

8th February, 1924

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**THE
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY DEBATES**

(Official Report)

FIRST SESSION

OF THE

SECOND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1924



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Friday, 8th February, 1924.

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber at Eleven of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

ELECTION OF PANELS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

ELECTION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEES FOR THE HOME AND INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR DEPARTMENTS.

Mr. President: I have to inform the Assembly that up to 3 O'clock on Wednesday, the 6th February, which was the time fixed for receiving nominations for the four Standing Committees to be attached to the four Departments of the Government, only eight nominations had been received for each of the panels for the Home and Industries and Labour Departments. As the panels will consist of nine Members each and only eight have been nominated, I appoint a further period up to 3 P.M. to-day within which nominations will be received.

ELECTION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

Mr. President: I have further to acquaint the Members that as regards the Standing Committee for the Commerce Department, the number of candidates nominated for election is equal to the number required, and therefore I announce that the following 9 Members are declared to be duly elected:

1. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas.
2. Mr. Bhubanananda Das.
3. Mr. H. G. Cocke.
4. Maung Tok Kyi.
5. Sardar Kartar Singh.
6. Mr. N. M. Dumasia.
7. Diwan Bahadur M. Ramachandra Rao.
8. Mr. W. S. J. Willson.
9. Mr. Mahomed Ebrahim Makan.

ELECTION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HEALTH AND LANDS.

Mr. President: As regards the Standing Committee for the Department of Education, Health and Lands, there will be an election on Wednesday, the 13th February, as already announced.

MESSAGE FROM H. E. THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

Mr. President: I have a Message from His Excellency the Governor General:

"In pursuance of the provisions of sub-section (3) of section 67A of the Government of India Act, I hereby direct that the heads of expenditure specified in that sub-section shall be open to discussion by the Legislative Assembly when the Budget is under consideration.

(Sd.) *READING,*
Governor General."

RESOLUTION RE THE GRANT OF FULL SELF-GOVERNING DOMINION STATUS TO INDIA.

Mr. President: I think it might perhaps clear the ground of to-day's debate if, before calling upon Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar to resume the debate which was interrupted the other day, I say a word regarding the amendments on the paper. The Resolution itself has already been formally moved. The first amendment of real substance stands in the name of Pandit Motilal Nehru, and I propose at an early stage in the debate to call upon the Pandit to move it. Coming, then, to the further amendments on the paper, I presume—I see that Dr. Gour is not in his place—the amendment of which he gave notice will not now be moved seeing that he has put in another amendment to the amendment of Pandit Motilal Nehru. Amendment No. 2 on the paper standing in the name of Mr. Patel, in respect of clause (a), is outside the scope of the Resolution. In respect of clause (b), I think I must take it that it is covered in substance, at all events, by the amendment standing in the name of Pandit Motilal Nehru, and that if there is any subsidiary amendment to be made by Mr. Patel it will come later on. The amendment standing in the name of Mr. Mohammad Shafee, in respect of clauses (1) and (2), is out of order, and in respect of clause (3), only proposes a very minor change in the amendment standing in Pandit Motilal Nehru's name. No. 4, standing in Mr. Jinnah's name, except in so far as he proposes a Committee rather than a round table conference, is already covered by the amendment of Pandit Motilal Nehru.

In respect of No. 7—here I may perhaps take Nos. 7 and 10 together, No. 7 standing in the name of Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal and No. 10 standing in the name of Mr. K. C. Roy, these two propose a procedure which is substantially different from the amendment of Pandit Motilal Nehru, and other things being equal, I should propose to call on Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal to move his amendment probably as an amendment to the amendment of Pandit Motilal Nehru at a later stage in the debate.

No. 8 standing in the name of Mr. Das is also subsidiary, as are Nos. 9, 11 and 12.

As regards No. 13 standing in the name of Maulvi Muhammad Yakub, it will only be necessary to move that amendment if the amendment standing in Pandit Motilal Nehru's name is defeated, as the motion of Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar does not specifically provide for the protection of minorities. I take it that amendment No. 14 standing in Pandit Malaviya's name is also superseded by Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment.

I hope that this explanation will serve to clear the ground, otherwise the debate may get hopelessly entangled in amendments.

Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar (Madras City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I formally moved the Resolution* which stands in my name, the other day, and I am really happy that I was able to do so, for I am a somewhat superstitious person. Sir, when I tabled my motion on this most important subject, I was wondering whether the chances of the ballot box would give me an opportunity to open that subject for discussion here to-day or on any other day. But, Sir, I happened to be present in Delhi on the first day of the ballot, and I brought my will to bear upon the ballot box with the assistance of an English friend of mine who happened to be present also on the spot. That English friend little knew what mischief I was up to. Before he knew what the subject was, and when the ballot box was about to turn, he wished me success. I grappled his hand and out came No. 1, which was my subject which is posted for discussion to-day. We shook hands together on the result of the ballot, and I hope, Sir, we will be shaking hands across the benches on the result of the motion to-day.

Sir, the subject of my Resolution is very plain. I ask for the revision of the Government of India Act. The Government of India Act was passed only recently after a great deal of discussion, after a great deal of examination, after joint deliberations of Joint Committees and after examination of witnesses who had gone all the way to England, and it must be a daring motion indeed to ask for the revision of such an Act, which was so carefully passed after such cogitation and consultation.

Sir, I plead guilty to the charge of venturesomeness in bringing forward such a motion. At the time this Act was under consideration I was not very much of an active politician. I had gone to the back benches in politics from the year 1917 onwards. I was watching from a distance the growth of this constitution. Sir, it happened to my lot, at the invitation of the Principal of the Madras Law College, to deliver a course of lectures on this new constitution. I examined this new constitution with a lawyer's eye, not with a politician's eye, and, having considered it in all its details, I came to the conclusion it was a vast improvement on the then existing constitution. I then came to the conclusion that I should lend a helping hand in working the constitution and so sought the suffrage of the citizens of Madras to be returned to this Assembly. You well remember the day, Sir, when I approached you with trembling feet in your Chamber, how morose and sullen I looked when I appeared before you. I was sullen. I was morose, but I was somewhat of an optimist at that time. I had faith in the constitution but I had not faith in the gentlemen on the Government Benches. I was suspicious what their attitude was going to be in working the Reforms. I was wary and cautious. Sir, when His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, graced that Chair which you are occupying to-day, the gallant soldier that he was and with the invisible tears in his eyes, he referred to the shadow of Amritsar, he referred to his mother's message to this country, and, when, Sir, it was followed by announcements made by the then Viceroy and when again it was followed by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief saying he was our humble

* "This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he be pleased to take at a very early date the necessary steps (including if necessary procuring the appointment of a Royal Commission) for revising the Government of India Act so as to secure for India full self-governing Dominion status within the British Empire and Provincial Autonomy in the Provinces."

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servant, and when again Sir Malcolm Hailey, as he then was the Finance Member, told us that it was by our mandate taxation was to be imposed, when, Sir, I found frank and free answers given to questions put in the House, when I found a ready response on the part of the Government Benches to the Resolutions which were tabled on the non-official side, my optimism grew stronger, my sullenness left me and I threw my heart and soul into the work. Sir, 1921 was a blessed year in the working of the Reforms. We put our shoulders to the wheel, much to the annoyance of my friends, whom I am glad to welcome here to-day in this House. They misunderstood our position, they kept aloof and, Sir, when, therefore, we see them here to-day, some of them at least, when we see them at close quarters, we find what mutual mistakes we have been making hitherto. I had not known many non-co-operator friends in close contact. I knew some of the mild co-operators in Madras. Madras is always a mild place, as it is famous for its mild cigars. Therefore, I was not afraid of the non-co-operators in Madras, but I was somewhat suspicious of the non-co-operators from elsewhere. Sir, during the last few days it has been my proud privilege to associate with them not only on the floor of this House but round the table discussing grave and important issues, and I am sure my Honourable friends on the Government Benches also have had opportunities of knowing them at close quarters, not as represented in the columns of the "Pioneer" or the "Englishman," but as you come to know them on the spot. Sir, I am sure the first day's suspicious eyes are now no longer there. I was glad to note the other day the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey hailing his old friend, Mr. Patel, and speaking to him in whispers. Sir, this is a bracing atmosphere. This is a place where we forget ourselves when we are bent upon the common good of the country. The common good of the country is what we are all after. Sir, many a misunderstanding between people and people in this land arises out of the fact that we do not know each other at close quarters. We see each other with others' lenses which magnify, which distort, and that is the cause, the frequent cause, of many a misunderstanding between the Englishman and the Indian, between the official and the non-official. Sir, as I stated, I was thanking Providence on that day when the ballot drew this Resolution as the first Resolution. I was doubtful whether the atmosphere in which I was going to move the Resolution was going to be a good atmosphere, was going to be a suitable atmosphere, for discussing such a grave issue. Sir, there again Providence has come to our rescue. By that one very just, wise and generous act of statesmanship on the part of Lord Reading's Government in releasing that great man, that great friend of the English Government, Mr. Gandhi, Sir, the Government have created an atmosphere for a full and free discussion of this most important Resolution. By that act they have brought good will into the floor of this House, and I hope, Sir, that, with the advent of the new Labour Government in England, good days are in store for India, good days are in store for the Empire. For without India what is the Empire? And after all, what is the object of a constitution for any country? The great object which the people who brought about this constitution in 1919 had in view was to get a Government with the consent and co-operation of the people. Those are the essential elements which any constitution-maker has to keep in view and with that great object this constitution was devised; but, Sir, has that object been fulfilled? Has that been achieved? Sir, there were three classes of people at the time the Reforms

came into operation: those who kept studiously out of it, those who wanted to work it in a spirit of responsive co-operation, and those on the official Benches who wanted to lend a helping hand in bringing into existence the new constitution. Sir, the latter two tried to do their best for the existing constitution. The goal has been laid before us, namely, full responsible Government in this country. There is no mistake about it. There is no going back upon it and the question is whether you have been placed properly on the road to responsible Government with a safe machine to work it. Sir, without examining the machinery, but examining it merely on theoretical grounds, some of my countrymen, I may say most of my countrymen, denounced it as unsuitable. We did not want to take that risk of pronouncing a verdict without trying the machinery. We tried it wholeheartedly, we tried it for three years and, Sir, what is the result? From the knowledge gained by experience in the working of the Reforms so far as the Central Government is concerned, I say without hesitation that the machinery is absolutely defective. If we have achieved anything under this machinery, it is due to the patience, to the tact and to the industry which we have bestowed in working that machinery. It might have broken down long ago. Instead of being acclaimed as a young Parliament which has got records of achievement to its credit, we might have gone home two or three years ago and said "This is broken machinery which we cannot use." Sir, we did not want to do it. We tried our best in order to work with the machinery. We have no less a person than His Excellency the Viceroy who says in closing the first Session of this Assembly:

"The close of this Session marks a stage in the working of these Reforms. We have reached the end of a definite part or chapter in the gradual development of self-governing institutions. We have advanced one step forward, an important step in the progressive realisation of responsible government."

Sir, we have taken one step. We have closed one chapter. Where is the next chapter? Where is the next step? Our foot is anxious to march. It is hanging in the air. It is dangling in the air. There is no step forward. Are we to walk backwards and forwards over the step which we have already crossed? Where is the next chapter? Are we to re-read the chapter which we have already read—read so well and so satisfactorily? That is where the difficulty comes. Sir, if you read the Preamble to the Act, if you read the section in the Act, it says that every 10 years, 20 years, or 30 years hence, 40 years hence, or 50 years hence,—a cycle of decades,—you will have periodical Commissions coming out to examine how far this institution has progressed or deteriorated, and how far you can march forward, or how far you can march backward. That is what is contemplated in the Act. No steps are provided in the Act for gradual realisation of responsible government. We have to go backwards and forwards over the same step. We have to read and re-read the same chapter. Sir, will any civilised nation be content with such a constitution? I ask in all seriousness, are we a civilised nation or not? Not in the words of Colonel Frank Johnson who justifies flogging of the people of this land because their civilisation is ancient. It has an ancient civilisation and therefore flogging was justified in his view. Sir, the more ancient the civilisation, I thought the more respect you would attach to that civilisation. Sir, if we are fit for this responsible Government at any stage, we are fit for full responsible Government. It is impossible to have a middle course. From representative institutions you have to spring to responsible Government. There is no such thing as a middle course. There may be safety valves here and there. There may be the Army,

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there may be the Navy, there may be the political relations, there may be the foreign relations which you may exclude. But, Sir, so far as domestic affairs are concerned, the internal development of the country is concerned, it is impossible to provide for partial responsibility in the way in which this constitution has provided. Sir, look at the idea. The trustees of this vast nation in this vast continent—I mean the British Parliament—are willing to entrust the lives, the education, the advancement and the development of this country to Indians, but they are not willing to entrust law and order in the hands of these men. Sir, is it right that the trustees should part with their trust in such vital matters as education, as public health, as sanitation, if we are not fit to handle these subjects? Are they not more important than law and order? Are not the lives of the millions of people, is not the health of millions of people, is not the educational advancement and the industrial advancement of millions of people as great a trust in your hands as the trust as regards law and order? The very division of functions, the very division of the subjects, indicates some lurking distrust of the people of this land. That is where it is. Unless that distrust disappears, unless that suspicion is removed, there can never be true advancement in the constitution of this country. Sir, I well remember how Lord Willingdon in choosing his Executive Councillor and entrusting him with the portfolio of law and order was warned by the wise people who surrounded him that he was undertaking a grave risk in entrusting that department to an Indian Member. He made that bold departure. He was an Executive Councillor no doubt, but he was an Indian. Sir, events have justified his choice. The very people who were afraid and suspicious of this move which Lord Willingdon made have afterwards gone to him and told him "you made a wise choice." Sir, that will be the result. It is only the entrustment of responsibility which breeds responsibility. It is the sense of responsibility which will create responsibility. If you create a sense of responsibility among the people, I am sure they will respond to that trust. There will be no betrayal of that trust. I can assure you of that. Therefore, Sir, speaking of the Central Government, speaking of the way in which we have been working it for the last three years, I ask the Members of the Government Benches if they are feeling happy. Is my Honourable friend, Sir B. N. Sarma, feeling happy with his charge of the portfolio over Kenya and over South Africa? Does he face his quondam non-official friends with that face which he would have had if he were responsible to us? He has to answer here on the floor of this House against the weight of the non-official opinion of his own countrymen with whom he thinks, with whom he feels. He has no feeling apart from ours. When he stands up on behalf of Government, how eloquent he is in advocating those reactionary views, those views which I know in his heart of hearts he does not share! (Laughter.) Is that a happy position? Sir, what is the good of having an Indian inside the inner council when he cannot respond to the call of his countrymen? Sir, we want them responsible to this House. If he is responsible to some gentleman who pulls the wire seven thousand miles away, who is in theory responsible to the British Parliament consisting of about 600 Members, of whom about a dozen Members take an occasional interest in Indian affairs more by way of amusement—they are sometimes looked upon as cranks because they dabble in Indian affairs—is that conducive to good government? No doubt you have done very well. Nobody can deny that. But the time is long long past when that state of things can continue.

Sir, this Resolution of mine records, registers, a mandate which we, the elected Members, have received from the country: I deliberately say that we have received this mandate from the country. It is true that under the rules only about five million people have been enfranchised and this time large numbers of people went to the polls unlike on the last occasion. Sir, I ask you to read the result of the polls. For one man who went to the polls to record his vote I am sure a hundred people shared the views of that man. Sir, I made no mistake. I did not hide what my views were from my constituency. I asked them point blank for a mandate to place this Resolution before you. In the very first manifesto which I issued on the 16th August, 1923, I told them:

“ My aim is Swaraj for the country and I want to win it peacefully through the Legislature. I therefore request you to give me that mandate by returning me once again and that with a solid majority.”

Sir, my opponent appealed to the passions and prejudices which prevailed unfortunately in South India. He claimed that he was a non-Brahmin. He said that out of the 10,000 voters who had to go to the polls 8,500 were non-Brahmins, and 1,500 were Brahmins and asked the voters whether they were going to vote for the Brahmin or the non-Brahmin. That was his cry. Sir, my supporters put this pertinent question, “ Are you going to send a man who will put up a fight for Swaraj or one who has hitherto hesitated to utter or write the word Swaraj?” Sir, the votes recorded gave the answer. Whether they are non-Brahmins or Brahmins they all want Swaraj. Sir, I addressed many audiences in the city of Madras. For one voter who was present there were at least one hundred non-voters present. There was not a single difference of opinion in that matter. Sir, people realised it. The great doubt which is felt as regards responsible government is whether the people understand the meaning of the vote. Sir, speaking of the cities with which I am acquainted, I am sure they understand the meaning of the vote. It is true that in some cases, in very few cases perhaps money buys the vote—I do not deny that. In what country does it not? But you ought not to judge by such exceptional cases. Here, so far as the people are concerned, they are accustomed to value the vote at any rate, they have traditions about it. When they read the Mahabharata, when they read the Ramayana, and when they read other ancient books which they have to read, they come across village assemblies, they come across accounts where the king consulted the people, they come across cases where elections were held. Therefore, the thing is still fresh in their minds, although the village institutions were killed by the regulations which were passed in 1816 in Madras. Still the idea survives and the people understand the value of the vote and you can very freely trust them with the vote and need have no fear. Therefore, I say that this Resolution records the verdict of the nation. So far as my Swaraj friends who have come into the Assembly are concerned, there can be no doubt as to the meaning of their return, and as regards those of us who do not come under the Swarajist flag there can also be no doubt as to the meaning of the vote recorded in our favour. Whether it is from North India, or from South India, or from West India, or East India, the one voice has gone forth that this machinery under which we are now working the constitution is unsuited, unsatisfactory, inadequate and can no longer hold. That is the verdict of the nation, and are you going to receive that verdict or not? Sir, one of the great Queens who ruled England, I refer to Queen Elizabeth, in one of her aphorisms said, the prince should have a big ear to hear far and near. Sir, I know that Lord Reading's Government is not deaf. Have they not shown this by this act.

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this magnanimous act to which I have referred, that they are responsive to public opinion? Lord Reading's Government I have great faith in. Notwithstanding the words that he uttered the other day, I know in his heart of hearts he is a radical. Whatever he may say here, I know what his heart says, and I am sure he will not turn a deaf ear to this verdict of the nation. Sir, there is some doubt in the minds of my English friends, my Scotch friends—I know my friend Sir Campbell Rhodes has closely investigated and examined the constitution under which we are working. He is as much dissatisfied with it as I am. I know it. Now, are you going to allow a constitution with which every one of us is dissatisfied—are you going to allow it to continue simply because you have put a section in the Statute that ten years hence a Commission will come out and examine it? Is it right, is the happiness of millions of human beings, civilised human beings, to rest on such considerations? Should not a move forward be made? Should not the thing be made more clear? Should the thing be kept in abeyance like this? Sir, look at the result. Every one who has worked the Act, directly he throws off the trammels of office, Sir, what does he say? What does Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru say, who was in the inner Cabinet, inside that glass dome working the levers, pulling the switches, operating on the engine inside that glass dome? Directly he got out of that glass dome, what did he say? He said, "The machinery is absolutely useless. We cannot work any longer. How long are we to go on bended knees before Rangachari and Seshagiri Aiyar and others of his ilk?" That is what he said. He says, "Here is a legislature clamouring for this, clamouring for that. Our hands are not free. We recognise the justice of the claim they make." He feels that this machinery cannot work in the Central Government. He has said that. I am sure there are Honourable Members here and I am glad to see Sir Chimanlal Setalvad (I am sorry he is not here)—Local Governments themselves, those who have experience of Local Governments and of this diarchical system will throw light upon the way in which the Local Governments are worked. But I speak with first hand knowledge, not that first hand knowledge as being inside the glass dome, but as being just outside and trying to rub and flatten my nose against it to enter into it—how long am I to go on doing that? A day will come when we will have to throw stones at the glass dome and break it and enter it by force. But we now want to take it by consent, by co-operation. We want to try to run the machinery which you are keeping safely in your hands. That machinery is built at our cost, is maintained at our cost, and, Sir, we want to have control over the running of that machinery. That is the real secret, that is the real secret of the agitation of the people, that is the real secret of the non-co-operation movement. That is the real secret of any agitation in this country. Look at the result. Now, instead of the intelligentsia of the country bestowing all its attention, earnest attention and thought on development departments of this country, instead of trying to do this, to do that and the other, what is it doing? For the last three or four years the whole country is in the vortex of agitation here, there and everywhere, and no public questions attract the attention which they ought to do. For instance, I travelled throughout the country with the Mercantile Marine Committee. Yesterday, Sir, my Honourable friend, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, bemoaned the absence of a mercantile marine in this country. But, Sir, a subject so important as that did not attract much attention in the country. We felt it. There is no public response to such Committees. We had to egg them on to come before us, those who had

got any interest in such questions. The whole intellect of the country is lost in cogitating about the Reforms. They are not satisfied with it. Their one object is to bring about Swaraj. Their one object is to bring responsible Government to this country. They think that these Committees are useless. You may travel about the country, you may do anything you like. We are not going to co-operate with you. That is the spirit you find. Any Committee which goes about does not evoke that enthusiasm, that response which I used to find in the earlier years. Public men shut themselves in. Take, for example, Lord Lee's Commission which is going about. How many elected Members of this Assembly took any interest in it? Probably, barring my friend, Dr. Gour, there is no one here who has gone before that Commission (*A Voice*: "Mr. Roy.") Well, have the Government asked themselves this question, why do people boycott these Committees? Are you going to allow this state of things to continue? Will not you, as wise statesman, take notice? Will not you see things in advance and see that things are put in order? Is it for the good of the country, for the Empire, that such a state of things should continue? Therefore, I say give up all notions of prestige. Take note of things as they are. In 1921 I well remember Lord Reading's Government were prepared to consider this question at a round table conference. Till December 1921 he was quite ready to go on with it and, unfortunately, things did not happen in the way in which they should have happened, and therefore the thing fell through. Why should we shut our eyes to solid facts which stare us in the face? It is not wise to do it. Therefore now that a new Assembly has come into being, now that we have got the co-operation of people who hitherto refrained from co-operating with you, this is a splendid opportunity for Government. In the last three or four days we have noticed how ready and willing our Swarajist friends in the Assembly are to throw in their lot with us, in improving legislation, in making suggestions as to Bills before us. They are as ready as any one of us to help the Government and to help this Assembly in transacting its business. You must take them with both hands. You have done it already. You have shown the way by one response, and now is the opportunity for the Government to show that they are really responsive to public demands, for no Government, as I have said, can get on without being responsive to public demands. There can be no mistake as to the verdict of the nation. They want a revision of the Act. They do not want this Act to continue. They want an early revision of the Act. The object of the revision should be to secure full responsible Government. Let there be no mistake as to my meaning. I want Dominion status abroad and responsible Government within, that is, the right to manage our own affairs, our internal affairs inside the country. This is what the people want. What is the verdict of even the Princes of this land who are not directly interested in the development of responsible Government in this country? I ask you, Sir, to look at the proceedings of the Imperial Conference which took place only recently when the Government of India's representative was openly insulted by an Irishman. What did that Irishman say at that Conference? This is Mr. Fitzgerald from the Irish Free State. This is that he said:

"Putting myself in the position of an Indian I do not think the Indian representatives here are of an equality with us because they are not really here in a representative capacity. They are not really sent by an independent Indian Government and they cannot really be regarded as equal with the rest of us. If I were an Indian, putting myself in their position, I would recognise that this hypersensitiveness that they have about their treatment outside India arises really from the fact that they have not so far reached the degree of self-government that the rest of us have reached."

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Sir, our representatives, I do not mean our representatives, because we did not send them, but the Government of India's representatives with whom we should identify ourselves in this connection, were openly insulted at this Conference. They were told "You are not our equals. What right have you to complain?" Are you going to allow that state of things to continue to your own discredit? The great Prince whom you deputed to that Conference said, pleading before that Conference:

"If India had some more definite proposition before it than having to wait every ten years for its destiny to be enhanced, if it had a reasonable assurance of rapid but progressive advancement, I believe that self-government, which is the goal of us all for two-thirds of India, would be achieved early and smoothly.

I add this, despite anything that may be said to the contrary, that achievement is possible within a very much shorter period than some people would like us to believe. I know, and I do not need to be told, that it depends to a great extent on India's capacity herself. I agree. But surely you do not desire to throw India on her own resources. Does not she look to Britain to give her periodical and sustained assistance so that my country may be, as it has been in the past, a really genuinely grateful and loyal partner in your wonderful heritage? I am speaking of self-government for two-thirds of India and in dealing with this subject I hope I may seek your indulgence for another few moments."

Then, pleading for a rapid realisation of full self-government, he said:

"I would much rather you got India round a table in confidence and worked out with her sons, plans and methods that would be the best suited to her environment, by which she can obtain her goal very rapidly but at the same time in a very peaceful and loyal manner. I say it is possible and probable of early success and you will be doing something for 300 millions of human beings that will cement them to you with gratitude and brotherly feelings."

So he went on in that strain. That is a Prince of the royal blood, the Maharajah of Alwar, who takes such vital interest in this advancement. It is not merely the people of this country who want a change. It is the Princes and the people of India for whom His Gracious Majesty the King Emperor has got such great regard who are yearning for this change. I say you should not overlook such a demand. It will be the height of folly to do so. It will be criminal to do so, and I implore you to have this constitution revised early. I may say, speaking for myself, I am indifferent as to what steps you adopt, whether it be a Royal Commission or a Committee or a Conference, but this state of things cannot continue and I ask that it be remedied early.

Mr. President: Resolution moved:

"This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he be pleased to take at a very early date the necessary steps (including if necessary procuring the appointment of a Royal Commission) for revising the Government of India Act so as to secure for India full self-governing Dominion status within the British Empire and Provincial autonomy in the Provinces."

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey (Home Member): Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me this early opportunity of rising, and for several reasons. I desire, in the first place, that on our side the debate should preserve the atmosphere which has been set by the Mover of this motion, and nothing will be wanting on our part to follow the tenour he has adopted. He referred to the sullenness and suspicion amid which he entered on his duties in this Assembly. I noticed at that time no sullenness in it; there was always, even in moments when he expressed himself most strongly, an engaging sense of humour about him; but I certainly noticed, as time went on, his growing appreciation of the position of Government, its difficulties, its genuine desire to work the Reforms; and, Sir, I take it as a

happy omen that he now, who was once somewhat critical of us, has seen his way to submit his name to the suffrage of the Assembly as its Deputy President. Once we were subjected to his criticism, now we may be content to work together under what, if I may use a poetical phrase, I may describe as his "mild and magnificent eye". But that is not the only reason. We have here before us a number of Resolutions and an even larger number of amendments dealing with constitutional questions. My friends opposite, Sir—I do not use that phrase as a matter of convention; there have been many whose friendship I have had in the past; we may, perhaps have been parted for a time, but I hope to renew that friendship now, and the friendship of their friends—as I say, my friends opposite and I have delayed these proceedings in the attempt to clarify the issues; but your opening instructions to us showed that there are still a number of cross-currents to be faced in this debate, and I think it is well that I should have an early opportunity of making clear our attitude, at all events on the one main proposition that is now before us. The Mover has not rendered my task easy; for he had submitted a proposition to the Assembly which reads clearly enough in itself; it is a patent demand that we should take early steps for revising the Government of India Act so as to secure for India full self-governing Dominion status. That could only mean one thing, that he and his friends consider that India is now ripe for full self-governing Dominion status, and that circumstances warrant that immediate steps should be taken to secure it for her. The appointment of a Parliamentary Commission was not essential; it was only one means which might be adopted to secure that definite end. But he did not argue that proposition. He argued another, the general need for advance in Reforms. Nevertheless, there is the proposition as it stands and as the world will read it. It may well be that a Resolution so framed may be the focus for many variants of a somewhat similar nature and for amendments comprising alternative policies. But, Sir, we can only regard the proposition as we see it, and as the world will see it. It contains, it is true, a subsidiary proposal, a reference to Provincial autonomy. I regard that as a minor proposition only, for if India is to have at an early date full responsible Government, nay more, a Legislature with the full and unlimited status now enjoyed by the Dominions, then the question of Provincial autonomy is one almost of domestic concern. Whether that fully responsible Legislature shall have any control over the Legislature or whether its Ministers shall have any control over the Executive of the provinces is, I say, but a minor feature in the picture which he presents, and I shall trouble myself no further with that detail of his proposal. I shall address myself only to the main proposition, that India is now ready, and that India must have, at once, full self-governing Dominion status. I say we cannot afford to allow anyone to be in doubt as to the attitude of Government on that question. There are many interests concerned. There are the Indian States, to which the Mover referred. I do not say what their attitude is likely to be; but it is of vital interest to them whether they will at an early date have to deal with an Executive Government which is entirely responsible to an Indian Legislature, or whether they will have to deal with a Governor General in Council who, as now, is responsible to the British Parliament. And, again, European commerce will desire to know—I say nothing of what its feelings are likely to be at the contemplated change; but men who have put great sums of money into India, and may be daily increasing the sphere of their operations, have a right to know if we contemplate an early change of Government. The men entering our services will desire to know.

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I predicate nothing as to their feelings. I only say that all men entering our services, whether civil or military, whether European or Indian, have a right to know if we intend a radical change of government at an early date. There is another interest, a great and extensive interest, which will desire to know our attitude; I mean the minority communities. I shall say no more at the moment regarding the very obvious interest that they must take in this question, for I shall have to return to it, but it is clear that they ought to know whether the Indian Government is prepared to recognize such a step, and whether the British Government is prepared to entertain it.

Here then, Sir, is our question. What is our answer to be? Just as
 12 Noon. we shall gain nothing by allowing the discussion to drift into cross channels, so, in rendering our answer, we should refuse to be deterred by any imputation to which our attitude on this subject may give rise. Opposition to this proposition does not mean in itself that we have fallen victims to that heresy which according to its harshest critics seeks a reversion to the ways of autocracy, and even according to those who take a more tolerant view shows a disinclination to the advance of Reforms. It does not necessarily mean that we should be unwilling to contemplate any change within the present scheme of Reforms. It is not certainly in itself an invasion of the principle of the Government of India Act or the declaration of August 1917. For, Sir, Mr. Rangachariar's proposition, as he has placed it on the paper, is directly opposed to the Government of India Act in two important respects. Remember that for the moment I am answering his proposition as framed, though much of what I say will apply also to the arguments he has used on the somewhat different proposition which he argued, and to some others of the proposals which are contained in the agenda before us. I say his proposition, as it stands, is opposed to the Government of India Act and in two important respects. The pronouncement of August 1917 spoke of "the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India". That is also the term used in the Preamble to the Act; that is the term used in the Royal Warrant of instructions which adds, that "thus will India be fitted to take her place among the other Dominions". The term has its significance; we know that it was deliberately chosen. The Congress and the League had asked the Imperial Government to proclaim its intention to confer self-government on India at an early date and the Cabinet chose the present term. The expression used in the Act is a term of precision, conveying that the Executive in India would be responsible to the Indian Legislature instead of to the British Parliament. If you analyse the term "full Dominion Self-Government", you will see that it is of somewhat wider extent, conveying that not only will the Executive be responsible to the Legislature, but the Legislature will in itself have the full powers which are typical of the modern Dominion. I say there is some difference of substance, because responsible Government is not necessarily incompatible with a Legislature with limited or restricted powers. It may be that full Dominion self-government is the logical outcome of responsible Government, nay, it may be the inevitable and historical development of responsible Government, but it is a further and a final step. The second point is this, that the Preamble of the Act specifically provides for the realisation of its ideal by successive stages. Now, it is here perhaps that the real cause of our difference arises. We hold both to the objective and to its realisation by stages. You, on

your side, even those who ask that we should not immediately go beyond the objective stated in terms of the Act, now object to the imposition of stages.] You do not confine yourselves to a complaint that our progress is too slow; that our pedestrian pace is but a crawl; that we show a caution so extreme that it casts doubt on our desire to proceed at all. You definitely repudiate the imposition of stages in that progress. Now, I can understand this attitude from those who from the first refused to accept the prescription of a transitional period. There were some such; but the Mover was not one of them. There are indeed many here who were not of that class. I see, for instance, some of those who joined in signing the Memorandum of the Nineteen in 1916. They asked for increased powers; they certainly did not ask for full Dominion Self-Government. The Calcutta Congress of 1917 by a formal Resolution demanded that the realisation of full responsible Government should be guaranteed to India—when?—within a period of 15 years. That was to be provided in the proposed Statute of Reforms; they apparently had no anticipation in 1917 that full Dominion self-government would be workable at an earlier date. When the Reform scheme took shape in the Bill, the Home Rule League criticised it. There was much that they saluted with somewhat faint praise; but they formally accepted the principle that the advance must be by stages. These are the actual words of their representative, Mrs. Besant, before the Joint Parliamentary Committee:

“ I accept realisation by successive stages, not because I admit that India has no inherent right to Home Rule or is incapable of complete home administration, but because time is needed to prepare home defence against invasion.”

The National Congress had considered the question fully in its Delhi meeting in December 1918; it repudiated the suggestion that the people of India were unfit for full responsible Government. But what did it ask for? Full responsibility in the provinces without prejudice to the claim for a substantial measure of responsibility in the Central Government. There sits Mr. Patel, who represented the Congress before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. He stood by the Calcutta Resolution of 1917 that the realisation of full responsible Government should be guaranteed in India within a period of 15 years. He accepted the 10 years Statutory Committee, but it was only to inquire whether the 10 years' experience did not justify the immediate grant of full responsible Government or whether another period of 5 years should elapse. Read the many passages of Mr. Jinnah's evidence on behalf of the Muslim League. Is there a word there of immediate responsible Self-Government or full Dominion status? Not one. On the contrary, he put forward some views which may perhaps be interesting to the Assembly. He might perhaps feel a little more secure if he came and sat by my side while I read them. He wanted advance in the Central Government. But he wanted it by means of dyarchy. The Committee asked him:

“ There were Indian witnesses who have been before this Committee whom you probably heard who were doubtful about dyarchy ”

and he replied:

“ I am not doubtful; I think myself it is bound to succeed. I do not see any other way and that is the very reason why I find the difficulty in the Congress-League scheme.”

He formally accepted the ten-years Statutory Committee; so that there is very little comfort for the Mover there. Then take the name of an even less cautious man, the late Mr. Tilak. Did he want immediate

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responsible Government? So far from that, he did not claim it until the 15 years period was over. He did not like periodical re-examination at all, but he thought that one such examination at the end of ten years was justified. I finally take Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. He said in 1919 or 1920 that even if 20 years were fixed as the outside limit we should know where we stood.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (Allahabad and Jhansi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): For taking complete charge of the army and administering the country.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Which is necessary for full Dominion status: I fail to see how that interruption advances the cause of the Honourable Mover. In fact, I do not know from where the Mover himself has taken his inspiration for this sudden demand. In last February he discussed Lord Peel's despatch of the 2nd November 1922; what did he demand then? Certainly not full Dominion status. I give his words:

"I want nothing more than this that the system should be re-examined by a Parliamentary Commission. All that we ask is that the thing be re-examined. It is not that we are extravagant in our demand. We only want an examination of the existing condition."

He has told us that he put forward his present demand in his election manifesto. I have it here, and I am sure his recollection must be wrong. There was a good deal about Swaraj. There was a somewhat heartfelt outpouring about the nastiness of communal feeling and the vice of communal representation, a matter which perhaps might have caused him to pause a little. But, Sir, there was nothing about the immediate grant of full responsible Government. I may perhaps be excused in this Assembly for referring to these much-abused men—the Liberals. I need not say that the Liberal Conference at Nagpur in 1922 made no such demand; even in 1923 it made a demand of an entirely different nature. In fact all my researches show me only this that there is not any genuine mandate on the side of the Mover. On the contrary, there is everywhere, and has been everywhere, a recognition of the fact stated by the present Premier in 1917 that "to build up a system of representative Government in India is bound to be a slow and a difficult process".

What then is the explanation of the demand? I first thought, when he spoke of the work that we had done together, that he was going to explain his demand in a manner entirely flattering to us; that we had progressed so far together in the last three years on the path of Reform that we had now proved that immediate Dominion self-status was feasible and could safely be granted. But as he proceeded, I realized that that assumption was too flattering. The opposite is the case. He and his friends now tell us that their experience has not justified the concession which they made to us in 1919, namely, that they would attempt together with us to work a transitional constitution. Their experience has shown that it will not function, and that it must be immediately supplemented by fresh management, fresh men and fresh methods. Then if that is so, I must take the strongest and soundest ground I can. I will not argue as a Member of the Executive Government who, by virtue of his office, is bound to support the policy of Parliament which laid down successive stages for realisation, and which claimed that Parliament itself, which has granted this constitution, must be the best judge of the fitness of India

for each successive stage. I will not take that ground. I will not dwell on the somewhat obvious fact that India desires to remain part of the British Empire (and let me say that even at the recent Congress, which met under feelings strongly hostile to the British Empire, there was no adhesion to a proposal for separation from that Empire; the Congress, at all events, was prepared to belong to what we heard a speaker yesterday, with a patriotism which was pardonable but perhaps exceeded his sense of proportion, describe as the Indo-British Confederation); if India desires to stay in the Empire, she might well concede something to the judgment of those who guard her from external aggression. She cannot save herself from all external ills by the simple and soulful exercise of self-determination.

Pandit Shamlal Nehru (Meerut Division: Non-Muhammadan Rural): What will happen if she does not want to stay within the British Empire?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I can only say that in every sense she must prepare for the consequences. Nor again will I take any ground based on the threats that we have heard as to what is likely to happen if the demand is not granted. I may deplore them; but I deliberately put them aside. I am addressing the Members of this Assembly, and as Members of the Assembly, I can only regard them as bound to constitutional ideals and constitutional methods. Indeed with regard to such threats I prefer to take much the same attitude as Pandit Motilal Nehru himself in dealing with the Resolutions of the Gaya Congress:

"It is", he said, "a hotch-potch of pious wishes, with a few threats thrown in to season the dish for the acceptance of the more impatient non-co-operator." (*Laughter.*)

I shall not seek to demonstrate the achievements attained by us and by those who have helped us in the last three years, though I believe them to be solid and substantial, in the sphere both of legislation and administration; and, though I do not wish to embitter controversy, I am constrained to ask those who preferred to stay out in the wilderness during the last three years, devoting themselves to what they claimed to be a constructive programme of work, how it is that they have had to confess that these three years were barren of result. No, Sir, I shall take better grounds than these. I shall consider the case objectively and as an outsider might consider it; I shall look only at the feasibilities and the possibilities of the proposition which has been put down on the paper by Mr. Rangachariar."

I have to ask three, or perhaps four questions of the Assembly. Is Dominion self-government to be confined to British India only, or is it to be extended to the Indian States? If it is to be extended to the latter, under what terms have they agreed to come in, for I assume that you have got their agreement to this proposition? Are they to be dependent only on the Crown, or are they to be controlled by the new Government responsible only to the Indian Legislature instead of a Government responsible to the British Parliament? Will they accept that? Remember they are vitally concerned at every point, for whether in regard to fiscal arrangements, communications, or trade interests, our Legislature touches them closely. Some kind of federation is the objective frequently held out to us; indeed it is the fact that some such federation is necessary that has made many thinkers such as Mr. Jinnah claim that we need a second Chamber. But have you secured that federation yet, and on what terms will it be?

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I pass to a second problem. I do not desire to exaggerate it, but it has to be faced. No conception of full Dominion self-government is possible which retains in the hands of an authority other than the Dominion Legislature itself the protection of minority communities. It is the use of this full dominion authority in South Africa against a minority which was locally unpopular that has lately caused us so much feeling against the Empire. I know that we are told that this is no real difficulty, and that it is we who have served, whether purposely or otherwise, to keep communal difficulties alive; and that when the day of independence has dawned, they will disappear in the bright sunshine of the new freedom. I do not see an equal feeling of confidence reflected in the preamble of the new National Pact, for it definitely states that the only obstacle to Swaraj is "the lack of mutual understanding in the different communities of India." How far that pact will secure the necessary understanding I do not intend to prophesy; I can only judge by the result of the Bengal Pact. Did that bring peace or a sword?

Mr. Chaman Lal (West Punjab: Non-Muhammadan): Peace in Bengal.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Peace in Bengal! The Honourable Member's interruption is timely. I will read him an extract from a Bengali newspaper:

"The Bengal Pact is a monstrous violation of national solidarity."

Again the same paper says:

"The government of one country by another is not so bad as the government of one or more communities by another."

I do not want to stress that point, for I see that it is amply recognised by the Resolution that follows. Moreover, it is not a point on which any of us should or would care to harp. There is not one of us here on our side who would not desire to see those questions solved and solved at an early date.

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal (Calcutta: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Will the Honourable Member kindly give us the name of the paper from which he quotes?

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I fortunately am able to do so. It is "The Bengalee" newspaper writing in December 1923. It is not a newspaper to which I believe the Honourable Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal now contributes

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: Is the Honourable Member aware that the Honourable Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal contributed for a long time to "The Englishman" newspaper?

Mr. President: I must ask Honourable Members to allow the Honourable Member to proceed with less interruption.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I will take your word for it, and it is a sign of growing grace on his part. I say that we wish to see those differences solved, but we do not believe that full Dominion self-government is possible for India until they are solved. I am not alone in claiming

this; contemporary literature is full of recognition of the same fact. The report of the Congress Civil Disobedience Committee itself confesses that the great difficulty in any advance lies in the religious susceptibility of the Indian people. Or if you desire that I should take a somewhat extreme advocate of advance, I may quote Mr. Jamnadas Mehta. He says:

"The so-called unity is unreal and illusory, and to-day we must confess with shame that we are not quite fit for Swaraj."

Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal just now wished to know my authority for a quotation which I gave the House. I will give him another from an excellent authority, no less than a recent writing of his own, strictly apposite, as the House will realize:

"Unless this question is settled, when the country is still under British authority, responsible for the defence of its borders against outside invasion, and for the maintenance of peace and order within, the elimination of the present British Raj from India will be found to spell universal chaos and inter-communal fights, which will render our position in many ways worse than what it is at present."

I need say no more; I could say no more.

Now I take a third problem, a problem so important that it may be described in the words of the old writers, as the "very article by which the Republic stands or falls," I mean defence. I am not of course suggesting that India, so long as she remains a member of the Empire, will not be entitled to call for and will not receive the very fullest assistance from that Empire in any moment of vital emergency. But full Dominion status means a Dominion army under full control of the Dominion Government, and I have not yet seen any serious thinker who has pretended that India is yet in a position, or will in the immediate future be in a position, to create a Dominion army in the proper sense of the word. What did the Mover himself say in February 1923?

"The Army will be taken over by the Dominion as soon as the Government is ready to assume responsibility. That is when the army is Indianised in the sense in which we want it, not merely Indian troops controlled by European officers, but Indian in the true sense of the term, the officers and all ranks consisting of Indians."

Very clearly the word "immediate" cannot be employed here. You may charge it against us that we are ourselves responsible for this delay, and that we cannot take cover behind the consequences of our own omissions. I claim on my part that since the Reforms have been instituted, we have made serious and sincere efforts to begin the process of Indianisation; and in any case we are not for the moment on appraisal of merits, but on the consideration of the possibilities of the step you advocate. I would remind you again in all earnestness that there are difficulties in the attainment of your ideal of a Dominion army which will in any case long delay its consummation. I do not debate the question whether a purely Indianised Army would be that perfect weapon which you require for the defence of India; our opinions might differ on that point, and I have no wish to be dragged into the turmoil of that particular controversy. I will not refer here to the damaging fact that the controversialists have not yet decided whether, if we were invaded by what is for the moment our most powerful neighbour, one of our great communities ought to stand apart or even to join the enemy. That is an alarming consideration, but for the moment I pass it by. My point is different. The President of the last Congress, though in a somewhat different connection, had to confess that "the fighting classes of India are more sharply divided from the rest of the nation than perhaps anywhere in the world." It was for that reason and perhaps

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for that reason only that he did not "desire to see India gain its end by violence," since it would place the power in the wrong hands. But what is the implication that I draw from that? It is this. If you create a Dominion army while those conditions still exist, it will not be a national army, it will be an army of those classes; and I warn my friends of the non-martial classes that the power which is now placed in their hands by the ballot box will speedily gravitate into other hands. There will be no British officers and no British troops to hold the balance.

I have one more question to ask. The demand for Dominion self-government assumes that its advocates have satisfied themselves that there exist those social and political foundations on which alone such constitutional structure can safely exist. Now I do not wish to exaggerate this point. I do not claim that a country must wait for constitutional advance until it has a large preponderance of educated voters. We did not wait for this in England. Again I do not wish to deny that the intelligentsia of this country has a great—perhaps a preponderating—influence over the mass of public opinion—certainly an influence out of proportion to its numerical strength. But I do claim that for the moment political advance in India has already outrun social advance. (*An Honourable Member*: "Whose fault is it?") Well, we can do something ourselves to secure political advance in India; social advance must rest on the Indian people itself.

Dr. H. S. Gour (Central Provinces Hindi Divisions: Non-Muhammadan): You have been opposing it.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: No; we have only opposed some of your own rather hasty advances in the matrimonial law! We were not alone there.

Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: But you can pride yourselves upon the progress of education among the masses.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Even if we could not, yet my point still remains good, that there is still wanting that sense of confidence between class and class which alone makes modern democratic institutions possible; that it would not be possible at this stage of India's development to expect the minority to accept without reserve the final verdict of the majority; and that India's political consciousness is not yet organised on lines which would either allow interests to be represented adequately, or leaders to be chosen whose guidance will be accepted with such confidence as to furnish the possibility of political stability. If I am right, then the grant of full Dominion status would be a danger rather than an advantage to India, so long as those conditions still prevail.

Now, Sir, these problems are grave. I do not say that they are insoluble, nor that they are insurmountable; but for the moment they must be faced, and no advantage is to be gained by pretending that they do not exist or hoping that they will be solved by a simple change in the form of the constitution. Their solution, not necessarily their complete solution, but such development as seems to promise their eventual solution, is a condition precedent to the change you advocate. I say that for the present, it would be impossible for us to make any such recommendation to the British Parliament or for the British Parliament now to entertain any proposal to this effect. It makes no difference to me what is the

political complexion of that Parliament, or under what guidance its policy is directed; the answer would be the same. But if it refused, that would be no proof of the want of goodwill for India and no proof of mistrust in its future. It would only be a proof that Parliament, mindful of its own past, and of the manner in which it has built up its own position on long and carefully tested experiences, is unwilling to jeopardise the structure to which it has laid its hand by adding the upper courses before it has thoroughly tested the foundations. "Those", says the prophet Isiah, "who believe, do not go in haste". With every feeling for the aspirations which the Mover has voiced—aspirations which must strike some answering chord in the breasts of all—and there are many here—who are Liberals at heart, I cannot help thinking of the lines in which Shakespeare described a character in a somewhat similar position:

" Like one that stands upon a promontory
And spies a far off shore where he would tread,
Wishing his foot were equal with his eye;
And chides the sea that sunders him from thence,
Saying that he will lade it dry to have his way;
So do I wish the crown, being so far off,
And so I chide the means that keep me from it,
And so do I say I'll cut the causes off,
Flattering me with impossibilities."

Now, Sir, it is not enough perhaps that I should only return this answer. The House consists of those who represent constituencies, certainly the great majority of which demand a speedy constitutional advance; they may differ in the extent of their demand; but on that point they are united. It is right then that the House should demand from us whether we are prepared to proceed further on the path we engaged to tread together. They are entitled to press us here; and I have no wish to avoid the issue. I must define our position as clearly as I can, and I explain what action we do propose to take. In the first place, the definition of our position—We maintain that the objective of the Government of India Act is as defined in that Act, namely, responsible Government. We do not deny that full Dominion status may be the corollary of responsible Government. For the present we must limit ourselves to the objective of the Act. Secondly, we maintain the necessity, as the Act maintains the necessity, of the realisation of that ideal by stages; but we hold that the first stage of transitional government has not yet been sufficiently tested. All transitional systems of this nature are bound to be full of difficulties. In the development of dominion constitutions, it has always been difficult to find a middle stage between responsibility to one Legislature and responsibility to another; the endeavour to find an intermediate course was bound to produce seeming anomalies both in legislation and administration. I will not dilate on them; but it is clear that our transitional constitution could be worked only on one condition, that there was a genuine attempt made on all sides to make it function. On no other terms could it succeed. There were those who honestly attempted to do so, and I think India owes them gratitude; for the more successful was the first stage the easier it would have been to introduce the second. But that treatment it certainly did not encounter on the whole. One section of the community stood completely aloof. Many of those who had agreed to aid in exploring the possibilities of the scheme decided, for reasons quite extraneous to the

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scheme itself, to make it the subject of embittered attack. Throughout the country attempts were made, and again for reasons really extraneous to the Reforms Scheme, to render the working of the whole of the administration impossible, and this had its inevitable reaction on the working of the transitional constitution. It is certainly not receiving fair treatment in the provinces to-day, I instance particularly the Central Provinces and Bengal. I am not going into motives here, but I only say this, that it is clearly impossible to expect a delicate piece of mechanism to work, if many of those who should be assisting, thrust obstacles into the machinery, partly because they do not like the nationality of the designers, and partly because they think the design should in itself have been different. That is the definition of our position; now for the action we propose to take. We do not limit ourselves to demanding that the system should be further tested. We propose to make a serious attempt to investigate justifiable complaints against the working of the scheme in practice; to assess the causes, and to examine the remedies necessary. We claim that this must precede any general inquiry into the policy and scheme of the Act, or general advance within the Act itself. In investigating these difficulties and may be defects in the actual working of the present system, we shall consult Local Governments on the subject; and we shall not close our ears to representations from outside. It may be that the remedy for these difficulties will be found by using the rule-making power within the Act; I refer to the utilisation of those sections to which reference is so often made, 19A, 45A and 96B. It may even be—I can say nothing as to this—that the inquiry may show that some changes are required in the structure of the Act in order to rectify definite and ascertained defects experienced in actual working. When we have our results, and those results are ready for presentation to Parliament, then before they are finally presented to Parliament we shall ask the Secretary of State to give every opportunity for discussion in this country both in the Legislature and elsewhere. That is as far as we can go at present; but I believe that this undertaking gives a guarantee that we are determined genuinely to discharge our duty to the Reform Scheme and to prepare the way for the next stage of advance. It will, I know, be unsatisfactory to many Members here who desire not only that the stages should be more clearly marked, but that they should proceed infinitely more quickly towards the final consummation. But, Sir, as I have said before, the achievement of political ideals must wait on the development of political conditions. With every desire to attain the former we can neither regulate nor control the latter. And if our promise is disappointing to many, yet on one point we can be clear. It is not open to us, and it is not open to any one here, to argue this case as though we were contestants battling in a court of law for the possession of the future of India. That is not so. Our objective is the same. Our aim is the same and our purpose as high as that of any of those who wish the best for India. We would fain have taken all with us along the same road; but if we have chosen a path which is longer than some here would desire to take; if it appears to be less easy, it is because we believe that we can plant our footsteps more firmly on the higher ground, and that our progress, if less rapid, will be more certain; we mistrust the morasses and the dangers of the shorter ways in the valleys below. We are vowed to this emprise. We shall not falter in it; but we can persist to the end only on one condition. Unless the best of India join us, then our labour will be in vain, and in vain will India look for our journey's ending.

Pandit Motilal Nehru (Cities of the United Provinces: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Sir, I beg formally to move the amendment that stands in my name. It runs as follows:

“ That the following be substituted for the original Resolution :

‘ This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full responsible Government in India and for the said purpose :

- (a) to summon at an early date a representative Round Table Conference to recommend with due regard to the protection of the rights and interests of important minorities the scheme of a constitution for India; and
- (b) after dissolving the Central Legislature to place the said scheme for approval before a newly-elected Indian Legislature for its approval and submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a Statute.’ ”

Sir, I am very glad that I have had an opportunity of listening to the speakers who have preceded me. I hope now to be better able to deal with my proposition and with the position which I mean to lay before the House for its acceptance. As will be seen, the proposition divides itself into three parts. The first declares the goal; the second and third the various stages which have to be gone through to reach the goal. Now, so far as the first part is concerned, there is no exception taken to it to-day in this House, nor, as far as I am aware, has any objection been taken before this outside this House. The whole controversy ranges round the other two parts. But the Honourable the Home Member has raised certain questions which have reference to the first part also and I shall beg with your permission to refer to them at a later stage of my remarks.

I wish, first of all, to thank my friend, Mr. Rangachariar, for the very graceful compliment he has paid to the Swarajists and for the welcome he has extended to them in this House. I am particularly glad to find that my Honourable friend has admitted, though I do not know if he is aware of it, that he is not very far removed from a Swarajist. (Hear, hear.) When referring to the glass dome and his intention to throw stones upon it at some future time, he was really saying what the Swaraj Party has been saying for some time past, and what the Congress, ever since it resorted to a policy of non-co-operation, has been preaching to the country. He is, or if he is not yet, he will, I hope, be a very valuable acquisition to our ranks, and we shall welcome him with open arms. Now, Sir, beyond this I do not think it is necessary for me to deal with the remarks of my friend, Mr. Rangachariar, and I shall simply lay a few broad facts before this House in support of the proposition which I have the honour to move. It will be seen, as I have submitted, that the first part of my proposition is unexceptionable. That there is a deep-seated desire for Swaraj in the country I do not think any one will doubt. That that desire proceeds from the natural cravings of the human heart for freedom, I do not think any one will seriously deny. That being so, I say the first and the last requisite for full responsible Government is completely established. According to all modern conceptions, what you have to look to is a genuine desire proceeding from the natural instinct to which I have referred and the determination to attain that desire. That is all that entitles a nation, that is all that has ever entitled a nation, to complete self-government and complete responsibility. But I am not going to put my case so high to-day. The desire for Swaraj, as all must be aware in this House, has passed through the usual stages of ridicule and intimidation, rather unusually prolonged, and has now, it may be said, and properly said, emerged from an ordeal of fire unscathed and pure. That desire has led

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different sections of my countrymen to different courses of action. It is all a question of the intensity of the feeling of each section, the point of view of each section and the mentality of each section of my countrymen. That each has been prompted and guided by the best of motives there can be no doubt whatever. The question then is: have we made out a case for the realisation of that desire? Well, what is asked for in my friend, Mr. Rangachariar's Resolution and what I ask for by my amendment is, without mincing words, a complete overhauling of the Government of India Act. The Honourable the Home Member has made a very strong case, or at least has attempted to do so, against that proposition. Now, Sir, what is the chief plank in his argument, and what is the great argument that has always been employed against any further advance in political rights to be given to the Indians? It is said that those who desire any further advance are precluded by the Government of India Act itself from making the demand, because the Preamble sets out in clear words that responsible Government will only be granted by successive stages and that Parliament shall be the sole judge of the manner and measure of each advance, or words to that effect. And it is said that you have no business to come forward and ask for anything. It is for you to satisfy Parliament, to satisfy us who are the agents of Parliament here—I mean the Government—that you deserve a further advance and you shall have it but not before that. Now, Sir, our answer, straight and clear, as unequivocal as the Preamble, is that that Preamble is bad, the whole law, the whole Act is as bad as could possibly have been devised to postpone, to stifle and to suppress the natural desire which I have already mentioned. That is what we say and we are perfectly entitled to say so. We feel that we must say so. What answer is it that the Act provides so and so, when the one reason why we do not want it is precisely because it provides so and so. Sir, it is arguing in a circle. We say that the Act has done a gross injustice to us in that Preamble and in the subsequent provisions of it which refuse to us the full rights of responsible Government that we demand. It is said: "You will not have them because the Act does not allow you to ask for them, but leaves it to the judgment of Parliament alone." Now, Sir, I ask what special sanctity is there in this particular Act of Parliament that we must not say a word against it? Wherein does it differ from other Acts of Parliament, all of which may be modified or repealed at any time? We ask for the modification of this Act or for its repeal, whatever may be necessary, and in doing so I really do not know what unconstitutional or improper act we are guilty of. Well, Sir, if it is true that we may ask for the modification of a piece of legislation which we take exception to, we are not going beyond our rights.

Then, the next question is, "Is the modification that we ask for justified under the circumstances?" That really is the crux of the whole matter. It has been said—and I have been hearing a considerable amount of loose talk during the last three or four days outside this House—that the Act contains within itself enough to give us that from which we can grow, from which we can acquire more by the building up of conventions and things of that sort. I wish at once to dispose of that argument. I say that, so far as I am concerned, it will take very strong authority, and that of the weightiest character, to convince me that any conventions can grow so as to defeat the express provisions of a Statute of Parliament. They are simply talking as if this Statute did not exist. But, even if such conventions could grow, I submit we are

not content to let them grow in the way in which it has been suggested. We wish that our rights should be formulated, recognised and clearly admitted, and not only admitted and recognised but actually conceded to us.

Now, as for the steps, the argument is that the Government are in fact doing the very thing that the Resolution and the amendment ask for, because what is called the working of the reforms constitutes the steps which are to be taken to secure the ultimate revision of the Government of India Act, and, in insisting upon the working of the reforms as they stand, we are doing all that is necessary to secure the revision of the Act and the inevitable establishment of responsible government after all the steps mentioned in the Act have been taken. Now, Sir, our submission is—and I am glad that the Honourable the Home Member has not been able to point to anything that I have said before I came to this House which conflicts with what I am going to submit now (Laughter)—we in the Congress have demanded ever since the year 1919 full responsible government; call it Swaraj, call it Dominion status, call it anything you like. The Honourable the Home Member has not paid attention to one very important fact that after the year 1919 the Congress has committed itself to a policy and a programme which were quite new and which had not been adopted before that year. I submit that it will serve no useful purpose except perhaps that of historical research to cite what the Congress said or what the leader of the Congress said in the years 1916, 1917 and 1918 and in previous years. From the year 1919 up to the present day the demand has been consistent that what we require is responsible government, that the Government of India Act is wholly inadequate and disappointing. The Congress has said that it will not rest until it has obtained either a revision or a repeal of that Act. That was the position under which the Act came into force and that is the position under which now it begins its second course. At this stage my friend, Mr. Rangachariar, thinks that it is not so improper as the Honourable the Home Member thinks to ask for a revision of the Act. As I have said, Sir, we have got to see other things besides the provisions of the Act itself if we wish to come to a right conclusion as to whether the time has come for its revision or not. What are we suggesting? We are not asking or complete responsible government to be handed over to us tied up in a bundle. We say we are quite capable of it, we are quite fit for it, but what is it that my amendment is suggesting? It simply suggests what the Honourable the Home Member says they are not unwilling to do, but upon conditions. In fact, when you come to examine the position as disclosed by the speech of my Honourable friend, Mr. Rangachariar and the Honourable the Home Member, the whole thing resolves itself into this, are we going to take this Committee fettered with the condition which the Honourable the Home Member has proposed? In effect he says "We stick to the principle of the Bill, we have no objection to exploring the avenues of improvement whether they are found within the four corners of the Act or without, but one thing must be certain and that is that we are not prepared to admit your claim to full responsible government or Dominion status." I may tell you at once that, so far as my Party is concerned, it will take a round table conference, or Committee, or whatever other name you may give it, but the scope of that Committee or that conference must not be limited. It must go into the whole matter. It must have the right to recommend whatever it considers proper. After all, it has no statutory powers, it is not a thing which can bind all parties for all time to come. It can only make recommendations and upon those

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recommendations we ask the necessary steps to be taken to give them the sanction of law.

The fact is, Sir, that my amendment has been considerably toned down to meet the wishes of friends who are not Swarajists in this Assembly. It seemed to me that there could be no possible objection taken to it from the Government side but, when we find that even such a mild, such a modest, request as this simply asking for a conference to go into the whole matter to find out for itself what is to be done and what is not to be done, is to be subjected to conditions, then I really do not know what Resolution would have been mild enough for the Government Benches to accept. However that may be, it is my duty to make my position as perfectly clear as the Honourable the Home Member has made his. What we are asking for is not intended to convey something by way of a threat as has been believed in certain quarters and as has been hinted at by my Honourable friend the Home Member. We are putting before the Government an honest and a fair demand. This is the demand not only of the Swarajists but also of a very large number of the elected Members of this House, as the House will know by and by when other Honourable Members rise in their places to support it. It is not fair to tell us that you can only do this or you cannot do that. It is not fair to treat our demand as a threat and to threaten us in return with dire consequences if we dare to make it. What I say is this: whatever we can do in this House, it is quite obvious that it must be done within the rules and within what is called the constitution. Personally speaking, I say there is no constitution for India. I refuse to believe in this constitution. I agreed to come into this Assembly and I am bound by the rules. That is the only thing that I consider binding. I do not think that anything deserves the name of a constitution for a country in the making of which the people of the country did not have a voice, and for that reason I say that I do not give it the dignity of a constitution, although I submit to the rules. Now, if we submit to the rules, it is open to us to do certain things under these rules in this House and in the Provincial Councils. If we can obstruct you under the rules, what is there to prevent us from doing so as an answer to the attitude that you adopt? Sir, I may at once say that the Swarajya Party has sought the suffrage of the electorates not to engage itself in the humdrum business of putting questions and getting answers and acquiescing in the process marked out in the Act itself for further stages of advance and similar things.

We have come here to do something which we have not been doing so far. I think it will mightily please my friends of the Congress who are known by the name of "No-changers" to hear what I am about to say,—but I do not mind it, I have never concealed it; Sir, we have come here to offer our co-operation, non-co-operators as we are, if you will care to co-operate with us. That is why we are here. If you agree to have it, we are your men; if you do not, we shall, like men, stand upon our rights and continue to be non-co-operators. Now what threat is there in this? When I say what I am, what threat do I convey? Am I conveying any new idea? If we conform to the programme of non-co-operation, are we doing something that we have not been doing? We have so far been working outside the Councils and this Assembly with a definite object. That object we have still in view, that object we consider perfectly legitimate. But we have come here because the dust and heat of the controversy which has been raging for the last three or four years, in fact ever

since the inauguration of these reforms, has obscured the real issues. We have come here and our coming here affords an opportunity to clear those issues as no other opportunity can. We are here for that purpose. We are not here simply to wreck or to destroy. We have been referred to as a party of destruction, and wreckers. Yes, we are out to wreck and destroy things of evil, and, rightly or wrongly, we think that the present reforms are a thing of evil. We have come to ask you to meet us so that we may put our heads together,—to hear us and to let us hear you and then to come to some definite conclusion. If we agree, well and good; if we do not we shall agree to differ, and the issues will be clarified. That is the thing. It is no business of ours to wreck things which we believe are doing good to the country. At least it will be admitted that we have no personal motives. We have not any axes of our own to grind. We believe in a certain principle. We believe that our country has reached a particular stage, and that at that particular stage it is entitled to certain rights, which rights are being withheld from it. We say that we cannot get those rights by an armed revolution, by delivering a great thumping blow, which alone in other countries has gained freedom for the people of those countries. In the very nature of things we cannot do that and therefore we say, we shall simply not assist you. What law, what reason, is there which can compel us to co-operate with people who do not co-operate with us? However, I am not here, Sir, to justify the principles of non-co-operation, but I certainly am here to say that we claim to be as much bound by our own principles as any honourable body of men has ever claimed to be, and that is all.

Now, it is said that the Act has been passed and the policy of the Act has been approved by a series of Prime Ministers. We were told by His Excellency in his speech from the throne that, during less than four years of the period he has occupied his exalted office, there have been no less than four Prime Ministers in England and four Governments and that each Prime Minister and each Government has approved the policy of this Act. Now, Sir, that is certainly so. But I should like the Honourable the Home Member to answer the question, suppose there had been a dozen Prime Ministers and a dozen Governments in this interval of four years, would these reforms have been three times as good as they are to-day? I do not understand, Sir, I say with due deference, what has the change of Government or the change of Prime Ministers to do with a good or bad piece of legislation or with the fact whether it is suited to the circumstances of the country or not. Well, I think I would attach more value to the opinion of the Honourable the Home Member than I would to those of all the Prime Ministers that have held office ever since the beginning of Parliament up to this date. Why? Because he knows what I know, perhaps more. My only trouble with him is that I cannot get him to feel as I feel. My trouble with Parliament, with Prime Ministers and with the British public is that I cannot impart to them the knowledge which my friend the Honourable the Home Member possesses. Then there is the British public. It has been said that the British people must also be taken to have set their seal of approval upon these reforms, because there have been these frequent changes of Government. Well, Sir, I should have imagined that this rapid succession of Prime Ministers and Governments only went unmistakably to show that your home politics are in a hopeless muddle and that you cannot either afford the time or have the inclination to pay attention to matters outside, strictly speaking, the circle of your home politics, such as India and Dominion status for India. But however that may be, it is

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a fact which I know personally, and which my friend Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya also knows, as we have both tried to gain a hearing at the bar of the august body known as the British people or the British public, that it is impossible under the best of conditions for Indians to secure a hearing in that great tribunal. We tried to do so and everybody knows how miserably we failed. It is impossible for us to approach that body. We can approach the Prime Minister; we can approach the Secretary of State; we can approach the Honourable the Home Member here and the other Government Members but the British public is altogether intangible and is something like the will-o'-the-wisp, which the further we follow the further it recedes. That is our experience. We therefore decided for want of anything better to depend upon ourselves and that is what we are doing.

Now, Sir, the process laid down is nothing, I submit, but a reversal of the natural order of things. What the Government of India Act provides is that an extraneous authority has the right to determine the stages, the manner, the measure and the time for the advance of a nation to attain its freedom. I do not think there is anyone who will question now or seriously argue against the proposition that if there is anything by which nations and communities—big and small—should be governed and should be guided, it is their own will. The House will be pleased to observe that clause 3 of my amendment has a direct reference to and is suggested by the right of self-determination. Now, that is the principle which we want the British Government and Parliament to accept. That is the principle which it will be for the round table conference first to say whether it is prepared to recommend and then for the new Legislature which I propose in the third clause of my amendment to accept.

Now, Sir, I may briefly explain clauses 2 and 3. It will be observed that we have left out all details and we did so because we thought they would more properly form the subject of subsequent negotiations and subsequent conversations. But I must make it perfectly clear that the representative round table conference mentioned in clause 2 must be really representative to the satisfaction of this House. It was intended at first to mention certain proportions but it was subsequently decided to drop them and to leave the word 'representative' there. That, I submit, is an essential condition of that clause of the amendment. Then, when we come to clause 3, I find that there is an amendment to that amendment of mine which is proposed by Dr. Gour. I do not know what his reasons are for omitting that clause because his amendment simply seeks to drop the third clause of my amendment. I wish to hear his reasons when he moves it and, if I have no right of reply, I hope some Honourable Member who will hear his reasons will be able to reply to him. For the present however I content myself by saying that that clause affords the only reason for having a conference and provides the only way by which you can ascertain the will of the people. I can understand a certain amount of nervousness on the part of my friend about another general election, but I can assure him that he will receive the same assistance as he did last time—(Laughter)—if he withdraws his amendment.

Another reason why we want this new Legislature to be elected is the same as was put forward by the Honourable the Home Member. He wants the best of India to agree to anything that is to be done so that there will be no future difficulties on the score of the constitution or of the rules.

or of the exact rights which are going to be taken by us or given by the Government as it likes to put it. Now, I want also the best of India to come to this Legislature. As we are all aware, many of our best men are suffering from disqualifications and have not been able to contest the elections. I want them to be here. As for the proposal of my friend, the Home Member, that he wants the best of the people to agree to the arrangement, I can only say that it will all depend upon the manner in which the best of India is approached or if, I may put it the other way, in which the advances or the approach made by the best of India are received by the Government.

Now, I shall try to answer the questions which have been put by the Honourable the Home Member. I will first make the general observation that all these questions are really answered by the terms of the amendment which I have put forward before the House, because there is nothing in that amendment, as I said before, which asks that something should be done to-day without consulting the very interests, the very persons which the Honourable the Home Member mentioned are very necessary to be consulted. His first question was: Is this Dominion status to be confined to India or will it include Indian States as well, and, if so, on what terms? I say it all depends on our preliminary conversations. If the Indian States want to come in, let us have their representatives too. If they do not want to come in, we do not want them. All the questions that have been put are, I submit, sufficiently answered by one or the other clause of my amendment.

Then the next thing was that Dominion status of course implies protection of the Dominion by its own armies. I do realise that and we are perfectly willing to confer with you as to how that may be done. We do require men to protect our Dominion with our own armies, but is it at all fair on your part to turn to us whom you have deprived even the use of arms, who cannot even have such training in the use of arms as you give in your schools and colleges? And why, because you have prohibited it. I say, is it fair of you to turn round and tell us "You have got to be armed; you have no Army and therefore you cannot have Dominion status." What Army have you got? Is it not the Indian Army—I do not say it is the sole Army that protects us but is it not the largest factor in the British Army in India? I need not go into what the Indian Army has achieved because that is a very long story and everybody knows it. Were they Indian soldiers or were they not?

When it comes to the carrying on of the government, I find three distinguished countrymen of mine on the Government benches. You talk of Hindu-Moslem differences. Well, without prying into official secrets, I think I may ask for information whether these three gentlemen—one from Bengal, the other from the Panjab and the third from Madras—whether these gentlemen, when deciding matters relating to the administration, have been flying at each other's throats in the Executive Council Chamber. I mean, what is there that cannot be done if of course the proper steps are taken; and it is the taking of the proper steps upon which we lay special insistence. The steps may take some time; I do not say that everything has to be accomplished in a night. But to say that you are not entitled to it and you will not get it because we have said so—that is a position of great unfairness to which we are not going to submit.

Then the next question is, there are these communal differences. Of course communal differences there are. Unfortunately they exist. We

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have not denied them. But as my friend the Honourable the Home Member has read an extract from the Congress Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee, where the existence of these communal differences has been admitted, perhaps he will like to hear what he has overlooked—the remedy suggested and the reason for it.

Now in that report we find—paragraph 70 begins thus (I have not got the report but I read from the Annual Register):

“The Prime Minister of England in the famous speech recently delivered by him in the House of Commons has thus justified the maintenance of the Indian Civil Service for all time to come :

‘There is great variety of races and creeds in India, probably greater variety than in the whole of Europe. There are innumerable divisive forces there, and if Britain withdrew her strong hand, nothing would ensue except divisions, strife, conflict and anarchy.’”

The report proceeds :

“Now the strong hand of Britain is the ‘British Civil Service in India’. Remove the cause of ‘divisions, strife, conflict and anarchy’ and you take away the sole justification for the continuation of that distinguished service. There can be no question that inter-communal differences constitute the sole cause of ‘divisions, strife, conflict and anarchy’ and that inter-communal unity which means the removal of that cause means also the removal of all justification for the continuance of the Civil Service.”

Then, after dealing with the causes, the Committee go on to say :

“The only radical cure for the disease is the entire elimination of the mischief-maker ; but that, in view of the conflict of interests we have pointed out above, cannot happen unless and until the costly maintenance of the Indian Civil Service ceases to depend upon ‘divisions, strife, conflict and anarchy’ ; in other words, unless and until Swarajya is fully established. It is only then that the mischief-maker will lose his occupation and think of some other opening for his activities.”

But, Sir, it is said by my learned friend that in spite of these differences he is willing to have some sort of inquiry. He has excluded certain things, however, from that inquiry, namely, the question of the immediate grant of Dominion status, and he has not given us full information as to what are the questions on which he would go to this Committee for inquiry. He has indicated that the advance that is necessary may be found within the four corners of the Act itself or that it may be necessary even to recast some portions of the Government of India Act; but not wholly modify it as is demanded by the Resolution of my friend and by my amendment. That is a question, Sir, which does not arise at the present moment.

I should like to say one more word, Sir, before I sit down and that is that the opportunity which this occasion offers is an opportunity which should not be thrown away either by the Government or by us. It will serve no useful purpose to continue the state of things which has existed during the last few years. The Government is very well aware that there is a section of the public of India which cannot be entirely ignored and which demands for the country certain rights and is prepared to put those rights before you, but is not likely to be frightened away by threats. It is not prepared to submit to conditions which are foreign to its policy, but is fully prepared to bear all the consequences of its action, action which it has decided upon after mature and deliberate consideration. I say this simply because the tone of the debate as set by my friend, Mr. Rangachariar, was different to the tone of the debate as modified by the Honourable the Home Member. I have said already, and I repeat it again, that we are not here to threaten anybody, nor even in our activities outside is it any part of our

business to threaten anybody, and I submit that what is taken as a threat certainly was not intended to be a threat. All that we want is that you should consider the proposition which we place before you in the same mood without saying that this thing or that thing will happen to us. It must be remembered that we, some of us at least, have burnt our boats behind us. We take our stand upon these rights, and it does not matter to us in the least what happens so long as we go on rendering such service to our country as we believe our country is entitled to.

Now, Sir, I do not propose to go into the distinction, the fine distinction, which the Honourable the Home Member has drawn between responsible Government and Dominion status and all the rest of it, but all I ask, and the whole object of my remarks is, that the Honourable the Home Member should reconsider his observations in regard to the conditions that he wants to impose upon either a Committee or a Conference or other agency which may be appointed. If he can see eye to eye with me on that point, if he agrees to remove all the conditions on behalf of the Government, then it will be for the Conference to make recommendations. The Government will be represented and every possible interest will be represented.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Sir, I hope you will pardon my saying one word. I was very loathe to interrupt the Honourable Member in the speech so thoughtfully phrased with such facility. He once or twice referred to the fact that I had mentioned the word 'threat'. You will bear me out when I say that I mentioned it only to discount it.

Pandit Motilal Nehru: I accept it.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I am glad, Sir, because I should be very unwilling indeed that we should discuss between us a question of such vital importance with the atmosphere of threats behind us. I accept it fully that the Honourable Member did not think that I had that in my mind and I now know that he has not had it in his mind.

Pandit Motilal Nehru: Sir, I can assure the Honourable the Home Member that I fully accept what he says. It is not that I thought he was giving any threats, but he mentioned those threats and I took him to mean certain things which had been mentioned outside the House.

Mr. President: Honourable Members are aware that, when we meet on Friday, which is not our usual practice, we as a rule adjourn for longer than the usual hour in order to meet the wishes of an important section in this House. I propose, therefore, now to adjourn till 3 o'clock, and, when we resume business, I shall probably have to remind the House of the existence of Standing Order 62.

The Assembly then adjourned for Lunch till Three of the Clock.

The Assembly re-assembled after Lunch at Three of the Clock, Mr. President in the Chair.

Sir Campbell Rhodes (Bengal; European): Sir, the chief point in favour of the Resolution before the House is the fact that it is moved by one who has done more probably during the last three years than any other

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man on this side of the House to work the reforms. I am sorry to hear from him to-day that, following a visit to the plains of Raisina last Sunday, he has contracted that terrible disease of pessimism, from which I hope he will shortly recover. Now, Sir, if I am to sum up his Resolution and the amendment moved by my Honourable friend, I might do so in the well known words, "An infant"—and when I say an infant I hope the Honourable Member will understand that I am attributing to him merely the qualities of innocence and purity—"an infant crying in the night, an infant crying for the light, and with no language but a cry". The Pandit has expressed his thanks to the Mover of the Resolution for the welcome he gave him here to-day. May I join in that welcome and may I tell the Pandit, as I said in an article I recently wrote, that the absence of him and his friends, I felt, was a real loss to the last Assembly. Pandit Moti Lal Nehru told us this morning that the Act was bad. I am not standing up this afternoon to say that the Act is good. No Act, which is of a very transitional nature, can ever be considered good. But it is better than the Government of England Act, for that Act does not exist. The Pandit despises conventions. I defy him to tell of any progress in the world that has been brought about in any other way than by conventions. But this Act, good or bad, is before us and one of the conditions of that Act is that a Commission shall eventually come out to see whether it is desirable to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible government then existing. In his famous pronouncement of 20th August 1917, Mr. Montagu said :

"I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples must be judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility."

It is, therefore, a question of convincing the British Parliament of our co-operation, of our proper use of the powers we have and of the need for a further advance. That responsibility the British Parliament can delegate only to a Royal Commission for report and to no one else. Pandit Motilal Nehru has told us this morning not to neglect a certain section of the people. The British Parliament cannot afford either to neglect a certain section of people which numbers 240,000,000 souls. Coming now to the speech of the Mover of the amendment I can only sum up his very dignified and lucid exposition as a demand and a statement of the consequences of refusal. It is, therefore, as we stand before the tribunal of the British Parliament, a question not of voting but of argument. The British Parliament when it has to consider what effect will have to be given to this Resolution, if carried, will naturally look at the debate which took place on this proposal to see what arguments have been advanced in favour of the Resolution. Let us go into that evidence together. I think that the Honourable Mover of the Resolution and I am certain my Honourable friend the Pandit in his amendment are in considerable doubt as to whether we have now before us such evidence as should win our case. Otherwise why this disinclination to accept the findings of an impartial body? They fear that the British Parliament will say to them: "We have set before you a dish of reform. Some of you have nibbled at it, some of you have not touched it at all, and you all with one voice say, 'Take it away and bring us the second course.'"

Now, Sir, what is our evidence with regard to the provinces? How has responsible government prospered there? My own experience is chiefly in the province where I have spent twenty-seven years of my life. There I find that the fundamental drawback to the present system of dyarchy is that the members will not support their Ministers. I said recently in an article which I wrote—I said it because I believed it, I said it because I wanted to see if it would be challenged :

“ It is doubtful whether there is to-day a single Indian politician to whom either the Viceroy or the Governors of Provinces can entrust a portfolio in full confidence that the new Minister would command for any length of time the loyal support of a majority of his fellow Members in his Council.”

I went on to say that there were many men in India who were worthy of that support. No, Sir, there is not at the present moment that union amongst the Members themselves in support of their Ministers which is the fundamental basis of all responsible self-Government. There is union only in destruction. My Honourable friend the Pandit told us this morning that, when they drafted their amendment, their idea was to be constructive and to put forward the proportionate representation of the various bodies which would sit round his proposed round table but they decided to leave that over. I gather from his speech that he and his party have decided to leave all awkward questions over and only so long as it is a question of destruction, can they be unanimous. But the minute any constructive proposal comes in, then divided counsels appear. Now, Sir, taking again my own province I do not think we are ready for full provincial autonomy. I was told the other day, by a man who knows, that there is more crime in Bengal to-day than on the frontier. The Police Department is at present in Bengal not transferred. Mr. C. R. Das, who is not a pillar of this House but whom I might describe, I think, as a flying buttress of one of the parties, spoke in the Bengal Council recently and made the extraordinary admission that only the other day he had received pledges from some young man who had belonged to revolutionary societies that he would not take part in violent activities. Mr. Das said that, in spite of this pledge given to Mr. Das, the police had arrested him. One of Mr. Das's party in the same debate said that Regulation III had deprived him of some of his best friends. He thus explained the use of firearms in Bengal :

“ They were smuggled into the country. They were cheap and people had a romantic attraction for arms because they were forbidden these arms. These arms came into the possession of young men and they could understand some misguided youths might collect associates and carry on a business which they thought would serve the best interests of the country.”

I have never before seen revolution explained in such beautiful terms; and yet the Bengal Council insisted on the passing of the Goondas Act which allowed the deportation of men without trial. Personally, it is a matter of indifference to me when the time of my assassination comes whether I am stabbed in the back by a goonda for the sake of my watch and chain or shot in the back by a young man, a friend of one of Mr. C. R. Das's friends, in mistake for a Government official. Parliament has got to consider the communal aspect of the question. The result of the reform scheme has and must necessarily have been that all sections of the community have become more alive to political rights and in Bengal to-day the position as between the Hindu and Muhammadan is very serious. My Hindu friends complain to me that at the present moment they can get practically no offices in the Legislative Department. They complain that they cannot get the number of posts to which their

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education entitles them. The Muhammadans complain that they cannot get the number of posts to which their numbers entitle them. We have therefore unless it is carefully handled, a very serious situation. The danger is that with full provincial autonomy one party would be in the ascendancy and the other might suffer, with the consequence, the inevitable consequence, that a strong and independent police force under the Executive would be absolutely essential, for the alternative to a strong police force under the Executive is the employment of the military, called in perhaps to do something which will not appeal to them in the way of putting down an agitation due to these unfortunate communal differences; and there is one thing we do not want, that is, every Englishman does not want, and I think our Indian friends too, namely, that, owing to the weakness of Government, we should find ourselves up against a military dictatorship. Now, as regards the Central Legislature, I think we can pride ourselves on having done more useful work. His Excellency the Viceroy has given his testimony to that fact. But here again we have only been unanimous in our destruction; and we have failed time after time, with some very notable exceptions, to be unanimous in construction. There have been no regular leaders, there have been no regular parties. There has not been that traditional support of the Government to which every Government is entitled, and without which a Government cannot put forward its best efforts. We were told during a debate the other day that the Executive Government here is not responsible to this House. I think the Finance Member told us so when at that very time he was moving a Bill which, as he informed us he could not put into force without the consent of this House. He was putting up a Bill which he said would confer powers on him which he would not have but for this House; and, further, he was telling us that we had powers at any time to repeal the Act. We have therefore considerable responsible government already. The present House is untried. This is not the time, before we know what the House is going to do, to decide on our evidence to put before a Royal Commission. There are two questions which the Honourable the Home Member asked which have not been answered. In fact I gather from the Pandit that here again these questions are not going to be answered by himself or by his party. If they are not, the Houses of Parliament will assume that there is no answer to these questions, that there is no evidence ready to put before a Commission, and that therefore it will be a waste of time for this Commission to come out. There is the question of the Army,—and my Honourable friend from Bengal told us that there was going to be a serious war in Asia within the next three years. There is the question of the Indian States. There is the question of turning the Civil Services out from their present position into one of similarity to the permanent staff at home. And here, Sir, I would like to pay a tribute to the Leader of the House for the way in which during the last three years he has endeavoured to make these reforms a success. Those who have worked with him have paid that tribute before, but I do not think that this debate should be barren of some tribute to him and his Colleagues, Indian and European, for the way in which they have attempted, and not unsuccessfully, to work the reforms. Only yesterday the Finance Member had to intervene to prevent one province flying at the throat of another. The time, therefore, Sir, I submit, is not ripe. We have to work together within the Act; as I have tried to show elsewhere, we have ample opportunities of developing practically all the conventions of the present British constitution.

Some of my community think that it would be a breach of faith with them, who have accepted the reforms unwillingly but accepted and tried to work them, if there were any attempt to bring out a Royal Commission within the 10 years. Personally, I am not in favour of any period. It is a question not of a period but of the progress we make. And in conclusion, Sir, I would like to say, as I have said elsewhere, a responsible House will very soon find itself in a position of responsibility. My Honourable friend the Pandit says that the Congress will not rest until Swaraj is attained. So I understood him. I hope the Congress will not rest. I hope the Congress will pursue a path of constructive policy, not destructive, and all of us on this side, certainly the community that I represent, very many of us who have been brought up, as the Home Member said, in a spirit of liberalism at Home, will work earnestly with them to attain full responsible government as soon as we ourselves are responsible and able to work it.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas (Indian Merchants' Chamber and Bureau: Indian Commerce): May I ask the Honourable the Home Member to make clear to the House what reference he made to the appointment of a Committee by Government in his speech? I discovered during lunch time that there were some misapprehensions as to exactly what he said, and I think it would help the discussion very materially if he does not mind making it clear.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I made no reference to the appointment of a Committee. I said that we should institute inquiry with the assistance of the Local Governments into difficulties and defects in the actual working of the Act in practice. I said further that, when our proposals had been formulated and were ready for presentation to Parliament, then, at that stage, we would ask the Secretary of State to give the very fullest opportunity for discussion in the Legislature and elsewhere of these proposals before they were presented to Parliament.

Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas: Purely departmental inquiries, I take it.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: That is so.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar (Madras ceded districts and Chittoor: Non-Muhammadan Rural): Sir, I have to my credit two amendments on the agenda paper, and, before proceeding to these amendments and what I have got to say about them, I wish to say a few words upon the remarks that have fallen from the various speakers who have preceded me. Sir, Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar in moving the Resolution has prefaced it by saying that by exercising his will power over the ballot box he was able to bring out this as the first of the non-official Resolutions in this Assembly. But I would remind him, Sir, that, in addition to his own will, there was a still higher will that operated. There was the will of that mighty soul which is engaged in a weak and emaciated frame, which was rendering penance during the last two years in the Yerawada jail. It is that *tapas* which fructified and opened the eyes of God towards the woes of India, so much so that the inanimate ballot box of this Assembly has taken now a national soul and a national life. Therefore, Sir, I give credit to that supreme influence which is now exercising and which is bound to exercise its influence towards the fruition of Indian aspirations.

Sir, this question, willingly or unwillingly, is bound to take two turns—one a racial question and another which I shall presently mention. The other day His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief told us that the racial

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distinction is not found anywhere outside this Assembly but only in this Assembly. May I remind, him, Sir, that this Assembly is nothing more than a mere mirror of the world outside. It is only a phenomenon and not the noumenon in itself, and I daresay His Excellency meant only a joke and never believed that the distinction was nowhere except in this Assembly; otherwise as the Scotch adage goes "a sooth boord will be no board; a true joke will be no joke." Sir, there is another aspect which this discussion is likely to take. It is likely to draw the House into a division between two kinds of electorate that we have got. There is the electorate of all people who represent the 350 millions of India. The electorate composed of them will be on one side. And there is that powerful electorate called the 'Viceregal Lodge' on the other. But I am certain that on all hands it must be conceded that the time is ripe for India to get its own fullest stature as a nation. Sir, the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey passed some observations which I must answer as best I can and leave the rest to the doyens of the party like Pandit Motilal Nehru inside and Deshabandhu Das outside. Sir, the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey observed that among the various difficulties that we will have to face before the Government becomes responsible is the interest of the European commerce and of the European capital in this country. Sir, I may say that the European capitalists. . . .

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: If the Honourable Member will excuse me, may I interrupt him for a minute. I merely said that European capital and commerce in this country would like to know our decision. Nothing more than that.

Mr. C. Duraiswami Aiyangar: Apart from any observation on his part I may also mention to this House that if India gets self-government, if India gets responsible government, the European interests in this country will be quite as safe and certainly safer than the Indian capital is under the present Government. (Hear, hear.) Sir, it is this country that has produced a man about whom it has been said by no less a person than Colonel Wedgwood:

"If ever India happens to be governed by Gandhi, that land will be governed more according to the Sermon on the Mount than any other land on earth."

This is an extract from what he said in his book on the 'Indo-British Commonwealth.' And, Sir, I may add that India under the inspiration of Gandhi is likely to produce many more Gandhis of his type and, when full responsible government is bestowed on India, the interests of every community will be safe, the interests of every nation and every race will be safe, and it can certainly be said that India is not a land of revenge or retaliation. Sir, the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey has also taken serious objection to the fact that this proposition of Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar is opposed to the Government of India Act. It is the very thing which he wants. He wants a revision of the Government of India Act and not that we should proceed under the Government of India Act.

Then, Sir, he has put four questions to this Assembly. He says that, if this full responsible government is introduced, what will become of the Indian States? Sir, I have not the slightest objection that the Indian States will be able to move quite as freely and happily with the responsible Indian Government as they have been doing, or even better than they have been doing, till now.

Then, there is one thing more, that is the protection of minorities. He has indented upon the differences which are supposed to exist between the Hindus and Muhammadans. Differences did exist, but I am certain they are disappearing now, and, if Sir Malcolm Hailey is still in the dreamland of carrying on this Government on the *divide et impera* policy, I am sure, Sir, he is mistaken. The times are drawing near when Hindu-Moslem unity will become an established fact, and has almost become so already, and the fact that there are some differences here and there need not trouble anybody. Sir, there is one other matter about which I want to say a word with reference to his observations on the question of the Dominion army, with reference to the question whether India is competent to control an army of its own. I may ask, was it with a view to raise this objection to-day, Sir, that these gentlemen were raising an objection to the proposition of Mr. Venkatapatiraju yesterday? It is certain that full responsible government takes along with it the control of the army also. I feel quite certain, as I have said elsewhere to the Honourable Mr. Sastri, that India, when it is prepared to take up full responsible government, is equally prepared to take up the army also. The Indian army has already distinguished itself. India does not contain totally all cowardly Brahmins like myself, but it contains Kshatriyas and Singhs, and I am certain, Sir, that the Indian Army will be able to build up quite as strong a fortification as any other army on the face of the earth.

Then, there is the question of social and political problems. He has also drawn our attention to the fact that the educated people are exercising considerable dominion over the masses, and the masses are not up to date. Sir, he is mistaken. Probably it was the fact some years ago, but after the movement of Mahatma Gandhi came in, it is the masses who are controlling the educated section and not the educated section that is controlling the masses. People who have experience like myself of having gone to village after village for the purpose of this electioneering campaign at least, if not for any other purpose, will tell you the questions which the masses were putting to us as to whether we are standing up for full responsible government, and, unless we are going to get full Dominion status, they are not going to elect us. The result of the recent elections demonstrate the fact how those who have not been moving with the movement of to-day, with the current of the National Congress, have not been able to come back here except here and there through a back door. Those who have been defeated and are sitting at home to-day are meditating within themselves, "Had I but served the country with half the zeal with which I served the bureaucracy, I would have been in a better position to-day." Is that not proof positive that the masses are far in advance of the educated gentlemen in these days, I mean only so-called educated, because English education counts for nothing in these days? I can assure the Honourable Member that the masses are far in advance of us, and there is absolutely no fear that they want the tutelage of the bureaucracy any longer.

Sir, I wish to say only one word before I sit down on the points which I have raised by way of amendment. I may at once tell this Assembly that I do not propose to press my amendment, and I have committed myself, as a member of an honourable party, that has been formed, that I will not press my amendment, but I will join with the amendment that has been moved so ably, so calmly by my friend Pandit Motilal Nehru. However, I must draw the attention of the Assembly to the reason why I put forward two amendments. One was for the purpose of eliminating from

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Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar's proposition the words "at a very early date," and "including the procuring of a Royal Commission." It was to these two portions that I raised objection. So far as the question of substituting the words "at a very early date" by the word "forthwith" goes, my reason was simply this. I have not been a usual customer in the official Chamber nor do I know the code language they use directly, but from the little I have learned from outside the Chamber, I have always come to understand that the expression "at a very early date" has a distinct meaning altogether in their dictionary. "At a very early date," to my mind, to the extent of the knowledge which I have acquired of their dictionary, means "at a very late date," and includes "never." It was that fear that made me put forward that amendment that "at a very early date" must be substituted by the word "forthwith." "At a very early date" may mean even "years hence," and, if they accept your Resolution, they may say they are carrying on correspondence; they may say they are sending despatches; they may say they are going through papers; and all this correspondence may continue up to 1929, when eventually the Royal Commission is likely to come or bound to come under the Government of India Act.

The latest date for that Commission coming will be probably the 31st December 1929, and on the 1st January 1930 the Assembly which will then exist may send a New Year greeting to that Commission saying "Sirs, you are the direct outcome of a pious hope or rather a pious Resolution which my grandfather passed on the 8th of February 1924." It is that which prevailed in my mind when I put forward that amendment requiring the words "at an early date" to be substituted by the expression "forthwith."

My objection to the requesting or the solicitation of a Royal Commission was simply this. I have always considered that there have been four nightmares sitting tight on the progress of India. They are Royal Commissions, Round Table Conferences, deputations and—I forget the fourth (*Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetty*: "Committees")—and mixed Committees. I thank my Honourable friend for reminding me; he remembers what I mentioned elsewhere. Sir, these four things have been sitting always as nightmares on the progress of Indian aspirations and until we get rid of them, we are not likely to improve nor are we likely to get the emancipation of this country. Stages there must be for them but not before a definite pronouncement is made upon our demand. Royal Commissions and Round Table Conferences are chambers of bargain; but ours must be a *kharar* transaction, a "fixed price" transaction. Pandit Motilal Nehru has made a demand for Dominion status or full responsible government being given. If that is accepted, then we will bargain about minor matters. But so long as that is not accepted, so long as Government invite you to a round table conference or to a round table dinner without meaning business,—Sir, I am always afraid of a round table conference.

Sir, so far as a Royal Commission is concerned, I ask what is the efficacy of asking for a Royal Commission? If you are making your stand upon the demand for Dominion status, once that is conceded there is absolutely no room for a Royal Commission. A Royal Commission means coming all the way from England to India to investigate how far we have progressed in our lessons, to hold an examination to see what percentage of marks we get. If that is the purpose, your demand is gone; but, if you stand upon

your demand, there is no efficacy in a Royal Commission being invited all the way from England to India when you want to revise the Government of India Act in accordance with the concession of Dominion status. The Royal Commission would then have to come only to teach us grammar and punctuation in the Government of India Act. Are you going to invite them for that purpose? Even if that is so—I mean even if you invite them for the sake of punctuation, the Royal Commission may come here and put a “full stop” before the sentence instead of after the sentence. I am therefore strongly afraid of a Royal Commission being invited. It was for these reasons that I put forward these two amendments, and I believe that every elected Member of this Legislative Assembly understands the definite demand that is made in the first portion of the amendment proposed by Pandit Motilalji. It is understood, I think, that, unless that is conceded, we have no room for bargaining at all. We understand full well that India cannot rise to the fullest stature of a nation until she gets rid of the trinity in unity which is now governing us. That trinity in unity is militarism, capitalism and imperialism in the unity of the present Government. We must get rid of that. Then we can claim brotherhood in the Indo-British Commonwealth, equal partnership in the Indo-British Commonwealth. Let us take our stand upon that. Let us not bargain until that is conceded. I therefore, Sir, do not press my amendments, because I understand that all this is involved and is implicitly understood by passing the Resolution of Pandit Motilal Nehru.

Dr. H. S. Gour: Sir, Honourable Members who are new to this House will not remember perhaps that a Resolution was moved and passed without a single dissentient voice calling for the appointment of a Royal Commission before 1929, and, if that Resolution was not moved by the then Home Member, he and the Treasury Benches were consenting parties to it. Well, Sir, after that Resolution unanimously passed by the vote of this House and to which the Government stood committed, I confess to a great pain and disappointment at the speech of the present Home Member. I should have expected that following in the wake of his predecessor in office he would also accept a Resolution worded upon the same lines to which his predecessor gave his ready assent. (*The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey:* “Is that Mr. Rangachariar’s Resolution?”) I am referring to Mr. Mujumdar’s Resolution. Well, Sir, far from giving his assent to a Resolution for further advance, the Honourable the Home Member has indulged in what I am bound to call special pleading. He tells us that there are insuperable difficulties which have to be taken into account in connection either with Mr. Rangachariar’s Resolution or the various amendments to that Resolution. He speaks of the Indian States, of the minorities, of European commerce, of the social progress, of the Civil Service in India, and last but not least, of the internal and external defence of the country. Now, Sir, I ask the Honourable the Home Member if these difficulties loom large to-day, will they vanish and disappear in 1929, when, under the provisions of the present Government of India Act, a Royal Commission shall come out and decide upon the question of further Reforms? I ask the Honourable the Home Member, will the differences between the various communities settle themselves within the short space of five years? Will India be prepared for this advance within that period and will all the difficulties which he has categorised disappear in that time?

But, Sir, I am perfectly certain that the Honourable the Home Member realises, as we do, that all these difficulties are difficulties which, as the Honourable Pandit Motilal Nehru has pointed out, are for the consideration

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of the Conference. No political progress of the country can be retarded merely because there is a minority not sufficient educated to take advantage of it. In the constitutional progress of the country, surely there must be difficulties, but these are not difficulties which the constructors of a constitution can regard as invincible and insuperable. Well, Sir, I have said that I have listened to the Honourable the Home Member's speech with a feeling of great disappointment. I should have expected that the Honourable the Home Member would say 'you want further advance; we, the Government, stand committed to the Government of India Act, under the terms of which a Royal Commission must investigate the question of further advance. That Commission must come to this country within five years' time.' Sir, what is five years in the life of a nation? We should have the Commission now, and that Commission will investigate the line of further advance. Surely, Sir, if the Honourable the Home Member had encouraged this House in a spirit of compromise, I am perfectly certain that we, on this side of the House, would have said that the Government is in a compromising mood. But, when we find the Honourable the Home Member resisting every attempt made on this side of the House for Conventions and Conferences and lastly even for a Committee, and when Government merely say that they will hold an executive inquiry in which the Provinces will be consulted and then they will determine as to what further advance they must advise the Secretary of State to recommend to Parliament, I ask the Honourable the Home Member how long will such an inquiry take? Can he stand bail for the fact that such an inquiry would be completed any time within five years? Can he give an assurance to this House that while this inquiry is proceeding that transitory period of the Government of India Act will not have run out and that a Royal Commission would be appointed by Parliament to investigate as required by the Act?—And suppose for the sake of argument, if this inquiry is pending, would it not be said by the Government of India that they are making inquiries into the matter as a preliminary investigation, and that the Royal Commission should be withheld till the inquiry is completed? I see, Sir, danger in this inquiry. I further ask, suppose for the sake of argument this inquiry completes its investigation and makes a Report, will it dispense, with the appointment of a Royal Commission? Does the Honourable the Home Member imply that the recommendation he would send to the Secretary of State for presentation to Parliament would be given the shape of a Statute without a Commission visiting this country? These are matters upon which the Honourable the Home Member has thrown no light.

In these circumstances, Sir, I don't think this House will feel surprised if this inquiry is an inquiry which is not likely to advance the cause of further political progress in this country. We are further told that it will be competent for these inquirers to report whether further progress within the comprehension of the existing Government of India Act is possible and should not be made. I again ask the Honourable the Home Member to remember what this Assembly did on the 18th of July last and what his reply was not three days ago. This House decided by a substantial majority that further progress in the direction of political reform in this country within the comprehension of the existing Government of India Act should be immediately made. The Government of India assured this House a few days ago that they had sent a Despatch with a full report of the debates in this Assembly to the Secretary of State but that they had received no reply. It is a matter of 8 months that they have

received no reply. I ask the Honourable the Home Member, suppose an inquiry is set on foot and they send up a Despatch to the Secretary of State after 3, 4 or 5 years, what guarantee is there that the Secretary of State will then give a reply to the Government of India and how will the Government of India vindicate their position if their Despatch to the Secretary of State is received with cold silence? I submit, Sir, we have no guarantee that this inquiry will lead to anything, and I therefore think I must press my amendment.

The Honourable Pandit Motilal Nehru, in opposing my amendment, confessed to being ignorant of the reasons that have led me to formulate it. I shall therefore briefly explain my reasons to the House. Honourable Members will find that, if they turn to clause 1 of Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment, if they omit the words "have the Government of India Act revised with a view to" in the first clause, it will improve the first paragraph, which seems to me absolutely and wholly redundant in view of the fact that the Government of India are not asked to revise the Government of India Act or to get it revised without, for the purpose, convening a round table conference and that round table conference will then formulate a scheme which will be presented to the people. Thereafter there will be a dissolution of the Central Legislature and the newly elected Members of the Central Legislature will approve of that scheme. Consequently, I submit that the main object which the Pandit has in view is to see that there is a Parliamentary Statute which will be the culmination of the scheme and which, I submit, therefore, is rightly placed at the end. But this is only a verbal change. I have weightier objections to Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment and I shall briefly state them to you. Honourable Members will find that two stages are enumerated in clauses (a) and (b). First in chronological sequence there is to be a conference. If the conference decides upon a scheme, then there will be a dissolution, and after dissolution, the scheme prepared by the Conference must receive the approval of a newly elected Legislature. Now, I ask the Panditji that supposing that the Conference does not agree as to the scheme, what will become of the whole of his amendment? The Government will say, "We have loyally carried out your amendment. We have convened a Conference." Sir Campbell Rhodes opposed the reforms when they were introduced and he opposes a further advance to-day. He and the members of his community are hostile to further advance. How can we possibly have a scheme so long as we have such political reactionaries in this House? I submit that, if the Conference decides nothing, the whole of the amendment falls to the ground. I therefore submit that the House should be cautious in passing an amendment which is likely to have such a short life. But assuming for the sake of argument that the Conference decides upon a scheme and it is submitted to the country and the country then returns a fresh Central Legislature and they disapprove of it upon grounds upon which you and I would not agree, then again the scheme comes to nothing. What is then to happen? The Government of India will say, "We have carried out your amendment. We have convened a Conference. They do not agree." There the scheme ends. If we have a newly elected Central Legislature that disapproves of your scheme, then your scheme goes to the wind. I therefore suggest, Sir, that this scheme as stated in Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment is likely to have a very short life. For that reason I have removed from his amendment those details which are likely to embarrass and destroy the main purpose which he has in view.

[Dr. H. S. Gour.]

Well, Sir, I should like to say a word or two in reply to my esteemed friend Sir Campbell Rhodes. He has not disguised the fact that he has been opposed to the Reforms and he does not now disguise the fact that he is opposed to a further advance. But if he had rest content with expressing his views without giving his reasons, I should have thought better of it. But when he descends into giving reasons, those reasons, Honourable Members will see, are not for delaying further advance but for denying them altogether and for all time. My friend will shudder from that conclusion himself because I do not think that with his professed liberal view in English politics and while in England, he will not possess even a vestige of liberalism to admit that some degree of political progress must be made in the fruition of time, though not now, at least in 1929. I was rather surprised to find a close family likeness between the reasons which he has given and those which the Honourable the Home Member categorises as insuperable impediments to further advance.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: "Not insuperable", Sir.

Dr. H. S. Gour: I am very glad to hear that these are not insuperable impediments. I think I forgot to mention that Mr. Montagu, 4 P.M. when introducing the Government of India Act, pointed out to the House of Commons at the time in these weighty words:

"I cannot reiterate too often that the basis of the whole policy is its transitional nature. You want to lead on to something else at the earliest possible moment."

And, speaking of the familiar objection raised by the Honourable the Home Member and raised in Parliament as to the incapacity of the Indian people to defend themselves, he said as follows:

"You must expect to see political life develop throughout India. Do not deny to India self-government because she cannot take her proper share in her own defence and then deny to her people the opportunity of learning to defend themselves."

Well, Sir, I commend these words of the then Secretary of State to the notice of the Honourable the Home Member in reply to his objections. It has also been said that this Royal Commission is expected in 1929. On a question being asked of the Secretary of State, he pointed out that the intention of the Act was that a Royal Commission must visit in 1929, not that it may not visit before. He said:

"There can always be a Commission appointed in the interim. What the Act says is that there must be a Commission appointed at the end of ten years."

Well, Sir, I can only say that I feel unconvinced by the arguments of the Honourable the Home Member and I think that if these arguments are sound they are sound not for opposing the Resolution to-day but for opposing it at any time. Turning to my friend Pandit Motilal Nehru I would ask him to accept my amendment for the reasons that I have given. If he is unable to do so, I have no doubt that some of his friends will be able to explain how his amendment is better than mine, in which case I shall be glad to vote for his amendment.

Mr. President: I understand the Honourable Member is moving his amendment?

Dr. H. S. Gour: With these words I move the amendment which runs as follows:

“ That for Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment the following be substituted :

‘ This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to take steps to establish full responsible Government in India and for the said purpose to summon at an early date a representative convention to prepare, with due regard to the protection of the rights and interests of important minorities, a scheme of a constitution for India, and submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a Statute.’ ”

Mr. President: Further amendment moved :

“ That for Pandit Motilal Nehru's amendment the following be substituted :

‘ This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to take steps to establish full responsible Government in India and for the said purpose to summon at an early date a representative convention to prepare, with due regard to the protection of the rights and interests of important minorities, a scheme of a constitution for India, and submit the same to the British Parliament to be embodied in a Statute.’ ”

Mr. M. A. Jinnah (Bombay City: Muhammadan Urban): In the first instance I should like to try and make the real issue before this House as clear as possible. After hearing the speech of the Honourable the Mover and the Home Member, I cannot share the opinion of those who say that the answer of the Government is disappointing, and my reasons are these. Under section 41 of the Government of India Act, 1919, it is laid down that a Commission shall be appointed at the end of ten years but it does not preclude, therefore, those who are in authority to institute an inquiry and appoint a Committee or a Commission earlier than ten years. Further, when Mr. Majumdar's Resolution was moved in this Assembly, two years ago, a formula was accepted unanimously by the Assembly itself. That formula expressly admitted that a Commission might be called earlier than ten years. I take it that, when the collective wisdom of that Assembly expressed that opinion, it must have expressed the opinion to reduce that period at least by two or three years, it cannot be a month or a week. Therefore, at any rate, the last Assembly, as it was constituted, expressed its opinion to that effect. Well, if you take 3 years, it will bring us to 1926. We are now in 1924, and to-day the Government have conceded, and I attach great importance to it, subject to the further remarks which I shall make later on, that they recognise the necessity of an immediate step being taken to examine, reconsider and revise the Government of India Act, 1919. I hope I understand the Home Member correctly. But he says that he will make a departmental inquiry. That is to say, if I understand the Home Member correctly and I stand corrected, he concedes the necessity of a step being taken forthwith, or at an early date. He says that the character of that step will be this, that they will make a departmental inquiry, that is to say, the Government of India will consult Local Governments or such persons as they may be advised, and they will formulate a scheme which they think proper. That scheme will then be submitted to the Secretary of State. After the despatches have gone backwards and forwards, the scheme will be placed before this Legislature and then it will be submitted to Parliament. Now, Sir, I recognise the first step, but I must say I cannot agree in this matter with the character of the procedure which was defined by the Home Member. Sir, just imagine: a scheme is to be formulated by a departmental inquiry which will, *ex hypothesi*, be framed in the secret conclave and the secret chambers of the Executive; the Government of India will take those decisions of formulating the proposals; after those proposals are formulated,

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they will go again to the Secretary of State for India. They will again be considered and examined behind closed doors at the India Office; and, when definite proposals have been formulated and serious decisions have been arrived at, you will then present that scheme to this Legislature,—with what chance of its being modified at that stage? I say it is an entirely wrong procedure to adopt. That is the fundamental difference between the Home Member and ourselves.

Now, Sir, I will not deal with the Resolution of Mr. Rangachariar, because I am in entire agreement with the amendment that is moved by Pandit Motilal Nehru. Now let us see what that amendment says. That amendment, first of all, asks the Government that they should take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full responsible government in India, and for that purpose, etc. Well, I shall not go into the constitutional gymnastics which the Home Member performed, by his fine distinction between Dominion status and full responsible government. I fail to understand exactly what is the distinction; it all depends upon how you define full responsible government. But, as I say, we are not concerned at the present with those highly technical constitutional questions; it is quite sufficient for my purpose, and I shall point out for the moment to the Home Member, as he was good enough to quote from the opinions of some of the public men, that he quoted me only partially, and he forgot that the answer quoted by him was given to a particular question; but I am sure that if he has read my evidence, he will, I think, have found that that very question as to what we mean by responsible government is answered by me and was the very first question that was put, and this is what I happened to say. I hope the House will excuse me for quoting from my own answer to the question, but I do so because the Home Member has quoted only part of it. This is what I said. The question was as follows:

“Do you accept the proposition that it is desirable to bring about the progressive realization of responsible government in India, and if so, how do you define the expression ‘responsible government’, and do you generally accept the proposition contained in the Preamble—(the answer I gave was as follows)—the proposition that it is desirable to bring about the progressive realization of responsible government in India is sound.”

That is my answer. Then I go further and say as follows:

“But a substantial step must be taken at once. We would define the expression ‘responsible government’, as far as we can define it, that the will of the Legislature, which is responsible to the electorates, must prevail over the Executive, subject to veto.”

Now, I ask the Honourable the Home Member what difference is there—perhaps he might claim to be a great constitutionalist and would enlighten us—what difference is there between full dominion status and the definition given by me of true responsible government? Therefore, Sir, it is irrelevant and beside the point really for our present purpose to go into those matters. What do we suggest in our amendment?

“This Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council to take steps to have the Government of India Act revised with a view to establish full responsible Government in India and for the said purpose, etc. . . .”

Here, Sir, I pause for a single moment. The Honourable Member with his usual ability has tried to run away from the issue. First of all he set up a bogey of the immediate grant of full Dominion status. That is the first

bogey he set up. It is not there, excuse me. I shall explain, and I am surprised that the Honourable Member has not been able to understand it. Remember, says he, we have the question of Hindus and Muhammadans not united. Remember we have got large commercial interests, European interests. Remember that your army now consists of the fighting classes. Remember that, and further remember that your own public men, when they gave evidence, before the Joint Parliamentary Committee, and the Indian National Congress never asked for such a thing as that. Remember the position of ruling princes. Sir, I can only tell the Home Member that all that energy was wasted for nothing. If he will carefully read that amendment, he will see that it is not a demand for immediate full responsible government. But it wants you to take immediate steps—I will repeat that—immediate steps are required. I recognise freely, frankly, that the Home Member's speech does convey to the House that they will take steps. Now, we come to the steps. What steps? I have described the steps which the Honourable the Home Member proposes to take. What steps do we suggest? The steps that we suggest are these, and I say, Sir, that these are the finest steps that Government could possibly be advised to take. If your purpose is high, as the Home Member said, if your purpose is really to look to and think of the welfare of India. If you really want the best of India to go with you, this is the best possible method for you to adopt, because after all you want confidence, support and co-operation from the best of India. We say to you that the finest method that you can adopt for that purpose is to summon a round table conference of representative men to frame a scheme in consultation with you, not without you. What objection have you to that? Why is it wrong? Why do you want to sit behind closed doors, in the secret chambers of the Executive? Why do you want to carry on your despatches backwards and forwards behind our back? Why do you want to take this decision and formulate these proposals and then come to us with all sorts of excuses and say that now this is very difficult to deal with. Sir, the proposal of yours is putting the cart before the horse. We want you to take the people with you. We want you to start in a manner which will carry the support of the people with you. What objection can you have to a round table conference of representative men for this purpose? Further, we give you a far greater security and far more real sanction and approval of the scheme that this round table conference may formulate. And what is that? Sir, the round table conference will consist of representative men. No doubt these people will carry the greatest influence with the people. On the other hand, we shall have the Government and we may have experts who are entitled to speak on constitutional matters. But, Sir, even when you have that we give you a far more convincing proof so as to make you feel that we have once for all settled this question in such a manner that it will carry the support, the confidence and the co-operation of the people; and for that purpose we suggest that, when a scheme is framed by this round table conference, dissolve this Assembly, the Central Legislature. Let that scheme go out to the country and let us vacate these seats. Of course, you will draw your pay just the same. It does not matter to you. But we shall have to spend more money in electioneering. We shall have to spend some thousands of rupees by going from place to place, begging each voter if he will vote for us or not. Sir, we shall be more out of pocket and shall undergo the trouble and inconvenience of which you have no idea and no experience. We shall then have to convince the electorates, which you have created under the Government of India Act. And, if we come back

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with that mandate of the electorates, who are the real masters after all—and we want them to be real masters because without them no scheme is worth the paper on which it is written—then we shall say that we are in a position to give our sanction which shall be lasting, which will give you all the support you require. Any Government that is formed will not be a Government run as it is to-day by a minority and supported by a section of the Statute which gives it the power to certify in the place of the majority. That is what we want. Now, what objection can you have to that? What is wrong about it? Sir, the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey, the Home Member, quoted a passage from my evidence, although it was in answer to a particular question, but I take complete responsibility of it. It was as follows:

“We have no other method to suggest. Dyarchy fits in more with the order of things as they exist at present in India and it can be justified on the ground that it is for a transitional period.”

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey did not tell the House that the crux of my evidence before the Joint Committee was this: that at the present moment I am inclined to think that dyarchy is the best possible system that you can introduce. But, Sir, my proposal was that there should be dyarchy in the Central Government also. It was on that footing that this answer was given. Further, the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey must remember this that that was my opinion in 1919. The Honourable Member then was a Commissioner in a district. Since then he has become the Home Member and has been designated Governor of a Province. A great deal of water has run down the Thames since then. We were in 1919 considering a question, or rather a constitution of far-reaching importance, dealing with a vast population of a country like India. Is an opinion given at that time to be an opinion to last for all time? We have realised, Sir, and I have very little doubt about it in my mind, that dyarchy has failed, and I believe I am not the only one who thinks so. I believe even those men who faithfully and loyally worked the Reforms, men who were wedded to these Reforms, say so. Take the case of Mr. Chintamani. What does he say? He was one of the stalwarts amongst the supporters of these Reforms. Therefore, Sir, it is no use merely getting hold of a few words and quoting them. I thought the Honourable the Home Member would have something better to advance than to pick up a sentence here and a sentence there, and say you said this in 1918, or in 1919. Sir, I do not wish to waste the time of this House, but I do submit this, and I say to the House that the simple issue before the House to-night is this: what is going to be the character of the step? That is the simple issue. We have heard the Honourable the Home Member. I absolutely and entirely oppose the character of the step that he has described, and I therefore ask the House to vote in favour of the character of the step that we suggest. Until something better is suggested, I am not satisfied with the step which is suggested by the Home Member. I hope I have not exceeded my time, but I wish to say this with regard to Dr. Gour. I speak with very great respect, and I say this. I really fail to see how his amendment is going to prevent the Government from doing what he said or attributed the Government might do. He suggested a convention. On what footing will that convention be called? Who will call that convention? What will be the qualification of those who will be the members of that convention? Who will decide these questions? I cannot really understand how that is going to prevent the Government, if they wish to procrastinate or delay the matter, from doing so. But I am not one of those who will, in season and out of

season, attribute motives to Government. I accept the word of the Home Member when he says that they want to take steps. I accept that word and I am ready to take it that that is an honourable assurance that we accept and it will be done without delay. I accept that and I am not going to start by saying "you will delay and you will frustrate." We will see, but I submit to this House that I really fail to understand Dr. Gour. Instead of saying "round table conference", he says "convention." "Convention" has got some constitutional meaning, I understand. Otherwise I do not see any difference between convention and round table conference; but there is a constitutional difference, and I say it does not improve matters at all. On the contrary, it makes the position of Government far more difficult to call a convention, and it is likely to bring about far greater delay than a round table conference. Therefore, I strongly oppose his amendment.

With these words, Sir, I may say I am very glad that the tone and the attitude of the Home Member, speaking on behalf of the Government, has been very conciliatory. We appreciate that, we fully appreciate that; but I do press the Honourable the Home Member to accept our method of starting with that step.

Mr. N. M. Dumasia (Bombay City: Non-Muhammadan Urban): Mr. President, it is a sign of happy augury for the good of this country that we meet to-day in a calm and peaceful atmosphere to consider the problems leading to the advancement and prosperity of this country. That calm and peaceful atmosphere has been induced by the release of that great Indian patriot, Mr. Gandhi, and for that our congratulations and our gratitude are due to Government. Sir, I belong to a community which has been in a minority. I belong to a community whose leaders were the first to unfurl the banner of Swaraj—a community which has produced such great patriots as Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta. I am here to maintain the noble traditions they established in years gone by.

Sir, Swaraj is our birthright and no body can deny it to us. But, Sir, we must remember that our rulers have recognised the fact and the word "Swaraj" which was considered to have a sinister meaning not many years ago, was given a finer and new meaning by His Majesty the King Emperor when, in the Message sent through His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, His Majesty said:

"For years—it may be for generations, patriotic and loyal Indians have dreamed of Swaraj for their motherland. To-day you have beginnings of Swaraj within my Empire and widest scope and ample opportunity for progress to the liberty . . . which my Dominions enjoy."

Sir, this clearly shows that the representative institutions that were established three years ago were meant to give complete self-government to India as an equal and integral part of the Empire. Sir, much water has passed under the bridge since those Reforms were introduced. A new sense of nationhood has been awakened, race-consciousness has been intensified and there is a quickening impulse for progress. New forces and new influences are at work all tending towards progress. As the late Prime Minister of England, Mr. Lloyd George, said: "The world is rushing along at a giddy pace covering the track of centuries in a year." That being so, does not statesmanship require that there should be an immediate revision and extension of the Reforms? Sir, the time-limit is always a mistake. The German Kaiser fixed a time-limit for entering Paris. Mr. Gandhi fixed a limit for Swaraj. It was a year. We know the result.

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The British Government may find that they were as mistaken as Mr. Gandhi in fixing a date for the revision of the Constitution. It therefore behoves them not to wait till the statutory period has expired. Sir, we have met to-day in the ancient capital of India around which cluster age-long memories, memories of the fall and rise of dynasties, memories of the fiercest battles fought, memories of the magnificent grandeur which surrounded the old courts of the Mughals.

Sir, the conquest of India by the Mughals was made at the gates of Delhi; the battles of Panipat record the heroic deeds of the different warring sects; to-day, under British rule we have not to draw the sword for the conquest of India. We are assured of Swaraj by peaceful means. That is a great triumph of British rule in India. To-day we have only to bring constitutional pressure to bear on the Government to obtain our rights and privileges. To-day we see the alliance of Hindus and Muhammadans, which fifty years ago nobody would have dreamt of in the capital of Delhi. All this is due to the influence of the Pax Britannica. Sir, no body wishes to stand between India and Swaraj; but that Swaraj, Sir, should not be of that nature which stank in the nostrils of Mr. Gandhi. We ought to remember one thing, that between India and anarchy it is the British rule that has stood for so many years. It is the British rule which rescued India from chaos and anarchy and guaranteed to us the blessings of unbroken internal peace and security against external aggression. I will support any legitimate demand for the advancement of our country, but that demand should be such that it will be considered reasonable. Sir, the greatest curse of India is dissension among communities. The greatest curse of India is that it has been divided into so many races and communities. The curse of untouchability has not been removed and, if the British were to retire from India to-day, there is nothing to show that there would not be confusion and anarchy again. I am fortified in this opinion by the views expressed by my friend, the Honourable Mr. Jinnah. In 1916 Mr. Jinnah said:

"There is first the great fact of the British rule in India with its Western character and standards of administration, which, while retaining absolute power of initiative, direction and decision, has maintained for many decades *unbroken peace and order in the land, administered even-handed justice, brought the Indian mind, through a widespread system of Western education, into contact with the thoughts and ideals of the West, and thus led to the birth of a great and living movement for the intellectual and moral regeneration of the people.*"

I will now quote a greater man than Mr. Jinnah, the late Mr. Gokhale, and I am sure one day Mr. Jinnah will attain Mr. Gokhale's height of eminence. What did he say? At Poona in 1909, Mr. Gokhale urged acquiescence in British rule for two reasons:

"One that considering the difficulties of the position, Britain had done very well in India, the other that there was no alternative to British rule and could be none for a long time"

Sir, I ask the Members of this House to pause and consider dispassionately the opinion of one of the greatest leaders of the Indian community. He was one of the greatest of Indian patriots:

"They could proceed in two directions: first toward an obliteration of distinctions, on the grounds of race, between individual Indians and individual Englishmen, and second by way of advance toward the form of Government enjoyed in other parts of the Empire. The latter was an ideal for which the Indian people had to qualify themselves, for the whole question turned on character and capacity, and they must realise that their main difficulties lay with themselves."

Again, Sir, the same Indian leader, the late Mr. Gokhale, when a campaign was started to seduce Indian students, said:

"A considerable part of what it has preached could not find ready acceptance on every hand, that love of country should be a ruling principle of our lives; that we should rejoice in making sacrifices for her sake; that we should rely, wherever we could, on our own exertions . . . side by side with this undoubtedly valuable work, the new party gave to the country a great deal of what could only be regarded as unsound political teaching. That teaching was in the first instance directed to the destruction of the very foundations of the old public life of the country. But, once started, it could not be confined to that object, and in course of time it came to be applied generally. Its chief error lies in ignoring all historical considerations and tracing our political troubles to the existence of a foreign Government in the country. Our old public life was based on frank and loyal acceptance of British rule, due to a recognition of the fact that it *alone could secure to the country the peace and order* which were necessary for slowly evolving a nation out of the heterogeneous elements of which India was composed and for ensuring to it a steady advance in different directions."

Sir, the importance of maintaining law and order and internal peace and security against foreign aggression cannot be exaggerated.

Now, coming to the Resolution and amendments, I see, Sir, that after hearing some of the intellectual giants of the country I have not grown wiser but I have grown sadder. Sir, to take first the Resolution of my Honourable friend, Diwan Bahadur Rangachariar, I can only say that its terms are vague and indefinite and the Resolution means nothing. It says:

"That this Assembly recommends to the Governor General in Council that he be pleased to take at a very early date the necessary steps (including if necessary procuring the appointment of a Royal Commission) for revising the Government of India Act so as to procure for India full self-governing Dominion status within the British Empire and Provincial autonomy in the Provinces."

We do not know in what period that status of self-governing Dominion is to be acquired. We would have liked to know from the Honourable Mover of the Resolution the period that he set to it, and whether it was to be immediate or at some distant future.

Then, Sir, coming to the amendment of my Honourable friend, Pandit Motilal Nehru, I find nothing objectionable in the first two paragraphs. But, Sir, the very harmless and innocent looking character of this amendment makes me suspicious. Sir, the avowed object of the Swarajist in entering the Assembly was to destroy. (*Voices from different corners of the House: "No, no."*) Well, Sir, that was the programme laid before the country (*Cries of "No, no."*) Well, I am glad I stand corrected. Anyhow, Sir, the whole-hoggers were for immediate Swaraj. (*Voices: "They are still."*) Very well, Sir, I am glad to hear that they are still for immediate Swaraj. That clears a lot of ground from under our feet. If that be so, then the amendment ought to have made it clear so that we may know where we stand, because this innocent looking measure still shows that there are still whole hoggars. As the amendment stands, Sir, Members may be induced to vote for it, but when we know from our friends that by that amendment they demand immediate Swaraj, then I must say that the time has not yet come for it. (*A Voice: "What do you mean?"*) I say, Sir, what I mean. Sir, we all want Swaraj, but that is by gradual stages and not immediately.

Sir, some of the speakers who preceded me said that they want immediate Swaraj. Sir, I was one of those who thought that a round table conference was necessary to come to a common understanding, but after the explanation which has been given by the Leader of the House, I think

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the necessity for a round table conference no longer exists. I was of opinion that Government ought not to take a *non-possumus* attitude but they must make their position clear. The Government of India have made their position clear. They have made a gesture to which we were all looking forward. They recognise the necessity of the revision of the Government of India Act, for introducing the second step in the constitutional reforms of the country. (Dr. H. S. Gour: "They have said nothing of the kind.") Well, Sir, the Honourable Mr. Jinnah said this and nobody challenged it and I take it that this is so. What we want is the revision before the expiration of the statutory period; and as Mr. Jinnah has very ably put it, we want to know the character of that revision.

Then, Sir, the Honourable Sir Campbell Rhodes said that the Members of the Provincial Council did not help the Ministers. I join issue with him there. So far as the Bombay Legislative Council was concerned, the Members gave the fullest assistance to the Ministers but the Ministers were more bureaucratic than bureaucrats themselves, and I am of opinion that dyarchy has failed and has failed miserably, because the Ministers who were entrusted with nation-building activities were starved for want of funds, and I am of opinion that Government must take steps towards further constitutional progress and Government should not delay it even for a moment. We should be assured now that the next stage in the chain of Reforms would not be delayed. Sir, during the war, a new spirit of equal partnership had arisen. We were welcomed as equal partners in the Empire. We were asked to make equal sacrifices for common aims and common objects. We were asked for co-operation in the common goal, but, Sir, unfortunately, that spirit has not survived the conclusion of the war. India has many grievances. These grievances should be redressed but I think that now that we have got this machinery, through this machinery we must try to bring constitutional pressure upon the Government to redress our grievances and, fight the constitutional battle for Swaraj. Sir, if the Honourable Mr. Nehru assures us that he does not convey more than the actual wording of the amendment, that there is no intention of causing destruction and that he is ready to co-operate with Government on constitutional lines, and that he asks for full responsible government by gradual stages, then I may say to him, as he said to the Honourable the Leader of the House, "my vote is yours and that I am yours." But, Sir, he must make it clear that he and his party are not out to destroy but to advance the constitution and constitutional progress in the country. But, Sir, if behind that amendment lies the object of overthrowing the Government, of destroying the Reforms, then I must say, Heaven forbid, that we should ever live to see that ill-fated day. There has been a great deal of confusion in the minds of Swarajists themselves and that is indicated by the various amendments that have been tabled. Sir, I think, after the explanations that have been given by the Honourable the Home Member, I hope he will give a further explanation as to by what method and in what way he wishes to recommend to the Secretary of State the revision of the Reforms. I say that India is ripe and ready for another step and an important step for constitutional advance, and, if that step is taken immediately, we must rest content for the present and like the Fabian we must ask for more and more until we reach the final goal, namely, Swaraj, which is our birthright and which is our ultimate goal and to which our rulers are pledged.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: Might I have the indulgence of the House for one moment, for I fear from what Mr. Dumasia said, that he was under the impression that I had gone somewhat further this morning than I had actually intended to do. I replied at the beginning of this afternoon's debate to Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas giving the terms of what I said this morning. May I repeat what I said? "The Government of India are prepared to examine, in consultation with Local Governments, into the existence of any defects in the working of the Act as revealed by experience with a view to their remedy." That was the statement that I made this morning. I did not say that we were prepared to set on foot any wide investigation as to the complete revision of the Act such as Mr. Dumasia seems to suggest.

Mr. T. E. Moir (Madras: Nominated Official): Sir, the last two speeches to which the House has listened from the Honourable Mr. Jinnah and the Honourable Mr. Dumasia brought the debate back to a level on which I have been able to move more freely. The two previous speeches were to me perorations punctuated, or to my mind punctured, by questions to which the speakers refused to pause to give an answer. It is, I think, a matter of great regret that the new party to which we have heard reference made did not come into being in time to complete that task on which those who live in the neighbourhood of Raisina know many Members of this Assembly have been engaged during the past few days, namely, to clarify the issues, because, it would certainly, I think, have been of great assistance to this House if we had had a clear cut issue and we had not been left quite so much to consider for ourselves what was the exact meaning to be attached to the various Resolutions and what was aimed at by the proposed amendments. I attempted to place myself in the position of those who have been engaged in this somewhat arduous process of drafting and I tried first to determine what exactly was intended to be the difference between terms such as "immediately", "forthwith" or "at an early date." Having listened to the explanations which have been given, I have come to the conclusion that they all mean the same thing and that the more simple term "at once" in its ordinary acceptation, meaning "as soon as you can," covers them all, that you might by subtle explanations classify the supporters of these various Resolutions and amendments into immediate-futurists or paulo-post-futurists, but that there is essentially no difference between them and that what is asked is that immediately or forthwith steps should be taken for the establishment of full self-government or responsible self-government or government modelled on Dominion status, not at some future date—10 years hence or 15 years hence or 20 years hence—but as soon as those steps can be taken which are necessary in any case for carrying out the intention expressed in these Resolutions.

Now, Sir, to whom are these various requests or behests addressed? I think, Sir, it is a great compliment to one of the finest speeches to which I have ever had the privilege of listening, that of the Honourable the Leader of the House, that practically every Member who has spoken from this side of the House has thought it sufficient to address himself to the Leader of the House, that it was he who required an answer. But, Sir, it is not even to the Leader of the House, it is not even to this Assembly, that we have to address ourselves. It is not even to the Government at present in power in Great Britain, it is not even to the Parliament of Great Britain, it is in the last resort to the people of the United Kingdom. Now, Sir,

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it seems to me that, if we are going to address the people of Great Britain, it is as well that we should have a somewhat clearer idea whom we are addressing when we attempt to formulate our requests. I was astonished to hear the Honourable Mover of the Resolution, Mr. Rangachariar, express the opinion that no interest was taken in Indian affairs in Great Britain and that indeed there were not more than sixteen members of Parliament who took an interest in our affairs. It seemed to me, Sir, a remarkably poor compliment at any rate to the other 176 members of the Labour Party to which reference has been made, and it seemed to me to be entirely contrary to facts of which I have personal knowledge. What is the use of setting up a false representation of the British people? Children attempt to draw a picture of a dragon and achieve a cross between a kitchen table and a corkscrew, and because they are not certain that the picture approaches reality, in order to show what they have drawn, they put underneath the drawing "This is a dragon". Well, Sir, there is as much resemblance between their picture and the reality as there is in Mr. Rangachariar's description of the British people with reference to India. Having been recently at Home I have attempted to find out their interest in Indian questions, and the attitude of my fellow-countrymen towards this country. It is perfectly true that the ordinary man whom you meet does not pretend to any great knowledge of India, although, since the war, and I think it

5 P.M. was one perhaps of the few good results of the war, many people in Great Britain are acquainted with India, with its people, with its problems and are in a position to take a more sympathetic and understanding attitude towards such problems than their forefathers were. In the ordinary man whose knowledge is, as I have stated, limited, there is undoubtedly a feeling of great anxiety regarding India: indeed anxiety is expressed in all quarters in regard to what was not very long ago commonly referred to as the brightest jewel of the Crown. They are not quite sure as to how things are going on in this country. They hope for the best but they are not quite sure whether they will not have to prepare for the worst. Turning to what I might call more informed opinion, let me admit at once, there are men who in the interest as they consider of their own country regard with indifference the prospect of the severance of the ties between Great Britain and India. That I may say was a phenomenon which I had not met as far as I could recollect on previous visits which I happened to make to my own country. Such men are not numerous but they represent a certain feeling that is growing. They allege two grounds. One is the political ground. The exponents of this theory say:

"We find that our own affairs are far too much hampered by this connection. We are anxious to see full freedom restored to ourselves in the political sphere. We regard our foreign policy as being deflected, unduly deflected, by this constant regard which we have to pay to feeling in India and to our responsibility for India."

There were others who base it on the economic ground, not out of any feeling of hostility to India but simply because so far from agreeing with Mr. Rangachariar's view that opinion is indifferent to India, they felt that opinion at Home is too much attracted towards the East and the true interests of the country hampered by its entanglements in the East, in Palestine, in Mesopotamia, and to my astonishment I found that among these entanglements they were beginning to include India. They held those views, as I have stated, not because of any hostility to India but because they felt that the East was diverting the attention of our Government at

Home and of our people from what was the real task, namely, the development of the Dominions and drawing closer those ties between the Home country and the Dominions which they said were being perpetually strained by Indian questions; they wished for the earliest possible settlement of the question of our responsibilities towards this country. This, Sir, I hope will prove to be a small and negligible body of opinion, and I was glad to find that there were two very large schools of opinion which held very different views. In one case, those who hold these views are actuated by a deep feeling of attachment to India. They based their feelings more on sentiment. They were attempting to get rid of every cause that might possibly create friction between the two countries, in the desire to go as far as possible in order to meet India and to help her; and let me say that among the most active workers in that cause were men who, as soldiers, as civil officers or as men of business have given their lives to India, and found in it their career and their inspiration. There is another large body of opinion; in fact I might say that it forms the bulk of instructed opinion. The Englishman is always being accused of being unable to see more than one side of the question. It is an accusation which is frequently brought against him in this country. But, Sir, that has its purpose, it does service. There is one matter on which the Englishman can only see one side of the question, and that is that the highest possible form of Government for any community is full and responsible self-government. But, while they hold that ideal, they are well aware that there is no categorical imperative in politics. It is the only system that they can conceive being worked. They are beginning to be afraid, however, when they hear of what is happening in India, that the rule is not universal, and that when Indians refuse to work the Reforms, it is not because of the defects in the Reforms but because they feel themselves incapable of working such a system, a system of democratic responsible self-government. While, Sir, holding that political faith, they do not confuse the means with the end; any form of Government is a means to an end,—the greatest happiness of the people, and they feel that by what is happening in India they are going to be dragged into a conflict between their political faith and the sense of the awful responsibility with which they are charged towards the teeming millions of this country. Further, even as regards that responsibility, they feel that even wider responsibilities rest on them than before the war. It is not only their responsibility but they feel that they are responsible to the rest of the world, to all those communities who have retained their sanity, that India shall not relapse into that pit from which so many of the countries of the world are at present struggling possibly in vain to emerge. It is no use answering them with rhetoric. They have one example before their eyes now to which possibly attention has not been drawn—certainly has not been largely drawn in this country. It is to a neighbour of ours, China. Now, Sir, may I read one extract relating to that country which would express more clearly than I can what it is that people at Home are apprehensive of. It runs as follows:

“Her condition may be summed up in the one word—anarchy. The tragedy of China is that her people fondly imagined in 1911 that Utopia was to be attained by the simple device of changing the form of Government without any corresponding change in the spirit and general outlook of the people. That is why we are witnessing to-day the reign of a despotism infinitely worse than the despotism in the worst days of the Manchus, because the latter, with all their faults—and they had not a few—at least were able to exercise the elementary function of a Government, the assertion of authority, whereas the latter-day Peking ‘Government’ is powerless to govern anybody.”

You may say that they are wrong in having these apprehensions. What I wish to impress upon the House is that they exist and that it is not

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mere rhetoric that will answer them. So far I have heard no answer which, in my opinion, would in the least convince the British people that those problems to which the Leader of the House made reference were capable of immediate solution. (*Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar*: "Never, never".) Now, Sir, there is one other point I should like to make as regards public opinion at home. I think I made it clear from what I have said that, while there are some elements at home which would be prepared to risk the future of India in England's interests, there is no school of thought of any kind which desires to delay the grant of full responsible Government to India one day later than it can be done with due regard to the interests of India itself. Now, Sir, that is the position, the feelings and apprehensions to which we present on this occasion the demand we are making—in terms such as "forthwith", "immediately", "at an early date". They all mean the same and we rather resent the action of the Leader of the House in pointing out questions which have to be answered to justify them. But there is still more serious objection to the actual terms of the amendments which are now under consideration. What do they amount to in effect is this—and I omit all reference to details—that a scheme for carrying out the desire of the House as expressed to-day is to be prepared out here by a round table conference or by discussion or by other means and it is to be placed before this Assembly for ratification and it is then to be presented to the British Parliament to be embodied in a Statute. Sir, since when has it been the custom of the British Parliament—the Mother of Parliaments—to have Statutes presented to it for sanction to be embodied in a Statute? (*Dr. H. S. Gour*: "What about Australia?") I do not believe that the Honourable Member has the slightest intention of making such a suggestion, but with the wording of his amendment, what other opinion can be formed of it. (*Honourable Members*: "What about Australia, South Africa and Ireland? Are they not precedents?") The British Parliament are to have no voice in this matter. I have heard no mention of any suggestion that the British Parliament should be represented on any conference or any round table conference. (*Sir Purshotandas Thakurdas*: "They will have the final voice.") But, Sir, I need not dwell on that point too much. I merely suggest that it is a matter of regret that the process of drafting and of arriving at the terms of the final Resolution to be placed before this House could not be dealt with more carefully. There was, however, one thing which to-day had given me great comfort and that was the announcement that the Leader of the House made as to the steps which the Government of India propose to take. Now, Sir, I belong to a province which has honestly attempted to work the Reforms. I was rather disappointed that my friend, Mr. Rangachariar, who comes from the same province, did not emphasise that fact in his speech. The one point to which he pointed with pride was that the portfolio of law and order in that province had been entrusted to an Indian Member of the Executive Council. I never supposed for a moment that my province could not produce from amongst the Indians either in the service or in the political world men capable of holding these high offices and discharging their trust. But surely, Sir, the question is not whether a particular office has been entrusted to a particular man. Surely the question is whether in Madras we have been able to do something to advance India towards that goal at which we are all aiming, and I claim, Sir, that we have done so. I should be glad if Mr. Rangachariar had also paid a tribute to the work of our Ministers and all those who

have supported them in Madras. I regard them as having done most admirable work, but our one fear has been, Sir, that events elsewhere would crowd out the claims of Madras to recognition; that because Bengal has lapsed from sanity, our advance is to be jeopardised, or that our rate of progress is to be measured by that of the Central Provinces cart. Now, Sir, for that reason, I welcome the announcement of the Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey. I do think there is wide scope for an inquiry on the lines he has indicated. No one is more anxious than we are in Madras that the present Government of India Act should have full scope and that, in the manner in which it has been administered offers any obstacles to the full and proper working of that experiment upon which we are engaged, that that shall be investigated and removed as early as possible. We see in Madras, and I am certain, though I can only speak for myself, that a large number, if not all the members of the services there will endorse my words. We have the fullest confidence of the future in Madras Province, and we shall be willing to see all that can be done to carry on this experiment to which we have been only too glad to lend our assistance, and I hope that the intentions of the Government of India, when they come to be given effect to, will be carried out in no narrow and grudging spirit, but with a view to completing and making perfect as far as possible under the Act, this experiment, widening it, placing it on a broader basis if you like, so that when 1929 does come, in Madras we shall be able to point to our record with entire confidence. Now, Sir, I think that, although some of the speeches made this evening disappointed and discouraged me, there is reason to hope that, when the House thinks longer over it, they will see that there is much more in the offer made by the Leader of the House than they were at first inclined to suppose. Now what is the natural line of progress in India? Is it possible, considering the far wider sphere of responsibility that is placed on the Central Government, that you can advance in the same measure and at the same time in the Central Government as you can in the Provincial Government? That is a view of which you will find it very difficult to convince the people of Great Britain. There are two things we can do. We can accept, and I hope we shall, the offer made by the Leader of the House. From the very thoughtful speech which, not knowing him and possibly being misinformed, rather surprised me, from Pandit Motilal Nehru, it seemed to me that his views were not so diverse from those which I have ventured to express as I anticipated. And I would earnestly ask him to consider whether this offer should not be accepted. What is the alternative? I am afraid if we are going to enter upon that course which we all wish to avoid, that we shall lose sight of the direct road of progress, and that we shall enter into a barren and possibly dangerous conflict with the authority from whom the powers of this Assembly are derived. Sir, does any one wish to plunge India back into the dangers and the confusions of the past few years? We in Madras do not. Mr. Rangachariar may rate the Industries Department above that of law and order. I can assure him he will get very little support in Madras for that view. We have too much experience. We remember Malabar; we remember Perambur. We know the trouble we have had to face in the Agency. But, Sir, if we adopt the alternative, is it not possible, if we are going to enter into a conflict—pursue the wrong line and enter into a conflict of the kind which some of the speeches have indicated,—that we may do serious harm to India? Sir, I remember some years ago visiting the Kolar Gold Fields in Mysore and being shown round one of the mines

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by the Chief Engineer. My attention was attracted to a part of the mechanism for winding the cages up the shaft from depths of as much, I think, as 3,000 or 4,000 feet. I asked him what this particular part of the mechanism was and he said:

"That is our safety device; we take every possible precaution but cases have been known where the steel cable has snapped, and when that happens not merely the cage with its occupants or contents is precipitated to the bottom but the whole machinery is wrecked."

I said to him "Have you ever tried your safety device?" He said "No, because it might not work. Then the whole machine would be wrecked." Now, our position in India is very much the same. We have in the last few years put an immense strain on the machine. We have our safety device. We are not quite suré, because we cannot experiment, that it will work under all circumstances. I would ask those who express so much anxiety to test or get rid of that safety device, if they feel quite sure that they know where they are going. I can tell them this, that if a crash did come, when the dust had subsided and the process of reconstruction had recommenced, it is not men of my race who would find any consolation in the fact that beneath the wreckage lay the reputations and the political aspirations of those who precipitated the catastrophe.

Mr. President: It appears to me that it will not be possible to conclude this debate satisfactorily to-day unless we sit very late to-night. As Honourable Members with experience of the previous Assembly are aware, I am quite prepared to do so myself, but I think it is against the wishes of the House; and if the Honourable the Home Member can in any way meet what I take to be the desire of the House, he might perhaps explain to us whether he has any proposal to make.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey: I think that the state of business next week will allow us to continue this discussion on a Government day. I would have suggested Monday, but I am not sure how long the business on that day will last. Looking at the list of business, I think it will be safe to promise that if the House so desires, we can continue the discussion after concluding the Government business on Wednesday next.

Mr. President: In that case I propose to adjourn the House now and the debate will be resumed on Wednesday next on the conclusion of Government business.

ELECTION OF PANELS FOR STANDING COMMITTEES.

ELECTION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

Mr. President: I have to announce that the following Members have been elected to serve on the Home Department Standing Committee:

Mr. N. M. Samarth,
 Mr. S. C. Ghose,
 Sardar Bahadur Captain Hira Singh,
 Mr. N. M. Dumasia,
 Diwan Bahadur T. Rangachariar,
 Mr. H. R. Dunk,
 Mr. K. Ahmed,
 Prince Akram Hussain, and
 Mr. B. C. Roy.

ELECTION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND LABOUR.

Mr. President: Similarly, the following Members have been elected to the Standing Committee for the Department of Industries and Labour:

1. Mr. N. M. Joshi,
2. Seth Kasturbhai Lalbhai,
3. Mr. B. C. Roy,
4. Mr. Darcy Lindsay,
5. Mr. E. G. Fleming,
6. Sardar Gulab Singh,
7. Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas,
8. Sir Campbell Rhodes, and
9. Kumar Ganganand Sinha.

STATEMENT OF BUSINESS.

Mr. President: The Honourable the Home Member desires to make an announcement regarding business for next week.

The Honourable Sir Malcolm Hailey (Home Member): Sir, Government propose that on Monday the 11th the Bills to amend the Indian Tariff Act and the Indian Passport Act should be taken into consideration and the Bill to amend the Indian Income-tax Act should be referred to a Select Committee. It is proposed also to ask for leave to introduce a Bill amending the Criminal Law to provide for the protection of minor girls. On Wednesday the second reading of the Central Board of Revenue Bill will be taken. We also propose to take, after conclusion of Government business, the continuation of to-day's debate. On these two days any elections that may be necessary for the purpose of constituting the panels from which the Departmental Standing Advisory Committees are to be constituted will be held. Tuesday and Thursday are non-official days for Resolutions. The Resolutions to come forward have already been settled by ballots, the results of which have been communicated to the Members of the House.

The Assembly then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, the 11th February, 1924.
