union and the

agitation of their grievances, and in legally provokable cases by bringing the culprits to their well-deserved punishment.

All who believe in one God and acknowledge the Holy Prophet are true believers. The fundamental principles of Islam are few and simple. Islam knows no castes and ought not to have divisions and sub-divisions. Yet we find Islam divided into sects, into innumerable divisions. This is certainly against the spirit of Islam. All true believers are equal. By Mussulman Law they can all eat with each other, nay more, they can eat with the followers of the Great Prophets on whom Revelation has descended. All Mussulmans can intermarry, nay more, Mussulman males can marry females from the followers of the Great Prophets. Yet the different sects of Indian Mussulmans will not intermarry, even amongst themselves. It is the duty of all true believers to educate themselves, their wives and their sons and their daughters so as to enable them to know God aright. Yet ignorance is the prevailing rule amongst Indian Mussulmans. Mussulman females are free. Marriage is a contract in which the husband and the wife are parties. Females have independent property. Yet amongst Indian Mussulmans there are frequent cases of maltreatment of wives. The Musjids are places of worship as also places for giving education, and places of meeting for discussion of social and political matters. Yet discussion and consideration and expression of opinions is an exceptional thing amongst Indian Mussulmans. Freedom of speech and liberty of action consistent with a few fundamental and world-recognised principles are the birth-right of Mussulmans. Yet Indian Mussulmans are content to sit idle. To point out to the rulers their own grievances and to ask redress for them is the privilege of Mussulmans. Yet Indian Mussulmans prefer to remain silent. To be active and to be energetic, to be enterprising and to be fearless, has been the characteristic of the faithful. Yet Indian Mussulmans prefer to remain indolent and apathetic. Are not Indian Mussulmans, then, to blame themselves? If the Indian Mussulmans once shake off their lethargy and rid themselves of their apathy, if they unite together and love each other, as members of the same fold, as brothers of a Universal Brotherhood, mix with each other and intermarry, educate themselves, and their wives and children, and meet together and exchange opinion and voice their grievances, and generally endeavour to raise themselves and actively co-operate in the raising of their brethren, they have under merciful Providence as bright a future before them as they had a glorious past. The Indian Mussulmans are a brave and generous race, and it is natural that they should smart under the misfortunes that have overtaken them and resent the treatment that has been and is extended to them. But certainly apathy and lethargy are not the means calculated to reinstate them in anything like their former greatness. Relying, therefore, upon merciful Providence and True Religion, and placing confidence in Almighty God, the Creator of the Universe and the Dispenser of all things, they must rise equal to their present trials, and it is to be fervently hoped that the Benign Ruler may have mercy upon them and raise them again to prosperity and good fortune. One of the obvious means by which Indian Mussulmans can raise themselves is education. It is stated

that there are five crores of Mussulmans in India. It is further stated that the average annual income per head of population in India is rupees twenty-seven. If so, the average annual income of Indian Mussulmans ought to be rupees one hundred and thirty-five crores. The Zakat or tax on this income at the rate of two and a half per cent. comes to nearly rupees three crores. Making all possible allowances for those who may be exempted from payment of Zakat, and for that purpose reducing it to one-tenth, we can have the splendid annual sum of rupees thirty lakhs, that is, at the rate of one anna per annum per head of Mussulmans in India, which is certainly not a very heavy average annual payment. If all the Indian Mussulmans join together and voluntarily contribute as above suggested, they will thereby be fulfilling one of the main commandments of Islam, and thus performing an act of duty. With this magnificent sum, schools for primary, secondary and higher education can be established and maintained, and in such schools education as also food and clothing to students may be given, and there will, thus, every year, be maintained, lodged and educated thousands and thousands of Indian Mussulman youth. Government will have under the grant-in-aid rules, to contribute to this sum, and thus the total sum will be materially increased. If this system is established and continued, in the course of a few years, education will have permeated all ranks of Indian Mussulmans, and the condition of the whole body will have become so much improved as to be a matter for admiration. What is wanted is voluntary performance on the part of all Indian Mussulmans of a strictly religious duty and on the part of the leaders co-operation and good management, and it is to be devoutly wished that Mussulmans in every part of India, instead of scouting the idea will allow good sense for once to overcome apathy and lethargy and give to this suggestion a sympathetic consideration.

It may be observed here in passing that it is sometimes contended in disparagement of the Indian Mussulmans that "Islam is unfit to be a moral code for a nation to live in": that "the faith of the Islam is incompatible with good Government and with the happiness of a people." Both the above accusations are absolutely false. In fact, the tenets of Islam are inherently capable of good government and good and happy subjects. The very first and most fundamental doctrine of Islam that there is no God but God, that is but one God, is not only the true doctrine, but also binds the true believer to be a respectable man, and, if Mussulmans have become degenerated, it is not on account, but in spite of, Islam. Another fundamental doctrine is that of prayers. Prayers bring the human being in personal contact with his Creator. Another fundamental doctrine is that of observing fast, which teaches men by personal experience to think of the miseries of their fellow human beings. Another fundamental doctrine is that of charity, and which has been admitted all over the earth and in all times to be an excellent virtue. Another fundamental doctrine is that of Haj, which apart from its religious benefit, has all the benefits of travel. There is nothing, therefore, in Islam to cause degeneracy, on the other hand, there is everything in Islam to make Mussulmans loyal subjects and good citizens.

If you will look at the map of India, you will find that India has the appearance of a one-legged horse. India has from time to time been a prey to foreign invasions from without and to internecine wars within. Famine periodically visits the land, and so does plague: English rule has, however, stopped foreign invasion, and the Pax Britannica has put an end to internecine wars. Western arts and Western methods are employed to prevent—at all events to check—famine and plague, to keep them within gradually diminishing limits, and under steadily increasing control it is to be hoped that these monster evils will, in the near future, be completely laid at rest. The resources of the country are being gradually developed and its trade is increasing. Public expenditure, however, under British rule, is increasing by leaps and bounds far beyond the national income that is at present realized, or that can reasonably be expected to be realized in the near future. The average income per year per head of population is, in England, £33 (thirty-three pounds sterling); in France, £23 (twenty-three pounds sterling); in Russia, over £9 (nine pounds sterling) in Turkey in Europe, (£4 four pounds sterling); whilst in India, it is only Rs 27 (twenty-seven rupees,) or at 1s. 4d per Rupee £ 1-14-6 (one pound sterling fourteen shillings and 6 pence). Thus the average income per year per head of population of India is about one nineteenth of the average income per year per head of population in England; or, in other words so far as the annual income is concerned nineteen times better off than India or India is nineteen times worse off than England. Again, the population of India is mostly agricultural. The ratio of town population to country population in India is one to twelve, that is, the agricultural population of India is twelve-thirteenth of the total population of the country. In England the ratio of town population to country population is two to one, that is, the agricultural population in England is only (one-third) of the total population of the country. Thus town population, as compared to country population, is in England, 24 to 12, whilst in India, it is 1-12; or, in other words, so far as the ratio of proportion of town population to country population is concerned, England is 24 (twenty-four) times better off than India. Again the population of British India, is, in round numbers, 22 (twenty-two) crores whilst the total Imperial taxation, in round numbers, is Rs. 95 (rupees ninety-five) crores, or, in round numbers, Rs. 4-8 (rupees four and annas eight) per head of population; and as the average annual income per head is Rs. 27 (rupees twenty-seven), the percentage of taxation to annual income is  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 27, that is, sixteen-and-a-half per cent. The population of the United Kingdom is, in round numbers, about four crores, whilst the total Imperial taxation is a little more than that of India and comes to about Rs. 25 (rupees twenty-five) per head; and as the average annual income per head is £33, the percentage of taxation to income comes to about six per cent. Thus, so far as the percentage of taxation to income is concerned, India is two-and-a half times worse off than England. Moreover, it is a well-known fact) the same percentage of tax to income, when levied on persons having good incomes, may be easily borne by them and may not be at all felt by them; when levied on persons having poor or small

incomes—may be heavily felt—may even become wholly unbearable. In fact, this incidence is now well admitted in the case of income-tax, and it is for this reason that on levying that tax, incomes under a certain amount are wholly exempted, and on incomes above that amount and up to a certain amount, there is a sliding scale put into operation. Thus the ratio of  $16\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of taxation to income, in the case of India, though nominally only two-and-a-half times higher than the ratio in the case of England, is in incidence, considerably more heavy, and India is therefore, in reality, considerably worse off than that ratio indicates. Again, in the year 1849–50, the population of British India was about fifteen crores, whilst the expenditure was about twenty-seven crores. In the year 1894–95 the population was about twenty-two crores, whilst the expenditure was about ninety-five crores. The increase, in population, therefore, was about fifty per cent., whilst the increase, in taxation was about three hundred and fifty per cent., that is, the growth of expenditure was about seven times the growth of population. During the same period, the charges of collection rose from 6.06 to 9.75 that is, more than fifty per cent.; the expenditure on civil administration rose from 6 to 14.83, that is, more than 240 per cent. and the expenditure on Army rose from 11.39, to 24.31, that is, more than 213 per cent. Again, the estimated debt of British India for the year 1895 is £ 127 (one hundred and twenty-seven million pounds), whilst that of Great Britain is £660 (six hundred and sixty million pounds). Thus the Indian debt is about one-fifth of the British debt, whilst the capacity of India for repayment of debt, as judged by the average annual income per head of population, is only one-nineteenth! Again, the debt of Great Britain in the year 1875 was £ 780 (seven hundred and eighty million pounds); of India £ 130 (one hundred and thirty million pounds). Thus, from the year 1875 to the year 1895, the British debt is reduced by £ 120 (one hundred and twenty million pounds); whilst that of India, only by £ 3 (three million pounds). Again the rate of interest on public loan in England, in the year 1875, was  $3\frac{1}{4}$  (three and one-fourth) per cent.; in India, 4 (four per cent.) and there is still a corresponding difference in favour of England and against India. Again, Great Britain annually pays, by way of interest, 12s. 9d. (twelve shillings and nine pence) per head; and, as the average annual income per head is £ 33 in England, the proportion of interest to income is nearly two per cent. India annually pays, by way of interest, annas three and pies nine per head; and, as the average annual income per head is Rs. 27 in India, the population of interest to income is nearly one per cent. Thus a British subject, who, so far as his average income is concerned, is nineteen times better off than a British Indian subject, has to pay, by way of interest on national debt, only two per cent, out of his average income, whilst an Indian subject, who, so far as his average income is concerned, is nineteen times worse off than a British subject, has to pay one per cent, that is, in this respect also, is nine times worse off than British subject. Again, the Imperial expenditure of the United Kingdom has risen from 81 (eighty-one million pounds) in the year 1881 to 94 (ninety-four millions) in the year 1895. This addition is caused, for the most part, by an increase

of the naval and military from 25 (twenty-five) to 38 (thirty-eight millions), an exceptional and temporary measure. The charges of the national debt have decreased from 28 (twenty-eight) to 25 (twenty-five millions), and the debt itself from 770 (seven hundred and seventy) to 660 (six-hundred and sixty millions). The Imperial expenditure of India has risen from 71 (seventy-one) crores in the year 1881 to 94½ (ninety-four-and a-half crores) in the year 1894. The charges on the national debt have, contrary to what has happened in England, instead of decreasing, risen from 485 (four crores and eighty five lacs of rupees) in the year 1881, to 512 (five crores and twelve lacs) in the year 1894, and the debt itself has increased from the year 1884 to the year 1894 as follows, that is, permanent debt in India from 93 (ninety-three crores) and odd to Rs. 104 (one hundred and four crores and odd,) and permanent debt in England from 69,271,088 (sixty-nine millions and odd) to Rs. 114,005,826 (one hundred fourteen millions and odd). Again the total land, according to the survey of India is 539,848,840 (five hundred and thirty-nine and odd). Of this land actually cropped is 196,600,688, current follows, thirty millions and odd; available for cultivation, 99 (ninety-nine millions and odd); not available for cultivation, 113 (one hundred and thirteen millions and odd). Forests, 62 sixty-two millions). The average incident of Government Revenue per cultivated acre is one rupee three annas and two and two-fifths pies. The population of British India is 22 [twenty-two crores]. The average acreage under food-crops is 18·60 [eighteen crores and odd]. The average of food-crops per acre [both irrigated and unirrigated is 0·31 ton or 694 [six hundred and ninety-four pounds]. The total of food-crops is 576 [five crores seventy-six lacs tons]. The average consumption of food-grains per head of the population per annum is 585 lbs. [five hundred and eighty-five pounds] or per day 1·60 lbs. [one pound and six-tenths pounds]. The total consumption is 5·77 five crores and seventy-seven lacs tons). It is clear, from the above facts and figures, that India is a very poor country; that it is an agricultural country with but few manufactures, that Indians are a poor nation, living from hand to mouth—indeed, some of them actually starving and many of them having barely one meal a day; that taxation is very heavy; that charges for collection and the cost of administration, both civil and military, have increased far beyond the capacity of meeting them; that, notwithstanding the heavy taxation, the national debt—specially the gold debt and the charges to meet such debt—are steadily increasing.

That the Indians are a poor people, that they are overtaxed, that the Civil and Military expenditure of India is excessive, that the drain from India is of a ruinous character, that both justice and self-interest demand of our rulers that native labour should be more and more substituted for foreign labour and that all unproductive expenditure should be stopped, the following extracts from the speeches and writings of English statesmen themselves, make abundantly clear.

Mr. Bright, in the House of Commons, 14th June, 1858 :—

“The cultivators of the soil, the great body of the population of India, are in a condition of great impoverishment, of great dejection, and of great suffering.”

Lord Lawrence in 1864 :—

“The mass of the people enjoy only a scanty subsistence.”

Lord Lawrence, before the Select Committee of the House of Commons, in 1873 :—

“The mass of the people of India are so miserably poor that they have barely the means of subsistence.”

Major Baring, Finance Minister of India, in his Budget speech, 1882, after stating that the average income per annum per head of population in India is Rs. 27, says :— “It is sufficiently accurate to justify the conclusion that the tax-paying community is exceedingly poor.”

Mr. Gladstone, in the House of Commons, 10th May 1870, said that India was “too much burdened.”

Mr. Bright, in his speech at the Manchester Town hall, 11th December, 1877 :—

“I say that a Government . . . . . which has levied taxes till it can levy no more . . . . . and which has borrowed . . . . . more than all that it can levy . . . . .”

Mr. Gladstone, in the House of Commons, 30th June 1893 :— “The expenditure of India and especially the Military *Expenditure* is alarming.”

Lord Salisbury :— “India must be bled.”

Lord Salisbury, Secretary of State for India, Minute, 29th April 1875 :— “ . . . . . where (in India) so much of the revenue is exported without a direct equivalent.”

Mr. Bright, in the House of Commons, 24th June, 1858 :— “We must in future have India governed, not for a handful of Englishmen, . . . . .”

Sir George Wingate in “A Few Words on our Financial Relations with India” 1859 :—

“They [taxes not spent in India] constitute . . . an absolute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country.”

Mr. Fawcett, in the House of Commons, 5th May 1868 :—

“Lord Metcalfe had well said that the bane of our system was that the advantages were reaped by one class and the work was done by another.”

The Duke of Argyll, in the House of Lords, 11th March 1869 :—

“I must say that we have not fulfilled *our duty* or the promises and engagements which we have made.”

Sir George Wingate in “A Few Words on our Financial Relations with India.” 1859 :—

“Such is the nature of the tribute we have so long exacted from India . . . . . From this explanation some faint conception may be formed of the cruel, crushing effect of the tribute upon India.” “The Indian tribute, whether weighed in the scales of justice, or viewed in the light of our own interest, will be found to be at variance with humanity, with common sense . . . . .”

Lord Hartington, Secretary of State for India, in the House of Commons, 23rd August 1883 :—

"The Government of India cannot afford to spend more than they do on the administration of the country and if the country is to be better governed, that can only be done by the employment of the best and most intelligent of the natives in the service."

Lord Randolph Churchill, Secretary of State for India, in a letter to the Treasury, 1886:—

"The position of India in relation to taxation and the sources of public revenue is very peculiar . . . . from the character of the Government which is in the hands of foreigners who hold all the principal administrative offices and form so large a part of the Army. The impatience of the new taxation which will have to be borne wholly as a consequence of the foreign rule imposed on the country, and, virtually to meet additions to charges arising outside of the country, would constitute a political danger the real magnitude of which it is to be feared is not at all appreciated by persons who have no knowledge of or concern in the Government of India, but which those responsible for that Government have long regarded as of the most serious order."

The table, recently prepared by Mr. W. Martin Wood, formerly Editor of the *Times of India*, whose knowledge of Indian finance and economics is surpassed by few, and who in his retirement still takes a deep and abiding interest in Indian affairs, gives the financial condition of the country at a glance so well that I will reproduce it here for your information. (*For the table, see page 129 Part I*).

Again, in the words of another Englishman, money is leaving the country without commercial "equivalent" to the tune of £ 25,000,000 [twenty-five millions pounds] yearly, or if you take the present fall of the rupee into consideration, then to the tune of forty millions pounds yearly. In short, it is as clear as possible that the ability of the country to bear any fresh taxation is exhausted, and any further burden on the taxpayers would simply break their back—a dangerous consequence to be avoided at all hazard. Yet it is stated that Indians should remain silent, forsooth because it will be an act of disloyalty to discuss, aye even to discuss in a loyal and constitutional manner with the best of motives, honourable in themselves and calculated to ensure the safety of the country and the maintenance of the British rule in India, moderate measures of reform. It is true that English rule in India has done much for India, but much more yet remains to be done, and it is a matter of extreme surprise as well as of deep regret that the sort of supercilious objection above referred to comes from people who, to say the least of it, ought to know better. With the above facts and figures, and it is certainly not an overdrawn picture glaring in their faces, all true lovers of their country, and all its inhabitants, and all its rulers, possessing the most ordinary common sense, if they have even a spark of humanity left in them, ought to bestir themselves, and leaving aside all differences arising from difference of race or creed and forgetting even just resentment, if there is any, join with their fellow countrymen in the movement—sober and temperate as it is—expressly organised for the amelioration of the country, of their countrymen, themselves included. The objectionists should remember that even the most honest

and the best regulated administration has constant need of proper criticism even at the best of times. For all Governments are, in their nature, monopolists, and as such have constantly to be watched and warned. In India, moreover, on account of its foreign character, it is excessively bureaucratic, more than other Governments in the world are, and, hence the greater necessity for constant watchful criticism on the part of the people. The Government of India, moreover, consisting as it does of capable and well-meaning gentlemen, is from the nature of its position and constitution, between two conflicting interests, the interests of England and the interests of India, and it is the sacred duty of all loyal Indian subjects to strengthen the hands of the Government of India in its laudable efforts to obtain financial justice for India by moral support of the united Indian nation; and judged from this point of view, keeping aloof from the Congress movement is not only undesirable but may even merit censure.

If the short sketch above given of the Financial result of the British administration in India for one century only be correct, we are necessarily forced to ask "if these be the results in the green leaf, what will they be in the dry wood?" And yet Indian Mussulmans still hold aloof, alike from western education and from those political movements among our countrymen to which western education has given rise and when appealed to, they talk of difficulties in their way and ask for special encouragement and special facilities and special privileges. "Special encouragement to any class," said the Education Commission, "is in itself an evil, and it will be a sore reproach to the Mussulmans if the pride they have shown in other matters does not stir them up to a course of honourable activity; to a determination that whatever their backwardness in the past they will not suffer themselves to be outstripped in the future; to a conviction that self-help and self-sacrifice are at once nobler principles of conduct and surer paths to worldly success than sectarian reserve or the hope of exceptional indulgence."

Indeed it will be a happy day for India when the disproportion between the Mahomedans who ought to be at school, and those who are actually at school, is reduced to the lowest possible minimum, and the Indian Mussulmans, as a body, make it a point to educate their children and actively co-operate in all the public movements in the country generally and especially, "our good Congress, the germ of future federated parliament . . . . . with hearts honest, true and unselfish" . . . . . and participate in our great bloodless battle for justice and freedom and specially make a beginning now when "all minor sources of anxiety are overshadowed by the cloud now impending over our beloved land in which we too plainly discern the gloomy spectre of famine frowning down upon . . . a teeming, frugal and ceaselessly industrious population" and join in asking a redress at the hands of Government and in expressing disapproval of the mistaken system, whereby the entire resources of 220 millions of people are placed at the disposal of able and well-meaning men who are nevertheless foreigners, who cannot in the nature of things sufficiently and adequately appreciate the wants, the necessities, the real condition of the people over whom they rule, and are naturally though

unconsciously drifting to the conclusion that India is to be ruled for the glory of Great Britain and not for the good of her own people. That this system is a mistaken one and that a strong financial check is necessary is now admitted by eminent Englishmen themselves. Lord Welby, President of the Royal Commission now sitting, says "Sir David Barbour made a criticism, which I think all officers connected with Financial departments must allow as a criticism, of general application, namely, that sufficient attention is not given by the departments in India to the financial question. They hardly appreciate the gravity of it, and do not forecast what the financial effect of the measures on which they are bent may be. That, of course, is a defect common to all Governments. The heads of different departments very seldom take a general view of the effect of their administration. They are anxious to carry out measures which they think are important." Sir David Barbour says, "I certainly think something is very desirable, that which would ensure greater attention being paid to financial consideration in connexion with the Government of India. . . . I think it would be better for India, better all round, if more attention were given to the financial question, and if we went more slowly in periods of great apparent financial prosperity." . . . Sir Auckland Colvin agrees with Sir David Barbour in the opinion. . . . Lord Welby further says "the point of Sir David Barbour's criticism, I think, might be put thus: that in a country like India where deficits are more dangerous than they would be here, where new taxation is more difficult than it would be here, the Government as a whole does not give sufficient attention to what may be the financial results of measures which it adopts." . . . Whereupon Sir Auckland Colvin remarks, "I agree entirely to that, that in a country where the taxpayer is an alien, and is not able to make his voice directly heard, the need of giving close attention to economy in administration is greater than it would otherwise be." From these remarks coming as they do from such high authorities this Congress will be perfectly justified in coming to the conclusion that "the discussion upon the Budget, both in India and in Parliament, needs to be converted from a farce into a reality," and that all thinking and reasonable men will be justified in expecting all the races inhabiting British India to join the Congress and co-operate with it in the cause of their country and of themselves. Indeed, I have a presentiment, that in the very near future my co-religionists will not only join the Congress movement, but take active part in moulding it and will deem it the highest price of their Civic life to be permitted to preside at its sittings.

I now come to the most absorbing topic of the hour. After a lapse of twenty years, famine has again overtaken a greater part of the country. The insufficiency of rain-fall in Behar, in the North-West provinces, in the Punjab, in parts of Central India, in many districts of Bombay and Madras and in Mysore, has already led to distress among those classes who habitually live from hand to mouth. The cultivators, whose impoverished condition is well-known, are the greatest sufferers. Next come the class of small artisans and weavers, and then the day-labourers who barely eke out an anna per day as wages. The prices of food grains in every one

of the afflicted tracts went up high, in some cases 50 and 100 per cent. This occurrence was most unusual. It has seldom happened that at the very beginning of the season of scarcity prices of wheat, rice, bajri, and jowari have gone up so high as has been the case at present. That such a condition of affairs should have created panic and led even to looting and rioting as in Sholapur, in Nagpur, and elsewhere is not unintelligible. The people seem to have been frightened at the insufficiency of food-grain. They naturally thought that if a limited stock of grain, at the very commencement of the scarcity, should raise prices so high, what might happen when the season advances and the stocks are exhausted? No doubt, the first impulse was to curse the Bania grain-dealer and lay on his head all their woes. But as the panic subsided, and as it became known that Government would spare no efforts to relieve the distressed, while the long arm of charity may be expected to loyally assist the efforts of the State, prices went down a little. This may be taken as the situation at present. The weekly official reports show that upwards of two lakhs of the persons in various parts of the country are already employed on relief work, and that as week after week advances the number will swell till at last it may reach a maximum in April and May, the number of which it is impossible to forecast at present. Every presidential and provincial Government has been straining its nerve to do its level best to cope with the distress which really bespeaks well of the humanity of our Government. British civilisation could not tolerate famine. And the head of the State has already declared from his place in the Council Chamber that his Government will endeavour to save life at all cost and all hazard. Let us all devoutly hope that it may be so able to achieve its noble intention without indulging in hope or prospect not founded on the realities or circumstances prevailing in the country. To entertain sanguine prospects which may not only be not realised but which may end in heavy mortality, otherwise preventible, would be grievous. For when we recall to mind the disastrous mortality which took place in 1877-78, when, according to official accounts, over 50 lakhs of human beings perished, we cannot but contemplate with the gravest apprehension what may befall unhappy India at this dismal juncture, should the efforts and energy of the State, with all the ample resources and most perfect organisation at its command, be found to be not so satisfactory as the people have been led to expect. I do not mean to say that these efforts and energies will be wanting. But it is not unlikely that, here and there, owing to more sanguine estimates of food and fodder and other optimistic views, the same care and attention may not be paid. You may have on paper the most perfect Famine Code; but, unless those entrusted with its work, from the highest to the lowest, do not fall short in carrying out its provisions by a variety of causes, it is not unlikely that mortality, otherwise preventible, may ensue. It is, therefore, the duty of every citizen and public body to heartily second the efforts of our benign rulers in saving life. The Press, too, is doing an invaluable service in placing before the public from day to day all intelligence regarding the famished in various parts of the country. It is discharg-

ing a noble duty worthy of its sacred functions, and we cannot but express our gratitude to it for its enterprise, which enables it to give such wide publicity to all intelligence in connexion with the famine. Its argus eyes can detect neglect, indifference or mismanagement anywhere, and enable the authorities concerned to set matters right at once. The primary and essential function is to see that relief is given in time, that it is not allowed to be too late when it may become impossible to save lives.

That the Government, as the Hon'ble Mr. Woodburn observed the other day, is in a better position to-day to cope, and cope effectively, with famine, than it was 20 years ago, is no doubt perfectly true. We have had two crores of irrigation works and seven crores of protective railways constructed since 1880 out of the Famine Fund. Facilities of communication have been vastly increased; many a tract of the country has been brought within the radius of our railways both trunk and branch. All these are assuring elements in connection with the present famine which were wanting in 1877-78. But, while admitting these facts, we should not forget that despite branch or feeder railways, despite increased communications, despite other facilities of transit, if there be no sufficient food-stock in the country to move from the locality where it may be a surplusage to one where it may be most wanted, then these appliances and resources are unhappily of no avail.

Thus the most pressing question of the hour is not irrigation or railways, but the stock of food in the country. For your own province, I was rejoiced to see the other day from the note issued by your public-spirited and energetic Lieutenant-Governor that though there was an insufficiency of rice, the surplus of the Burma crops, plus importations from Singapur and Saigon, might be able to supply it. The Upper Provinces, under able administratorship of the equally energetic Sir Antony Macdonnell, are a wheat consuming country. Though wheat has been less exported from those provinces last year for purposes of exports, it is not impossible that there may yet be a deficiency and if that is so, wheat may be imported from Persia, and Russia and even America though at a dear rate. Thus the wants of that populous, but very poor, province might be fairly supplied. It is needless for me to inform you that the N. W. Provinces and Oudh have a population numbering  $4\frac{3}{4}$  crores. But it is so poor on the whole that according to the weekly reports the largest number of persons *gratuitously* relieved are to be found in that province, and it also has the largest number of persons employed on relief works. But as regards the food-supply of the Central Provinces, Bombay, and Madras, I have not yet noticed full and detailed official estimates being placed before the public and if that is so, I hope it will soon be done, for you will agree that an approximate knowledge of the stock vastly helps private enterprise and private charity between them to import grain and pour it into those localities where it is most needed.

But, this question of the stock of grain shows clearly that India lives from hand to mouth. A leading weekly journal in Bombay, the *Champion*, gave

statistics a few weeks ago, based on the figures of the outturn of food per acre as given by the Famine Commissioners, shewing that with a population of 22 crores in British India, the total quantity of food required, at the rate of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  lbs. per day per head, was 5·80 crores of tons, while the actual outturn of food-crops could not be estimated at more than 5·76 crore tons, taking 18·60 crore acres as the whole area cultivated for these, and computing the outturn at 3·1 ton or 694 lbs. per acre. These statistics would lead us to infer that the outturn of food just sufficed for the population. But there is an average export of 25 lakhs of tons beyond the sea. If then exports were taken into account, the quantity actually retained for home consumption would be *pro tanto* diminished, that is to say, while the food required was 5·80 crore tons, the quantity available was only 5·51. This would signify a deficiency of 29 lakhs of tons which would mean insufficiency of grain for a crore of the population. If these statistics are wholly or even approximately correct and we have no reason for thinking they are not as they are founded on official figures, you may imagine, how perilous is the situation. The late Sir James Caird observed that India had no food-stock surplus to last even for ten days. Since he made that statement, which has never been contradicted, population has vastly increased, while the area annually cultivated for food-crops is barely enough. A further comparison shows that the area sown for non-food crops is relatively larger, as may be seen from the following table :—

	In crores of acres.		Percentage of
	1880-81.	1894-95.	increase.
Total food-crops .. ..	16·62	18·62	12
Total non-food crops .. ..	2·15	3·90	81

Thus, while the acreage of food-crops has only increased 12 per cent. in fifteen years, the acreage of non-food crops has increased 81 per cent., or almost doubled. Though it is a matter of satisfaction to know that the area for merchantable crops has increased almost double, that the area for food crops should not show the same growth is a matter not only for regret but for deep reflection by every one interested in the better welfare of the country, so far as the annual food-supplies are concerned.

To us, again, it is a further matter of regret that the substitution of the system of paying the land revenue in cash for that in kind, is having its pernicious effect on our ryot. Whatever may be the merits of the cash system, it is to be feared it is not exactly suited to the cultivators of the country. The *kind* system previously in vogue was automatic in its incidence, and so far was most conducive to the happiness of the ryot. Whatever the condition of the crops, he had enough food-grain to last him for domestic consumption. If the crop was 16 annas, he paid in proportion to the State in kind. If it was 8 annas the proportion to be paid to the State would diminish. Thus, the State dues fluctuated according to the condition of the crops, while the factor of food for annual domestic consumption remained constant. This system, in a great measure, tended to alleviate distress at

the very outset of the scarcity. The cash system is wanting in this element and so far is defective.

This leads me, to rivet your attention on the great danger looming in the near future in connection with our agrarian problem. It is, I admit, a gigantic problem and has been staring our rulers in the face for many a year past. Now and again palliatives have been applied by means of legislation. But palliative measures, you will admit, are, after all, no permanent solution of the problem. A broad, comprehensive, and practical solution is imperative, and it will require the highest experience and statesmanship to devise a remedy which may cure the disease, which is growing year by year and deepening in its intensity. I entreat you all to reflect on this grave situation, for, to my mind, the greatest danger to our country, in the near future, is what may arise from agrarian agitation. There is nothing like the rebellion of the belly. Government has been for years most unwisely spending millions against the so-called external danger. The expenditure is said to be an insurance against invasions, and yet we have a terrible invasion arising from hunger within the country itself, while there is no serious effort yet made to build an insurance against such internal danger. This must be, to all of us, a matter of the deepest regret. Let it be our endeavour, to the best of our power and ability, to assist the Government in its arduous task by suggesting suitable remedies. Two years ago, Sir Antony Macdonnell, as the Home Secretary of the Government of India, informed the public, from his place in the Supreme Legislative Council, that Government had on the anvil such a broad and comprehensive solution of the agrarian difficulty. Let us hope that, as soon as the hands of the Government are free from famine, it may devote all its ability and energy on this important topic. Let it be the good fortune of our present Viceroy, the liberal and sympathetic Earl of Elgin to inaugurate such a practical agricultural reform as may restore agricultural prosperity to India and extricate her ryots from their present impoverished and distressed situation and earn for his lordship a deep and lasting gratitude.

The next subject of importance is that of the growing expenditure of the Administration, both in its Civil and Military branch.

The famine has conclusively demonstrated, beyond all other facts and all other statistics, the existence of the poverty of India to which our patriotic Grand Old Man, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, has been persistently drawing the serious attention of our rulers. That one main source of that poverty is the annual drain of millions of the national wealth, is now admitted everywhere. None can deny the fact, however plausibly it may be explained away. When we come to analyse the cause of that drain, we are confronted with the enormous expenditure incurred in England on civil and military pensions, India office establishments, and what are generally called, Home charges. More or less, they are undoubtedly the outcome of the costly foreign agency in the administration—a subject on which the Congress has continued to express its emphatic opinion from time to time during the twelve years of its existence. I do not propose to enter here into the details of this grave economic phenomenon. But to us it is a matter of some satisfaction

to know that, in respect to the costliness of the administration, there is now sitting a Royal Commission to investigate the whole subject, a Commission which is the direct fruit of the agitation by this Congress, and by none more than Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir William Wedderburn. None can deny that, but for their strenuous exertions in Parliament to have this Commission appointed, India to-day would have been still without any inquiry. The last one was in 1874. But the Fawcett Committee, as it was called, concluded its sittings without a report. This Commission, however, has had now thirty sittings and has already recorded the evidence of expert officials, both in active employ and in retirement. Among the latter are two distinguished *ex-Finance* Ministers, Sir David Barbour and Sir Auckland Colvin, and Captain Hext. It is a gratification to see from their evidence that they have made out a strong case for greater control over the expenditure of the Government of India, specially military and naval; the two *ex-Finance* Ministers, are of opinion that, with a *pro-military* Viceroy, the chances of his dominating his whole Council and incurring any amount of military expenditure of an irresponsible character, in league with the military element in the Executive Council, are many, which can be hardly said to be conducive to the interests of the already overburdened taxpayers. These retired officials have also given their opinion that the limits of taxation have been already strained, and pointed out the danger of further taxation. Sir David Barbour again, has admitted that Parliamentary control over all expenditure, as wisely suggested by Sir William Wedderburn, is expedient. He will not, however, give his unqualified concurrence to the scheme which requires modification. So far, it may be observed that the evidence is satisfactory and in the very direction the Congress has for years been pointing out. Again, it must be said that the evidence of Sir Edwin Collen has completely established the contention of the Congress regarding the appalling growth of military expenditure, even after making all allowances for necessary and unavoidable increases. Mr. Stephen Jacob, too, whose evidence was exhaustive, has made out a case as to the unfair character of expenditure which the Home Office foists on India. You are aware that the Congress, as well as the Government of India, are at one on the question of the apportionment of Home Charges. And Mr. Jacob's evidence is therefore eminently satisfactory in this respect. Let us, Gentlemen, do all in our power to further strengthen the hands of our Indian Government by once more placing on record our opinion regarding the financial injustice from which India has been suffering for many years past. If the Royal Commission does nothing else but recommends a fair apportionment of the charges to be borne by India and England respectively, it will have rendered the greatest service to this country and justified its appointment. Lastly, it is a pleasure to notice that thanks to the persistent efforts of the representatives on behalf of India—Sir W. Wedderburn and Messrs. Dadabhai Naoroji and Caine—the Commission has at last allowed reporters to attend its sittings. Publicity adds to the value of public enquiry. The Congress owes a deep debt of gratitude to these gentlemen for their disinterested exertions

throughout in this matter. Let me add here that my indefatigable friend Mr. D. E. Wacha has been elected by the Bombay Presidency Association to proceed to England and to give his evidence before the Royal Commission, and I have no doubt whatever that zealous and hard-working as he has been throughout his life in the cause of our country and a master as he is of the facts and figures regarding Indian finance, his evidence will be of very great use to us and assist the Commission in coming to the right conclusion.

I will now proceed to another important topic on which not only the Congress has expressed its own views but every Provincial Conference in the country has done the same. I mean the reform, which is absolutely necessary and expedient, in connection with the discussion of Imperial and Provincial Budgets. Though we all appreciate the privilege conferred on the expanded Legislative Councils to discuss the budget, there is no power to move amendments and vote on it. So far all life is taken out of these budget debates. And for all practical purposes, the discussion is purely academic. Though this is the fourth year of the expanded Councils, the most pungent criticism on the budget in the Imperial Council makes no difference whatever and has no practical effect. Though the representatives of the public give voice to public opinion in the Council Chamber, their utterances go unheeded. This is not a satisfactory state of matters. If budgets are to be popular and if the people and the press are to influence these for good, it is essential that the budgets should be voted upon. Otherwise, budget discussions will remain the farces that they are, and it is to be earnestly hoped that our rulers will see their way to instituting an early reform in this matter. The fear that the Government may be over-ridden is groundless. There is not a Council in the empire in which the official element does not preponderate, and it is absurd to expect that Government could at all be swamped. It is a curious anomaly that, though in Local Self-Government the representatives of the people can discuss their civil finances, and divide on them they cannot do so on the larger subject of the finances of the province and the whole empire. I repeat, therefore, the hope I have already expressed that the Government, will at an early day, see the reasonableness, aye, the justice of our demand and grant us the same as conducive to the greater welfare and contentment of the people.

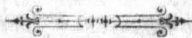
Since our last sitting (at Poona) the cruel hand of death has deprived us of several of our most energetic workers, friends and sympathisers. Foremost among them stands the name of the late Mr. Mano Mohun Ghose, an enthusiastic and steady worker from the early years of this movement. His great abilities and rare legal acumen, his special study of Indian questions, especially the urgent need of the separation of judicial from executive functions, his untiring zeal and moderation, his great powers and readiness in debate and wide-spread influence combined to make him best fitted to espouse his country's cause. His sudden and untimely removal from our midst leaves a blank which it will be hard to fill, but his services to the Congress will keep his memory always green in the annals of this movement. In the death of Rao Bahadur H. H. Dhruva of Gujarat, a scholar of Euro-

pean reputation, who represented H. H. the Gaekwar at the Norway and Sweden Oriental Congress, our movement loses another worker, whose zeal and enthusiasm for the Congress knew no bounds; he went from village to village pleading the Congress-cause, and spared neither time nor money in its advocacy. He was a District Judge on our side of the country, but as soon as he was freed from the trammels of office, the first thing he did was to attend the Karachi Provincial Conference in the scorching heat of May last, and died within a fortnight of his return from that place. Western India, especially Gujarat, will long mourn his loss. By the death of Mr. C. Narayana Swami Naidu of Nagpore, the Congress has lost another staunch supporter to whose enthusiasm the entire success which attended the Nagpore Congress was due.

You are all aware that the reign of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress of India has recently exceeded in duration that of any of Her Most Excellent Majesty's predecessors, (Cheers) and that this auspicious event is to be celebrated in or about June next. Whatever may be the differences between the different races inhabiting this vast country on political or other grounds, the whole of India is unanimous in the opinion that Her Majesty has throughout her reign been ever anxious for the welfare of all her Indian subjects and has ever treated them with the same kindness and with the solicitude with which she has treated all her other subjects. To Her Majesty all her subjects are equal without any distinction of caste, creed, race or color. She is the ever-affectionate mother of all her subjects, and all her subjects, whether near her or far away from her, are to her, her children. (Cheers) Whatever might be the political views of Her Majesty's ministers for the time being, whoever might be in authority under Her Majesty in India, Her Majesty has throughout thrown the great weight of her high authority in favour of equal treatment of all her subjects alike. You are all aware of the great Proclamation from Her Majesty to the people of the country, and which Proclamation is rightly regarded by the people of this country, as their great Charter and cherished accordingly. You are all aware that Her Majesty issued the said Proclamation unasked, and thus did an act of a signal, illustrious, very rare and unrivalled magnanimity, an act fraught with seeds of deep and abiding value. That she, the august sovereign of an Empire, over which the sun never sets; that she, the constitutional ruler of a country that leads the advanced guard in the march of liberty and of civilization, should deign to look over and care for us, who have fallen back amongst stragglers in the rear, is in itself a proof of her high generosity. It is not for us and in this place to pass in review the important incidents of her long, glorious and illustrious reign. Suffice it to say that the Victorian era will be ever remembered throughout the British Empire with deep feelings of pride and pleasure, and in the rest of the world with those of wonder and admiration. Let, therefore, this Congress, of delegates from all parts of India humbly offer its dutiful and loyal congratulations to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen Empress on her memorable, beneficent and glorious reign, exceeding in length of time the reign of any of her predecessors, and heartily wish her many more and happy years of rule

over the great British Empire. Let us all fervently pray that benign and merciful Providence may shower over her its choicest blessings, and guide her in futures as it has guided her in the past, in the path of duty and of righteousness, and that she may be enabled to complete her glorious work in India by bestowing on her grateful Indian subjects the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by her British subjects, by removing all disabilities which still cling to us, notwithstanding Her Royal Mandate to the contrary. By conferring on us the boon we ask for, in fulfilment of her own gracious proclamation, Her Majesty will not only command the prayers of her Indian subjects, but also secure the sympathies of the whole civilized world. Her sagacious clemency will ever live in the hearts of her Indian subjects, and will indeed assure the prosperity, as well as the continued and devoted loyalty, of India. The English nation is well known for its manliness, and manliness is associated with love of justice, generosity and intellect. It is the force of character, as also the force of circumstances, that have given Englishmen their present power. In fact, they are masterful men, and we trust they will therefore join with us in our prayers to our and their Sovereign on this auspicious occasion, and thus assist in inaugurating a truly liberal measure of reform, and thereby earn credit and achieve a reputation of which all manly hearts ought to be proud.

It now remains for me to say that in the discussion of the several important matters that will be placed before you for your consideration, you will show the same moderation, both of language and thought, as you have hitherto displayed. May merciful Providence guide us all, both you and myself, in the discharge of our duties on this important occasion, and may our deliberations contribute to the benefit of all concerned.—(*Loud and prolonged cheering.*)



Thirteenth Congress—Amraoti—1897.



Hon. Mr. C. Sankaran Nair.

GENTLEMAN,

I thank you heartily for electing me to preside over this great national assembly. We meet at the close of a year that will be memorable in the history of the British Empire. We have witnessed and we have taken part in the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of the reign of our Empress. We rejoice with our fellow-subjects of this vast Empire in the prosperity of that reign. We exult in our acquisition of political rights during this period. We bless Her Majesty for her message in 1858 of peace and freedom when the occasion invested it with a peculiar significance. While Englishmen in India inflamed by race animosity and the recollection of the Sepoy Mutiny, which ignorance still calls the Indian Mutiny, were calling for terrible reprisals, she unasked, forgetting and forgiving, issued her gracious proclamation. It was a stern reproof to those who then clamoured for indiscriminate vengeance; it continues today a standing rebuke to those of her European subjects who would deny us the rights of equal citizenship. She is to us the living embodiment of what is good in British supremacy, and we may feel assured that her anxiety in our behalf which she manifested in 1858, her kindly regard shown on every subsequent occasion, both in times of joy and of affliction, will continue unabated for the rest of her life. Throughout our land her name is venerated; in almost every language the story of her life has been written and sung, and in years to come her name will rightly find a place in the memory of our descendants along with those great persons whose virtues have placed them in the ranks of Avatars born into this world for the benefit of this, our holy land.

Forty years of peace and progress seemed to have amply justified the wise and generous statesmanship of the great Empress, when suddenly this year, we have been startled with the cry of sedition directed not against any specific individual nor even against a number of persons but against a whole class, the product of the liberal policy inaugurated nearly half a century ago. The charge of sedition, faintly heard years ago, against the Congress, a charge the absurdity of which has been often exposed, has now been revived against the educated Indians by a section of the Anglo-Indian Press. We are tauntingly asked to study our past history for proof of our

degraded condition from which the English Government has raised us, and to contrast it with the blessings we now enjoy. We do not need the invitation. We are acquainted with our immediate past ; we feel grateful for the present. But, our opponents forget we are more concerned with the progress of our country in the future than with the benefits we have already derived under British rule.

We are well aware of the disordered state of this country when it passed, with its insecurity of person and property, under British rule, of the enormous difficulties our rulers had to overcome in introducing orderly administration without any help from the then existing agencies. We recognize that the association of the people in the Government of the country except to a very limited extent was then impossible. We also know that British rule cleared the way to progress and furnished us with the one element, English education, which was necessary to rouse us from the torpor of ages and bring about the religious, social and political regeneration which the country stands so much in need of. We are also aware that with the decline of British supremacy we shall have anarchy, war and rapine. The Mahomedans will try to recover their lost supremacy. The Hindu races and chiefs will fight amongst themselves. The lower castes who have come under the vivifying influence of Western civilization are scarcely likely to yield without a struggle to the dominion of the higher castes. And we have Russia and France waiting for their opportunities. The ignorant masses may possibly not recognize the gravity of the danger attendant on any decline of England's power in the East. But it is ridiculous to suggest that those who have received the benefit of English education are so shortsighted enough not to see and weigh that danger. While, however, full of gratitude for what Great Britain has done to India,—for its Government which secures us from foreign aggression and ensures security of person and property,—it should not be forgotten for a moment that the real link that binds us indissolubly to England is the hope, the well-founded hope and belief, that with England's help we shall, and, under her guidance alone, we can, attain national unity and national freedom. The educational policy of the Government, a policy which combines beneficence with statesmanship, justified such hopes in us. Those hopes were confirmed by various pledges. Those pledges were followed by the creation of institutions by which we were admitted to a share in our ordinary Government which must surely, though slowly, lead to the full fruition of our ambitions.

Just look for a moment at the training we are receiving. From our earliest school-days the great English writers have been our classics.

Englishmen have been our professors in Colleges. English history is taught us in our schools. The books we generally read are English books which describe in detail all the forms of English life, give us all the English types of character. Week after week, English newspapers, journals and magazines pour into India for Indian readers. We, in fact, now live the life of the English. Even the English we write shows not only their turns of thought but also their forms of feeling and thinking. It is impossible under this training not to be penetrated with English ideas, not to acquire English conceptions of duty, of rights, of brotherhood. The study and practice of the law now pursued with such avidity by our people, by familiarising them with reverence for authority and with sentiments of resistance to what is not sanctioned by law, have also materially contributed to the growth of mental independence.

Imbued with these ideas and principles, we naturally desire to acquire the full rights and to share the responsibilities of British citizenship. We have learnt that in the acquisition of those rights and in the recognition of the principles on which they are based, lie the remedy for the evils affecting our country, evils similar to those from which England herself once suffered. We know that in Great Britain race differences between Norman and Saxon, at one period more virulent than those which at any time existed between Hinda and Mahomedan, religious intolerance which has scarcely been surpassed in India, class divisions equaling any in our own country, a degradation, political and social, of the masses which may be equalled here but could never have been exceeded—all these have disappeared in the common struggle for freedom, and in the combined effort to retain it when acquired, in which each required the help of its antagonist and each was obliged to concede to others the right claimed for itself and which, therefore, resulted in the recognition and solemn affirmation of principles of Government, which obliterated all distinctions of race or religion, caste or class. Those principles affirmed the equality of all before law and Government, the right of self-Government by the people themselves through their representatives, and complete freedom of speech and discussion as the very breath of national life. It is the hope that one day we may be admitted as equal sharers in this great inheritance, that we shall have all the civil rights associated with the English Government, that we shall be admitted as freely as Englishmen themselves to worship in this temple of freedom—it is this hope that keeps India and will keep her always attached to the British. This hope is sustained by pledges solemnly made; and the sentiment of loyalty to the British connection created by repeated declarations that we shall be gradually allowed the full rights of English citizenship is

already in full force. Such a pledge was made in 1833 when Parliament solemnly declared that race or religion or colour shall not be a disqualification for holding any appointment. This declaration of policy in a time of peace has been solemnly affirmed after the mutiny. Already, the pledge has been in part redeemed. We have been admitted, as it were, into the outer precincts of the temple of freedom. The press has been enfranchised. Partially elected members sit in our local and legislative councils. We can enter the civil service through the open door of competition. These blessings are no doubt now coupled with conditions which unfortunately detract from their value. But these great and healthy principles have nurtured and consolidated a sentiment of affection. All that England has to do is to persist resolutely in the line of policy she has initiated and thereby deepen that feeling of loyalty which makes us proud of our connection with England. I myself feel that there is very little reason to fear that England will reverse the past. To deny us the freedom of the press, to deny us representative institutions, she will have to ignore those very principles for which the noblest names in her history have toiled and bled. She cannot close all her educational institutions in the country. She cannot persuade us not to read the fiery denunciations of every illiberal form of Government, of the petty acts of tyranny committed anywhere on the face of the earth, which appear in her papers imported into India week after week. It is impossible to keep out of India eloquent orations on patriotism, by men like Mr. Chamberlain—a Cabinet Minister holding up to admiration the memory of patriots like Wallace whose head was struck up on the traitor's gate of the city of London, of Bruce guilty of foul murder in a church, of Emmet and other Irish leaders executed or hung for treason by the English Government. It is impossible to argue a man into slavery in the English language. Thus the only condition requisite for the fruition of our political aspirations is the continuance of the British Rule. The fond hope that India may one day take her place in the confederacy of the free English-speaking nations of the world can be realised only under England's guidance with England's help. Years must elapse, it is true, before our expectations can be realised, before we get representative institutions on the models of those of the English-speaking communities. Slavery we had under our old rulers,\* Hindu and Mahomedan; we may again get it under any despotic European or Asiatic Government. But we know that real freedom is possible only under the Government of the English nation, nurtured in liberty, hating every form of tyranny, and willing to extend the blessings of representative Government to those capable of using it wisely in the interests of freedom and progress.

Great as is the necessity of British rule for the political emancipation

of our country, even greater is the necessity for social and religious reform. In the present circumstances of India, inhabited as it is by followers of various religions, various sects, classes, very often with antagonistic interests, any Government which is not strictly secular and absolutely impartial must be disastrous to the best interests of the country. The customs, institutions, beliefs, practices of one community are denounced by others as unreasonable and destructive of true faith. Some of our reformers, hopeless of any internal reform, are building up a new social system and accordingly have adopted an attitude so antagonistic to the popular religion that they are regarded as seceders from Hinduism. Others again have formed themselves into sects each claiming to be orthodox and denying to others the merit of adherence to the true Hindu religion. We have also preachers in our midst who while deprecating any revolt or open defiance urge the purification of the Hindu faith. The gulf between Hinduism and other religions has been considered impassable. But attempts are being made with some success to re-admit converts into Hinduism. Steps are being taken in some places to mitigate the rancour of religious hostility between Hindus and Mahomedans. Some of the lower castes resent the galling yoke of caste so bitterly that they seek refuge in Mahomedanism or Christianity. The original four castes had multiplied into a number that must appear to every man unreasonable and absurd. There seems to be a general desire to break down the barriers between these numerous castes. Knowledge is accessible to all. The Vedas and other holy books are now common property; equality in knowledge must eventually lead to the practical removal, if not the entire destruction of the great barriers that now divide the various classes. Again, you are aware of the attempts that are being made to restore our women to the position which competent authorities maintain they occupied in ancient India. We want in brief to eliminate, if necessary from our system all that stands in the way of progress. We desire to absorb and assimilate into our own what appears good to us in western civilization. This is impossible under a Government which would uphold a particular social system or a particular form of religion to the exclusion of others as some of the ancient Governments of India did. To break down the isolation of the Hindu religion, to remove the barriers which now prevent free social intercourse and unity of action, to extend the blessings of education to the lower classes, to improve the position of women to one of equality to men, we require the continuance of a strictly secular Government in thorough sympathy with liberal thought and progress.

Gentlemen, I do not propose to refer to the various subjects that we have been continually pressing on the attention of our Government and of the public. This year, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and our four Indian witnesses

have stated our grievances before the Welby Commission with a fulness and clearness which leave nothing to be desired. They have stood the test of cross-examination by those who have constituted themselves the advocates of Indian Government and their evidence will remain on record as a protest against some of the shortcomings of British administration. Our thanks are due to them.

I shall accordingly content myself with referring to certain notable events of this year. Naturally, the terrible famine that has devastated our country first claims our attention. We render our hearty thanks for the magnificent aid received by us from the people of Great Britain and other countries. We recognize the great sympathy and ability with which the famine administration was carried on in India. But we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the same energy, if directed to discover and remove the causes of famine would be of far greater benefit to the country. At the root of these famines is the great poverty of India. The Madras Board of Revenue recently estimated on the returns furnished by local officials with reference to ryotwary tracts, that, in a season described as generally favourable for agricultural operations, there was no grain in the presidency for five out of a population of 28 millions. If this is true, the miserable state of the people with regard to food supply in seasons less favourable may be easily conceived. For ourselves, it is unnecessary to rely upon Government estimates and returns. The poverty of the country reveals itself to us in every direction, in every shape and form. It shows itself in the poor condition of the labouring population and of the great majority of ryots who are under-fed, and who are without, not only the comforts, but even the absolute necessities of life and who lead a life of penury and toil unredeemed by any hope of provision against the frequent vicissitudes of the seasons, sickness or old age when they must be dependent on relatives or strangers. The once well-to-do ryots are becoming reduced to the position of poor tenants, their poverty preventing them from carrying on any cultivation that requires capital. Parents find it difficult to give their children the education which their profession or station in life demands or indeed any education necessary wherewith to earn their livelihood; the extreme poverty of the class to which the majority of students belong could easily be ascertained. Even a partial failure of crops in one year leads to terrible scarcity or famine. Famine at certain intervals of time is becoming a normal condition of things in India. In 1877 and again this year, the loss of life has been terrible. Each succeeding famine finds the staying power of the masses particularly in the ryotwary Districts reduced. Is this state of things to continue for

ever? Are we not entitled, are not those who so generously come to our help entitled to ask the responsible Government, whether any steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence of the famine. In a fertile country, with every variety of claim capable of producing every variety of product, with a population thrifty and hard working, if the produce is not sufficient for the population, it must be due to some defect in the system of administration which does not protect the fruits of industry but scares away capital from the land. If the produce of the country is sufficient for the population and yet as a fact the food stock remaining in the country does not suffice for consumption, the state of things must be due to some enormous drain on the resources of the country. The feeling is gaining ground, that the Government is morally responsible for the extreme poverty of the masses, for the scarcity that prevails almost every year in some part of the country or other, for the famine that so frequently desolates the land and claims more victims and creates more distress than under any civilized Government anywhere else in the world. The flippancy that would dismiss the entire problem from consideration with the remark that all this is due to over-population and is irremediable, is as dangerous as is the deep-rooted belief that distress is a visitation of Providence for the sins of our rulers. One great Viceroy has had the question under consideration, and to him the remedy in so far as the increase in wealth from the land is concerned was clear. It is permanent settlement of Government Revenue from the land. The settlement officer will not then increase the Revenue and deprive the cultivator of the increased produce due to his labour, or his capital. Labour and capital will then be attracted to the cultivation of the land. There will be a large increase in the agricultural produce in India. There will always be a large reserve of food stocks in the country available in times of scarcity. The fixity of taxation will create a class of land holders interested in the maintenance of law and order. The policy of Government was once settled in favor of permanency, but in recent years under pressure of, mainly, military expenditure the policy has been changed and the revenue enormously raised. Our Government ought to concede the permanent settlement immediately to all parts of India and in those parts of India where from local circumstances a permanent limitation of land revenue is not feasible, it would be a step in the right direction if any increased demand for revenue by Executive action is permitted only with the permission of the Legislative Council. This would not be an adequate remedy, but it is a measure that will help to produce great and satisfactory results.

The next remedy that obviously suggests itself has reference to expenditure. Government agencies are notoriously extravagant, at least in the