

*Inaugural address at the
Indian Council for Culture Relations,
New Delhi, April 9, 1950*



INDIA AND THE WORLD

I have great pleasure in welcoming you to this inaugural meeting of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations. You will remember that we met last year on the 21st August, when we decided to set up a council for the establishment of closer cultural relations between India and her neighbours in the east and west. On that occasion, I described to you how during the war years the Indo-Iranian Cultural Committee had reopened one of the doors that had been shut some centuries ago. I also drew your attention to the need of re-establishing all our old cultural contacts in the context of a free India. In that meeting it was agreed to set up a Provisional Committee to define the aims and objects of the Council and draw up its constitution, and also appoint a small sub-committee to do the necessary work in that behalf.

The Provisional Committee met on November 27, 1949, and, after making some notable changes, accepted the draft constitution which had been prepared by the sub-committee. Of these changes, the most important was the removal of all the territorial or geographical limitations on the activities of the Council. The Provisional Committee recommended that the Council should aim at establishing closer contacts between India and all other countries of the world whether in Asia or outside. While we welcome this extension in the scope of the activities of the Council, I think you will agree that it would be more practical to proceed towards that aim step by step. We therefore propose to set up for the present two sections of the Cultural Council, viz., a Middle-East and Turkey Section, and a South and East Asian Section. The Middle-East and Turkey Section has accordingly been set up and will work towards the establishment of closer relations with all the countries of the Middle East, Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Since India and Iran have always had special relations with each other, there will be a special sub-section for the promotion of Indo-Iranian relations. I hope

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that within the next year or so, we will be able to set up the South and East Asian Wing of the Council to promote closer contacts with the countries in that region.

You will be glad to hear that our first steps towards the setting up of this Council have met with warm welcome from different foreign countries. Egypt and Syria, Lebanon and Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, Burma and Ceylon and the Republic of Indonesia, have all expressed strong support for the proposal. I hope that now that the Council is established, our cultural relations with these countries will continually expand and we will secure the full co-operation of the universities and other cultural and learned societies of India and these countries for the furtherance of our objects.

I have already referred to the limitation of our resources which compel us to proceed step by step. Nevertheless, action has been initiated and I can report to you some of the things already done :

- (a) The headquarters of the Council have been established at Hyderabad House. In the headquarters, we are building up a library which will provide facilities to scholars for the study of the history and culture of these countries.
- (b) To make a beginning with the library, I have presented to the Council my personal library and I hope that soon these books, which are being despatched from Calcutta, will be available to users here.
- (c) The Ajit Ghosh collection which has been purchased for the Council possesses many rare and valuable books on Indian art and architecture.
- (d) The reading room is being set up in the headquarters where newspapers, magazines and journals of all these countries will be available as well as the publications of universities and cultural societies.
- (e) We also propose to arrange for periodic meetings where specialists will discuss particular aspects of the culture and civilisation of India and these countries.
- (f) One of the functions of the Council will be the exchange of professors between India and these countries. We have already sent a professor of Sanskrit to Anjuman-e-Iran-Shinasi, Teheran. The Council also arranged for

the lectures of Professor Nafisi, a well-known Iranian scholar, in some of the Indian universities.

- (g) The Council also proposes to publish two Quarterlies, one in Arabic to interpret Indian culture and civilisation to the Middle-East countries, and another in English for the exchange of information and knowledge between India and South and East Asian countries. The first number of the first Quarterly is in press and will soon be available, while preparations for the second Quarterly will be taken in hand at an early date.

I will not, however, go into further details of the programme which will be decided by the executive body that will be set up for the purpose.

I would, before I conclude, like to draw your attention to a practical question which is of some interest for the proper working of the Council. This Council which seeks to create better understanding among peoples of different countries must necessarily concern itself with the language of its transactions. At one time French was the language of international intercourse. Nowadays that position is being gradually taken by English. We will therefore have English as the major language for the transactions of the Council but it is our intention to provide also for French as an alternative medium as soon as possible. At the same time, I hope, that the work of this Council will encourage the study of Sanskrit, Arabic, Persian, Chinese and other oriental languages which have contributed to the development of human culture and civilisation.

*Inaugural address at the
Delhi Public Library, Delhi
October 27, 1951*



PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND EDUCATION

When in May 1948, I formulated a twelve-point programme of social education for the country, one of the main services I had in mind was the provision of a Public Library for adult education. The need of such library service in any programme of social education is self-evident. It is obvious that adults who acquire literacy at a comparatively advanced age cannot be expected to read many books during their period of education. There is therefore a risk that they may relapse into illiteracy, unless they are provided with books, journals and newspapers that will be both interesting and intelligible to them. Ordinary newspapers and journals and the average type of literature would not always serve their ends, as these would employ vocabulary that may at times be too difficult for the new literates. We have a sad example of this in the experience of the large number of soldiers who were made literate during World War II, but on demobilisation relapsed into illiteracy through lack of suitable literature.

Such a library service is necessary not only for adult neo-literates but also for the children who complete their basic education. The vast majority of them give up their studies before literacy has become permanently established. This is also one reason why in spite of the fact that some 40 per cent of the children of school age attend basic and other primary schools and have been doing so for some decades, the percentage of literacy for the adult population is still so low. A library service which would provide suitable literature for those who have attended basic and primary schools is therefore an essential condition for the maintenance and development of literacy in the country.

I was therefore much pleased to learn that at its 4th General Conference held in Paris in 1949, Unesco resolved to organise in one of the member-states a pilot project for public libraries. The project was to be undertaken at the request and with the assistance of the State and as part of its campaign for the spread of

fundamental education. I was anxious that India should be the member-state to make that request and establish a pilot library with the assistance of Unesco. I felt that Delhi, where the social education programme had already been in operation for some time, offered a very suitable venue for the location of such a pilot project. Delhi is a large city and at the same time within easy reach of rural areas. It is served by a system of roads which makes it accessible from all parts of the State. Much is being done both in the city and in the rural areas in the sphere of mass education by the Government, the Municipal and the District Board authorities and private individuals. Delhi has a cosmopolitan population and seems eminently suitable to satisfy some of the requirements defined by Unesco for the location of a Public Library Service. I felt that if this pilot project could succeed in Delhi with its varied populations engaged in different kinds of activities, it would serve as an excellent model which could be followed elsewhere in India and outside.

I am very happy that after discussions with Unesco it has been possible to arrive at an agreement and the first Unesco Pilot Project for Public Libraries has been established here. It will form an integral part of the literacy drive of the city and its environs and its service will be directed primarily towards the needs of newly literate adults. It is, however, not our intention to forget the needs of the general reader. There will also be provision of books which will suit the taste of adults of varied educational backgrounds. Nor have we forgotten the needs of children and the Library will have a section devoted specially to them. In accordance with the spirit of our Constitution and the Unesco Public Libraries Manifesto, the Delhi Public Library will be a free public library and open to all members of the community "without distinction of race, religion, class or occupation."

It was felt that a public library of this type would be best administered by an autonomous body. Accordingly, by a resolution of the Government of India, the Delhi Library Board has been set up to administer the Library under the general supervision and control of the Ministry of Education and Unesco.

The Preamble of the resolution which sets up the Delhi Library Board has defined the object of the Library as

providing for the people of the city of Delhi a public library service and a community centre for popular education which shall be a model for all

public library development in India and in all countries where similar development of public libraries can be undertaken. The Library shall be designed so as to carry out the policy of the Unesco Public Libraries Manifesto and to serve the needs of popular education without distinction of class, creed, occupation or race, and specially those of neo-literates and children.

Under the agreement between the Government of India and Unesco, it has been agreed that the Government of India will contribute during the fiscal year 1950-51 a sum of Rs. 1,07,000 for the establishment of the Pilot Library. The Delhi Municipal Committee has agreed to contribute Rs. 25,000 annually. Unesco will contribute, subject to the vote of the General Assembly, sixty thousand dollars in the form of payment for the services of an Advisory Director, Fellowships, salary of the Director for one year, the supply of equipment for adult education and extension work and also for the supply and production of books specially required for neo-literates.

By the end of September 1950, over 5,000 books were secured for the Library of which a little less than a thousand are in English, over 3,500 are in Hindi and over 500 are in Urdu. Foreign interest in the project is evidenced by the donation of books by Carc, the National Book Centre in London and the Silver Burdett Company of New York.

As indicated above, the Library is intended not only to supply books and other reading material to adults and children but also to serve as a community centre for popular education. In order to make the place attractive, a garden has been laid out in front of the Library to provide open air reading space. It is proposed that the garden will be flood-lit and will enable adults to read in comfort on summer nights.

The connection between a library and a garden may not be apparent to many, but men who are real lovers of literature have always associated gardens with books. Hafiz, the famous poet of Shiraz, has given us his conception of the highest form of life in the following verses :

*Dū yār-i-zeerak o waz bāda-i kuhan dū-manee
Farāghatee o kitabee o goosha-i-chamancee;
Man in maqām ba dunyā-o-'āqbat na-deham
Agarche dar pai-am uftand khalq anjumānee.*

*Two wise friends, two goblets of old wine, amplitude
of leisure, books and a corner of a garden :
If these five things are provided, I will have no other
desire in life.
If I were offered instead all the gifts of this life and
the next
I would still refuse the exchange.*

I have every hope that visitors to this Library will find at least the two wise friends mentioned by Hafiz, if not more. Leisure also will, I hope, be theirs. They will also have the opportunity of reading the books of their choice in a selected corner of the garden. One condition will, of course, remain unfilled. In these days of a crusade for dry Delhi, I cannot promise the readers any goblets of wine, whether old or new ! I may, however, assure them that efforts will be made to supply fresh *sherbat* or hot tea in place of vintage wine, even though I know that to adherents of the cup this may appear a poor recompense !

I would also like to place on record, on behalf of the Government of India and on my own behalf, our appreciation of the help and co-operation we have received from Unesco in the development of this project. Unesco has not only given us the services of an Advisory Director, but also provided a Fellowship under which an Indian national has been trained for assuming charge as the permanent Director of the Library. When Dr. Jaime Torres Bodet was in Delhi in March this year, he took a personal interest in the development of the scheme. I am thankful to him and to Unesco for having placed at our disposal the services of Mr. Edward Sydney, M.C., F.L.A., Borough Librarian of Leyton, London, England, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Library Association. Mr. Sydney is internationally known for his practical experience of the use of Public Library in the cause of adult education and has rendered us great service in the planning and establishment of the library.

I know that this Library is only in its initial stage and we cannot show any tangible results yet. I have, however, no doubt in my mind that the foundations have been truly laid and will in course of time, if we are true to our ideals, be a magnificent edifice of service to the people at large. The task of social edu-

cation which faces our country is a colossal one and will require the devotion and service of all our national workers. I am happy that the Prime Minister who has devoted himself to the evocation of a scientific temper in our people is with us today. I am confident that his association with this project at its very inception will give to our efforts a sense of rational purpose and direction. May his large-hearted vision and his devotion to the eternal values of life inspire all the workers of the Delhi Pilot Library ! I am confident that this Library will be an exemplar not only for other libraries in India, but for libraries in all Asian countries.

*Welcome address at the inauguration
of the Indian Academy of Dance
and Music, New Delhi,
January 28, 1953*



THE ROLE OF DANCE, DRAMA AND MUSIC

Of the many questions that pressed for immediate attention after the achievement of independence, one of the most important was that relating to the revival of cultural activities. During the last 150 years, the fine arts, whether dance or drama, music or literature, did not receive the attention or the support they needed from the State for their full development. It is true that there has been a renaissance in India since the middle of the 19th century, but this was due to the release of new forces in society and owed little to the State. That is why, it was not as extensive or deep as it would have been if it had received the necessary State support. After the fall of the Moghul Empire, the centuries old tradition of State encouragement to different forms of fine arts was almost completely withdrawn.

The Indian States, which constituted about a third of India, have, no doubt, in their own territories played a significant role in supporting and developing these arts and thus deserve our gratitude, but their effort was not commensurate with the requirements of the situation. In any case, with the disappearance of the princely order, the patronage which they extended to the fine arts is also no longer available. In a democratic regime, the arts can derive their sustenance only from the people, and the State, as the organised manifestation of the people's will, must therefore undertake its maintenance and development as one of its first responsibilities.

Enlightened public opinion in the country has been conscious of this fact for over a decade. On January 26, 1945, a specific proposal in this behalf was put forward by the Asiatic Society of Bengal. The Society moved for the establishment of a National Cultural Trust as an autonomous body entrusted with the task of stimulating and promoting the culture of the country in all its aspects. The Trust was to consist of three academies, viz., an Academy of Letters to deal with Indian languages, literature,

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philosophy and history; an Academy of Art (including graphic, plastic and applied art) and Architecture, and an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music. It was intended that these academies should aim at maintaining and improving the standards of achievement in all these fields of culture.

The proposal was referred to the Central Advisory Board of Education which after examination by one of its committees accepted it and recommended that the Central Government should contribute half the amount while the Provincial Governments and the Indian States should contribute the balance. Owing to financial and other difficulties it was not possible for the Government to bring into existence the Cultural Trust though it had in principle agreed to do so.

Meanwhile the country attained its independence. The changed circumstances required fresh consideration of the issue. Accordingly, a Conference on Art was held in Calcutta in August 1949, followed by two more in March 1951 at New Delhi, on Letters, and on Dance, Drama, Music and Art to consider the position and advise the Government on measures for the promotion of cultural development in the country. These conferences appointed committees which after examining the various aspects of the problem recommended the establishment of three academies, viz., an Academy for Dance, Drama and Music, an Academy of Letters, and an Academy of Art. We have met today for the inauguration of the first of these academies.

A brief enumeration of the functions of the Academy will give you an idea of what we expect it to do. Some important functions are :

- (i) to promote research in the field of Indian dance, drama and music and for this purpose to establish a library and a museum ;
- (ii) to encourage the exchange of ideas and enrichment of techniques between the different regions in regard to the arts of dance, drama and music ;
- (iii) to encourage, where necessary, the establishment of theatre centres, on the basis of regional languages, and co-operation among different theatre centres ;
- (iv) to encourage the setting up of institutions providing training in the art of theatre, including instruction in the actor's training, study of stagecraft and the production of plays ;

- (v) to publish literature on Indian dance, drama and music, including reference works such as an illustrated dictionary or handbook of technical terms ;
- (vi) to encourage the development of amateur dramatic activity, the children's theatre, the open air theatre and the rural theatre in its various forms;
- (vii) to revive and preserve folk dance and folk music in different regions of the country and to encourage the development of community music, martial music, etc.
- (viii) to sponsor dance, drama and music festivals on an all-India basis, and to encourage regional festivals;
- (ix) to award prizes and distinctions and to give recognition to individual artists for outstanding achievements in the fields of dance, drama and music; and
- (x) to promote cultural exchanges in the field of dance, drama and music with other countries.

Since the Central Government would bear the main burden of financing the Academy, it was considered appropriate, at least in the initial stages, to leave the choice of the Chairman and the Treasurer to the President and the Government of India. The Academy will, however, be autonomous in its internal working and will include in its membership representatives of the State Governments and of important arts organisations as well as distinguished artists in their personal capacity. A provision has also been made for the amendment of its constitution as and when desired by the Academy. Specially noteworthy is the institution of the office of Fellows of the Academy; election must be almost unanimous and the total number will be strictly limited so that it will be a real honour—the greatest in the country—to be a Fellow of the Academy.

India can be proud of a long heritage and tradition in the field of dance, drama and music. In the field of fine arts, as in those of philosophy and science, India and Greece occupy an almost unique position in human history. It is my conviction that in the field of music, the achievement of India is greater than that of even Greece. The breadth and depth of Indian music is perhaps unrivalled as is its integration of vocal and instrumental music.

The essence of Indian civilisation and culture has always been a spirit of assimilation and synthesis. Nowhere is this more clearly shown than in the field of music. The amalgamation of Persian

and Classical Indian styles during the Middle Ages gave rise to a type of music which combines the excellences of both. When the Muslims came to India, Persian music was already a fully developed system but it did not take Muslims long to discover the special merits of Indian music. They not only adopted it as their own but added to it richly by adapting elements from the Persian tradition. Since then there has been no separate development of the two systems, but within India a combined stream has grown which, in richness and splendour, surpasses both the original tributaries.

Amir Khusro is a well-known name to every student of Indian history. He was a great poet but his inventive genius has left its mark on other fields of the fine arts as well. In music, he has created new forms through the combination of Indian and Persian melodies. *Aiman*, *Tarana*, *Qol*, *Sazgri*, and *Suhla* and other tunes, which are sung to this day by millions of Indians, are a living testimony to his genius and his power of synthesis. In the field of instrumental music, it was he who invented the *Sitar*. He found the *Veena* too elaborate and complicated an instrument and simplified it by reducing the number of strings to only three. The name *Sitar*, which in Persian means three strings, still bears testimony to this fact.

The same process of simplification and development is found in the field of vocal music. Sultan Husain Sharqy, King of Jaunpur, was a great lover of music, and it was he who introduced the *Khayal* style in Indian music. The old classical style of *Dhrupad* was too difficult and rigid for the fluent expression of emotions. In *Khayal*, he perfected a style which has the dignity of the *Dhrupad* without its rigidity and has become one of the most cherished forms of Indian music.

We find the same spirit of assimilation and synthesis in the evolution of the various musical instruments of India. There were *Tanpuras* of various types which were popular in Iran, and India adopted and adapted them to suit her own requirements. Another Persian instrument, *Qansun*, is played even to this day by the people of Kashmir. There is therefore no better example of the composite culture of India than in the field of music. The co-operation of Hindus and Muslims for almost a thousand years has here brought about a consummation that has perhaps no equal in the world.

We do not know the full history of the development of drama. New researches into Egyptology for the last 50 years indicate that drama was popular in Egypt thousands of years before the advent of Christ. If we are to accept Breasted's theory, it would appear that the Memphite drama was well developed as early as the fourth millennium before Christ. In 800 B.C., the tradition was revived under the orders of Shakaba, the Ethiopian Pharaoh, and a small fragment of a play survives to this day. In Babylon and Nineveh also religious festivals were accompanied by drama. All these indicate that, as in the fields of science and philosophy, Greece received inspiration as well as models from the earlier traditions of Egypt.

There is no doubt that whatever might be the source from which the Greeks derived their inspiration, they developed drama and brought it to a level that is still unsurpassed. Comparisons in such fields are invidious, but we can still say that Kalidasa may be compared with the greatest among the Greek dramatists. We have also the works of Bhasa, Bhavabhuti and Banbhatta who raised the Indian drama to a level which is perhaps not inferior to that attained by the Greeks. In the field of the theory of drama, Indian achievements are perhaps still more remarkable and serve as models even to this day.

In the field of dance, the great variety of Indian styles has attracted the notice of all students of arts and culture. The range of Indian dance extends from the strictly classical styles, developed in the temples with their infinite variety of expression and modulations, to the wonderful rhythm and flow of folk dances in different regions of the land. In their variety they present a richness of forms that have few parallels elsewhere in the world. What is most remarkable is the continuity of these traditions and the vigour they display to this day.

This precious heritage of dance, drama and music is one which we must cherish and develop. We must do so not only for our own sake but also as our contribution to the cultural heritage of mankind. Nowhere is it truer than in the field of art, that to sustain means to create. Traditions cannot be preserved but can only be created afresh. It will be the aim of these academies to preserve our traditions by offering them an institutional form.

The Academy of Dance, Drama and Music is the first of our

three proposed academies and I am happy that the President has kindly agreed to inaugurate it. I have now great pleasure in inviting him to do so.

*Speech at the meeting
of the Sahitya Akadami
(National Academy of Letters),
New Delhi, March 12, 1954*



I have pleasure in welcoming you to this first meeting of the National Academy of Letters.

In 1944, the Government of India accepted, in principle, a proposal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (as it was then called) that a National Cultural Trust should be set up to encourage cultural activities in all fields. The Trust should include three academies—one in letters, one in the visual arts and one for dance, drama and music. After the National Government was established in 1947, three conferences were convened to work out in detail the implications of this proposal. The conferences agreed about the need for the academies but felt that since a National Government had been established, it was not necessary to set up a National Trust. It was, however, recommended that steps should be taken to set up the academies as autonomous bodies and provide them with the funds necessary for their work. The Government of India has accepted that recommendation.

The Government's function in this process is mainly that of a curtain-raiser. Someone has to set up the academies, and the Government has decided to do so. Once they are set up, the Government will refrain from exercising any control and leave the academies to perform their functions as autonomous institutions. The Sangeet Natak Akadami has already been established in accordance with this decision of the Government. The Academy of Fine Arts is in process of formation, and today we have met to set up what is perhaps the most important of the three.

There are some—and the Prime Minister was one of them at one stage—who expressed the view that the academies should not have been established in this fashion. They regard it as an imposition from above. They hold that the growth of the academies should have been encouraged from below. Instead of establishing an academy, the Government should have waited till there grew up in the country societies or individuals who had the necessary authority to establish the academies. Once such

academics had been set up, the Government's function should have been merely to recognise them.

I am afraid I cannot agree with this approach. Since the Renaissance, many academics have been established in Europe. Today there is hardly any country in the Western world which does not have one or more national academies. All these academies were established by the Governments under letters-patent of the Sovereigns or by legislation. There was therefore no reason why the Government of India should not take the initiative for the establishment of the academies. In fact, if we had waited for the academy to grow from below we might have had to wait till the Greek Kalends.

I should like to dwell for a moment on the meaning of the term 'academy.' We are all aware that this term was first used for the school that Plato had established. The garden in which the school was set up was named after an ancient hero 'Akademus,' and it was after him that the school came to be known as the Academy. Whatever the origin of the name, it has, in course of time, acquired a connotation of its own which, as far as we are aware, cannot be expressed by any other single word. What do we mean by an academy? Is it a school? The answer is 'No.' Is it a research institute? Again the answer is 'No.' Is it then an association of writers and authors? Still the answer is in the negative. If, however, it be asked whether it possesses the attributes of all of them, the answer must be an emphatic 'Yes.' By calling it an academy, we refer to all these facets and signify that it is at the same time a school, an institute and an association. If we were to call it a school or an institute or association only, the full significance of what we intend would remain unexpressed. An academy is, in fact, something more than any or all of them.

The academics flourished in Greece for almost 900 years until Justinian ended them by a special decree. During this period, the term 'Academy' acquired its special significance. There is no other word in any Eastern or Western language which can convey the full flavour of the academy. That is why we have resisted the temptation of a vain search for a new term and have kept the original word in its adapted form as 'Akadami,' in conformity with the requirements of Hindi pronunciation.

Today is the first day in the life of the Indian Academy of Letters. It is necessary that we should have a clear idea of the

work which it is intended to perform and the standards it will place before the world. The question of standard is, to my mind, fundamental in the concept of the academy. The Academy must lay down a standard for those who seek to be recognised as distinguished men of letters. The Academy would serve its purpose only if its standard is set as high as possible. If the standard is lowered, the very purpose of establishing the Academy is lost.

The object of the Academy is to educate public taste and advance the cause of literature. This can be done only if we maintain the highest standard. Then alone will writers aim at giving their best and create works of art which will add to the heritage of man. On this question of standard, we should, I feel, be guided by the example of the French Academy. Established by Louis XIV in 1635 with only 40 members, it has to this day refused to increase this number. The number of men in the whole of France who can achieve the status of Academician is thus only 40. Even the most distinguished men have to wait for a place in the Academy till there is a vacancy.

The result of this insistence on standard is that France regards the membership of the Academy as an earnest of immortality. To be elected to the Academy was held to be a guarantee of permanent fame. The Academy has been so exclusive that we find that even the greatest men of letters have sometimes been denied the status of members. Descartes, Pascal, Molière are all men whose distinction as men of letters is beyond dispute, but they never found a place among the Academicians. Montesquieu and Voltaire were fortunate in this respect but Rousseau never achieved the distinction. We all know the high position occupied by Encyclopaedists in the world of French letters but among them only D'Alcembert and Marmontel were able to become members. Even Diderot and Helvetius found no place in the Academy.

Coming to modern times, we find that some of the greatest figures of French literature waited long and sometimes in vain to achieve the distinction. The nineteenth century is perhaps the most glorious period of modern French literature. There were, in this period, writers whose works have become classics, but, even among them, there were many who never achieved the membership of the Academy. Neither Daudet nor Maupassant nor Zola were members. Lamartine regarded himself fortunate that he was elected a member after some years' waiting. Even

the author of *Les Misérables* had to wait for ten years before he could become a member. In recent times, André Gide, who is a French writer of world-wide reputation and had received the Nobel Prize in 1947, was never a member of the Academy. If the Indian Academy of Letters does not maintain similar standards and reserve its honours only for the immortals of literature, the Academy will not be able to serve the object for which it is being established.

In framing the constitution of the Academy, these considerations were constantly before us. We saw that if we prescribed the membership of the Academy on the same basis as in the French Academy, it would have been difficult to set it up at all. We must admit that the literatures of India today have not reached a stage where 30 or 40 persons could be selected straight-away and be regarded as immortals. We have accordingly made a distinction between Members and Fellows. For membership, we have not laid down the standards prescribed for the French Academy and have considered it enough that a person should have helped in the development of literature or established his position as a man of letters. In order, however, to create the same standards as in the French Academy, we have created a separate class called 'Fellows of the Academy.' Here, as in the French Academy, only the selected will be admitted.

We considered carefully the question as to what should be the number of Fellows. We finally decided that the number of Fellows in the Sahitya Akadami must not exceed 21. This does not, however, mean that there will be necessarily 21 in the Academy. It only means that there will never be more than 21 Fellows. In the Sangeet Natak Akadami, where the limit is higher, namely, 30, there are at present only seven Fellows. For the Academy of Letters, my feeling is that the number will perhaps be less, for the selection is to be done with even greater care.

So far as the constitution of the Academy is concerned, it may be briefly described as follows. All the fourteen languages enumerated in the Constitution of India have their representatives on the Academy. There are also representatives of the States, the universities and of the Government of India. In addition, there are eight persons nominated by the Minister for Education for their services to the cause of literature. All the three academies have a constitution more or less on this pattern.

You will find that while all the languages named in the Indian Constitution are represented in the Academy, English does not find a place there. You will agree that the Academy would have remained incomplete if some distinguished writers of English had not been included. We have to admit that for the last 100 or 150 years, English has served not only as a vehicle of knowledge and learning but also as the medium of expression for many of our finest writers. This was inevitable, for English had achieved such a pre-eminence that the status of an author was not assured till he had expressed himself through its medium. Tagore, who is the greatest poet of modern India, had been writing in Bengali ever since his childhood but his fame was not fully recognised even in his own province till the English version of *Gitanjali* declared him as one of the greatest poets of the world. Mahatma Gandhi's contribution to national awakening and the achievement of independence is acknowledged universally. His writings in Gujarati are, however, known only to the people in Gujarat. It was his writings in English that enabled him to evoke a new political consciousness and give a revolutionary turn to Indian life. Similarly, Aurobindo Ghosh's claim to distinction rests upon the quality of his writings in English.

I have, for some time, been thinking how best to encourage the development of creative literature in the different Indian languages. Some of the State Governments are no doubt working to this end, but I felt that it was necessary to take measures which would secure an all-India recognition for writers in different languages. I asked the Ministry to examine the issue, and it has been suggested that one way of such encouragement is to award prizes or other distinction to writers of merit. A scheme which has been accepted by the Government is to give prizes of Rs. 5,000 every year for the best work in each of the 14 languages mentioned in the Schedule to the Constitution. Every year, the work of the three preceding years will be surveyed and a prize given to the writer of the best work. No author will be entitled to get a prize a second time, for I am sure you will agree that such a scheme should benefit as many people as possible. The awards will be made on the recommendations of the Academy of Letters.

One thing I would like to make clear is that these prizes will be given for recognised merit, and no one should apply for them.

It is my hope that the first prizes will be announced before the end of the calendar year.

I have already said that the Government's function in establishing the Academy is that of a curtain-raiser only. This also applies to the appointment of its first Chairman. The Government of India have accordingly selected its first Chairman but hereafter it will be the Academy which will appoint its own office-bearers.

I am glad that Sri Jawaharlal Nehru has agreed to serve as the first Chairman of the Academy. He has been appointed not because he is the Prime Minister but because he has carved out for himself a distinctive place as a writer and author. The Committee which framed the constitution of the Academy submitted three names, of which the first was that of Pandit Nehru. The Ministry of Education offered the Chairmanship to him, as it was beyond dispute that from every point of view he is the best man we could have selected for the first Chairmanship of India's National Academy of Letters.

*Address at the first meeting
of the Lalit Kala Akadami
(National Academy of Art),
New Delhi, August 5, 1954*



THE ROLE OF VISUAL ART

I am happy to welcome you all on the occasion of the inauguration of the National Academy of Art. Some of you will remember that when I addressed the All India Conference on Arts at Calcutta on August 29, 1949, I told you that at the recommendation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, the Government had decided to set up three academies, viz., an Academy of Letters to deal with Indian languages and literatures, an Academy of the Visual Arts and Architecture and an Academy of Dance, Drama and Music. The Academy of Dance, Drama and Music was accordingly set up in 1953 under the name Sangeet Natak Akadami. Similarly the Academy of Letters was set up under the title Sahitya Akadami in March this year. With the inauguration today of the Academy of Art under the title Lalit Kala Akadami, the programme for the establishment of the National Cultural Trust, which I had set before myself, is now complete.

I have always been of the view that apart from the intrinsic value of art for its own sake, it is an essential element in education as it develops the feelings and aesthetic sensibilities of man. I may remind you of what I said at that conference in Calcutta in defence of art in education and life :

"It is today realised that no education can be complete which does not pay proper attention to the development and refinement of the emotions. This can be done best through the provision of facilities for training the sensibilities by the practice of one of the fine arts. Apart from the general question of developing the finer aspects of personality through artistic education, there is also the immediate utility of such education in developing our manual skill and perceptive sensibility. It is recognised today that education at pre-primary or nursery stage can be best imparted through training the child in the matching of colours, shapes and sizes. This releases the creative instinct

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in the child and thus diverts his superfluous energy from merely destructive channels into those of social behaviour and decorum. Thus, whether from the point of view of the training of the emotions or refinement of sentiments or development of manual skill and creative urge, the importance of art as an element of education cannot be overemphasised."

I may tell you briefly what the Ministry has tried to do in furthering the development of art since the holding of the All India Conference. One of the recommendations of that conference was that regional surveys of indigenous art, including folk art, painting, sculpture, bronze-casting, etc., should be undertaken so that authoritative handbooks concerning art designs and techniques and methods and material used in India could be published. The Government of India accepted that recommendation and awarded five scholarships of the value of Rs. 3,500 each for the survey of indigenous art in Madras, Bombay, West Bengal, Orissa, Jammu and Kashmir.

The Government also set up a body called the Bharat Kala Samiti to advise the Government in all matters pertaining to art and to promote the cause of art in the country until the establishment of the National Academy of Art. The Samiti has decided to sponsor a critical and comprehensive history of Indian art and has taken in hand the immediate publication of a Moghul album, a contemporary art album and a set of colour picture postcards. It is expected that these three volumes will be published before the end of the year. The Samiti is also considering the publication of a representative volume of Indian paintings, ranging from the earliest Ajanta frescoes to modern times. At the instance of Unesco, we have assisted the New York Graphic Society in bringing out an album of 32 colour reproductions of Ajanta paintings.

In accordance with another resolution of the conference, a fund called the National Art Treasure Fund has been created with contributions from the Central and State Governments and private organisations and individuals.

The Government have also instituted a system of scholarships for young workers in art and other cultural fields. The object of this scheme is to provide effective encouragement to young artists in order to give them suitable facilities for the development of

their talents in the right direction. Applications for the first batch of such scholarships have been received and the selection of suitable candidates will be made in the near future.

I must also make a special mention of the establishment in August 1949 of the National Museum in Rashtrapati Bhavan. Here we have collected, under one roof, specimens of Indian art from the earliest times to this day.

Another important event in the world of art was the inauguration of the National Gallery of Modern Art in March this year. Jaipur House was acquired for the purpose and some of the masterpieces of modern Indian painting are displayed there. Efforts are constantly being made to make the collection richer and more representative. On the occasion of the opening of the National Gallery, an All India Exhibition of contemporary sculpture was organised at Jaipur House and prizes awarded to artists who had done distinguished work in this field.

In addition to these activities of the Ministry, voluntary efforts in the field of art have also been supported by suitable grants to various organisations. Special mention may be made of the grants paid to *Shankar's Weekly* for the annual organisation of an International Exhibition of Children's Paintings since 1952. A selection from those paintings has been published in an album entitled *Child Art*. We also arranged for an exchange of paintings between Indian and Japanese children. A grant was made to Rabindra Bhavan, Visva-Bharati, to organise exhibitions of Rabindranath Tagore's paintings in Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Grants have also been made to the Indian Academy of Fine Art, Amritsar, and the All India Fine Arts and Crafts Society, New Delhi.

Of special interest was the exchange of exhibitions of paintings and other forms of visual art with foreign countries. Since 1949 exhibitions from China and the U.S.S.R. have visited India while Indian exhibitions have been sent out to the U.K., Egypt, Turkey, Iraq, China, Japan, Australia, the U.S.A., Canada and the U.S.S.R. A special tribute is due in this connection to Unesco which brought to India an exhibition of the paintings of Leonardo Da Vinci, a travelling exhibition of colour reproductions of paintings from 1860 to date, an exhibition on "Education and Peace," another on "Man against the Jungle" and a scientific exhibition: Our Senses and the Knowledge of the World. We have also

participated this year in the International Art Exhibition in Venice and are helping to send an exhibition of Indian Art through the Ages to several middle Eastern, European and South American countries as well as to the U.S.A.

I have, however, always held that in the field of art the role of the Government must be secondary. The Government should, no doubt, take an interest in the development of art but the truth is that art cannot really flourish until there are strong non-official agencies working for it. This is the main reason for the setting up of the Lalit Kala Akadami which, though established by the Government, will work as an autonomous body and without any interference from the Government in its activities. It is true that it is being set up by the Government but this is only because some one had to take the initiative in setting it up. Now that this has been done, the work of the Government is over and from now on it will be your function as members of the Akadami to provide inspiration to artists throughout the country.

I may very briefly describe the constitution of the Lalit Kala Akadami. It is a corporate body and will work through a General Council, an Executive Board, a Finance Committee, and any other committee or committees set up by the General Council or the Executive Board.

The General Council will include, besides officers of the Academy, nominees of the Central and State Governments, representatives of recognised art organisations, eminent artists and the Directors of the National Museum and the National Art Gallery.

The General Council will elect the Vice-Chairman and the members of the Executive Board, and the Finance Committee will approve the budget and appoint auditors.

The Executive Board will be responsible for the supervision and control of the work of the Academy and its office, while the Finance Committee will consider the budget estimates, make recommendations to the Executive Board and prescribe the limit for annual expenditure.

I referred earlier to the assistance received from Unesco in bringing to India an exhibition of European art. Unesco has now taken the initiative in organising a regional Seminar on "Arts and Crafts in General Education and Community Life" in Tokyo this very month. The object of this Seminar is to study ways and means whereby arts and crafts can enrich general edu-

cation and contribute to the amenities of community life. I am particularly happy that Sri D. P. Roy Chowdhury, our first Chairman of the Lalit Kala Akadami, has been invited by Unesco to serve as the Director of this first Asian Seminar on Art.

It appears to me right and proper that the Unesco Seminar should lay such stress on the place of art in everyday life. Here in India we have always recognised that art is an essential element in the culture of the individual and the community. We have our simple village women who do beautiful *alpana* and decorate their homes. We have our village craftsmen who weave designs and patterns that are the envy of trained artists in the sophisticated countries of Europe and America. If we ask how even the poor in India have developed such pure taste in art, the answer to my mind is that this is due to the splendid architectural and sculptural work we find in our religious buildings. From earliest times, the temple was not only a place of worship but a place of beauty. During the Middle Ages magnificent mosques were built which combined great nobility with great simplicity. The common man who was continually seeing these splendid works of art could not but develop a pure and refined taste. A country which produced Konarak or the Brihadeswara Temple or the Taj Mahal had not only a high conception but also inimitable skill in art. The minds which conceived these noble edifices, the hands which shaped them and the patronage which made their construction possible evoke our admiration to this day.

The patronage to art which in former days was extended by kings and nobles will have to be given by the people and the State in contemporary India. I am attracted by a system which, I understand, is in vogue in Sweden. Under this system whenever any public building is constructed, a percentage of the estimated expenditure is earmarked for sculpture, painting and other decoration. I have under consideration a similar proposal so that in future all public buildings, constructed with State funds, may provide opportunities to our artists of today to display their talent.

I need hardly repeat to an audience like the present one, the record of India's glorious heritage of art. In the field of architecture, she has monuments which challenge comparison with the best anywhere in the world. Her sculptures have a plastic quality and vitality that have evoked the admiration of the most carping critics. Her paintings, whether they are the ageless frescoes of

Ajanta or the exquisite miniatures of the Middle Ages, are a precious heritage for the whole world. Not only in such traditional works of art, but also in articles of everyday use—made of clay or stone, brass or ivory, silver or gold, or bamboo, cane or wicker—her artists and artisans display wonderful skill.

The Lalit Kala Akadami, which is being set up today, must work to preserve the glorious traditions of the past and enrich them by the work of our modern artists. It must also seek to improve standards and refine public taste. If it serves this purpose, and I have every hope it will, the Academy will have justified itself to India and the world.

I am glad to announce that the Government have decided to give land and to provide funds for the construction of suitable buildings for the three academies. I hope that in a year's time these academies will be lodged in their own buildings.

WORLD EVENTS BRING FREEDOM TO INDIA.

— Maulana Azad

The Congress President Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview to Associated Press of India on March 18, at New Delhi declared that he saw no reason why a solution of the Indian problem should not be considered hopeful.

In view of the forthcoming talks and negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission the Congress President said that he would not attempt to speculate about things or anticipate the course of events. "In so far as the Congress is concerned," the Maulana said, "Our fundamentals and the main outline of our approach are already well-known. As regards details, it is obvious it all depends on developments and various adjustments which will have to be made."

The Maulana spoke with quiet confidence

Continued on next page

SOLDIERS NOT SPECTATORS.

Addressing a public meeting in Bombay on March 16, 1946, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad appealed to the citizens of Bombay and the people of India to maintain a ~~chh~~ calm and peaceful atmosphere in the country and strengthen the hands of the Congress for the forthcoming negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission.

Maulana Azad said that till the other day the country was confronted with ^{many} many problems of equally ^{urgent} urgent importance. All these problems had receded into the background because of the most important problem of the day, namely, how India should take over the reins of her ^e destiny in her own hands. That was the problem before ^A the Congress and that was the problem not only of the Congress but of the Indian people as a whole.

While the Congress was doing its best to play its ^{part} ~~best~~ ~~in~~ ~~xxxx~~ ~~its~~ ~~max~~ in the present critical juncture of India's history, the people of India should also play their part. The Congress must have an army of enthusiastic, determined, strong but peaceful people.

"The Congress wants you to have faith in its leadership and wait for its call like disciplined soldiers of a disciplined army. If you act upto it, the Congress will be the strongest political party in the world, and no power on earth can prevent it from attaining the independence of the country in the shortest possible time."

He advised the people to conserve their energies. If they frittered away their strength, as they did recently in Bombay and other cities, they would prove a great problem to the country.

QUESTION OF INCLUDING CONGRESS MUSLIM.

Letter from the Viceroy to the Congress President dated 22nd June, 1946:-

My dear Maulana Sahib,

I understand from press reports that there is a strong feeling in Congress circles that the party should insist on their right to include a Muslim of their own choice among the representatives of the Congress in the Interim Government.

For reasons of which you are already aware it is not possible for the Cabinet Mission or myself to accept this request, but I would draw your attention to paragraph 5 of the statement of the 16th June which reads as follows:

"The above composition of the Interim Government is in no way to be taken as a precedent for the solution of any other communal question. It is an expedient put forward to solve the present difficulty only, and to obtain the best available Coalition Government."

In the light of this assurance that no precedent is established we appeal to the Congress not to press their demand, but to take part in the strong Interim Government which the country so urgently needs.

Sd./- Navell.

R. I. N. Strike —

MAULANA AZAD APPEALS NOT TOACCENTUATE SITUATION

The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in an interview on 28th February 1946 on the recent happenings in the R.I.N. said that it was true that discipline in the army was a matter of supreme importance, but, having regard to the entire chain of happenings in connectin with the ratings' strike, the question of discipline should not be viewed in narrow spirit. Nothing should be done, Maulana Azad said, to give the impression that individuals, can be, ~~xxxxxx~~ or are responsible for collective and general feelings and actions.

Maulana Azad said: Now that the R.I.N. episode has come to a close, it is possible to view its origin and development in their proper perspective in a dispassionate manner. It is, whether the action of ratings in going on strike is called by its technical term of the naval law, viz. "mutiny," or it is called by the civil term 'strike,' the essential nature of the action resorted to by the ratings undergoes no change. It is perfectly clear that certain grievances which the ratings had been feeling for some time were not redressed for one reason or other.

Certain immediate incidents brought the trouble to a head, but the root of the struggle, as far as one can judge, was the feeling of the ratings that in spite of the fact that they were in no sense inferior to those of the British Navy, they were not placed on the same footing as regards general treatment. For a hundred and fifty years ^{or longer the Indian services have been} subject to this discriminatory treatment. Now that India has come of age, and of national dignity and self-respect, racial discrimination is very keenly felt and resented.

Insult to self-Respect

It is quite obvious from the facts as they have been reported that Indian ratings of R.I.⁴ went on strike as the result of what they considered was a gratuitous insult to national self-respect. They formulated their demands in a clear and precise form. Examination of their demands shows that they were legitimate, and so far as they are legitimate, they must be sympathetically examined and redressed.

The term "Ring Leader" in such instances, said President Azad, usually applies to a person, who acts as a spokesman of a general body of complainants. It would be unjust to select such persons for punishment. In the present atmosphere of the country which is surcharged with ^{emotion and political indignation} ~~sentiment~~ that nothing should be done which may accentuate the situation. I earnestly appeal to the authorities concerned who seem to be anxious to secure efficient working of the services both during the interim period and in the future to try to see things from the Indian national point of view. India is not in a mood to ~~be~~ tolerate any action that may have even the semblance of the suppression of national spirit in any quarter.

NEW A.I.C.C. DISCUSSES Muslim's proposalsMAULANA AZAD'S SPEECH

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President ^{at the A.I.C.C. at Bombay on July 6, 1946} in his valedictory speech said, "We have met here after six years. No elections to the All-India Congress Committee could be held till now owing to the War and the abnormal conditions created by the war. These six years have been years of profound importance in our history as they mark far-reaching changes in the international situation and our own struggle for our national independence. We are on the threshold of our freedom. Our freedom is coming not because of international changes but because of the revolution that has taken place in our own country resulting in great national awakening.

"The new- All-India Congress Committee which has just assembled contains new blood and fresh minds. I am glad to welcome the new members as new blood always gives fresh vigour and strength. This meeting of the new All-India Congress Committee should have been held along with the plenary session of the Congress, but owing to abnormal conditions we have been ^unable to hold the annual session. Now that a new All-India Congress Committee has been elected I have decided to hand over the reins of office of the Congress President to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to allow the work of the Congress to be carried on uninterrupted, though the annual session itself may not be held for sometime.

"When I took charge of the office of the Congress six years ago, we were struggling for our freedom. But today when I lay down the reins of the office, I am happy to find that the question is no longer one of fighting for our freedom, as we are already on the threshold of freedom, but of working out the

freedom that is coming. Only one further step is required for us to reach our goal,"

Reply to criticism

The Congress President then referred to the criticism that the Working Committee had not consulted the All-India Congress Committee earlier in connection with the constitutional negotiations and said that the criticism was wrong for the reason that as soon as definite conclusions were reached the Working Committee lost no time in summoning the All-India Congress Committee to get its stamp of approval on the decisions taken by the Working Committee.

Maulana Azad urged the Committee to consider the results of the Working Committee's negotiations with the British Cabinet Mission dispassionately and see if the Working Committee had not discharged its responsibilities in the best interests of the country.

PANDIT NEHRU OCCUPIES CHAIR

The Congress President then announced that he would now vacate the chair and asked Pandit Nehru to occupy the chair. The two Presidents then warmly shook hands and Pandit Nehru took the chair.

TRIBUTE TO AZAD

Sardar Vallabhai Patel then in a brief speech paid a warm and glowing tribute to the arduous work done by the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. He said, "This is the first time in the history of the Congress that any one person has held the reins of office of the Congress President continuously for six years. This honour goes to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. During these six years, whatever difficulties the

INDIA'S FUTURE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MAULANA AZAD'S ADDRESS Explains

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, addressing his first press conference as Member for Education and Arts, on Feb. 3, 1947 appealed both to the public and to the selected scholars to treat the system of overseas scholarships as a sacred trust by which the foundations of India's future educational industrial and technical development were being laid. The scholars who go abroad, he urged, "must go in a spirit of service and dedication."

It was proposed, said Maulana Azad, to strengthen the organisation in the U.K. and U.S.A. for dealing with the students' problems as quickly as possible. In the U.K. particularly, a separate welfare branch would be set up in the Education Department of the High Commissioner's office to help the students in regard to accommodation and also their welfare generally. Government had already set up at considerable expense two hostels for Indian students, one in London and the other at Edinburgh, and it was now proposed to establish another hostel in London to serve as a reception and transit camp.

SCOPE FOR WOMEN SCHOLARS

The scholarships awarded under the scheme had till now been confined exclusively to technical and scientific subjects. The necessity for a large personnel of trained scientists and industrial technicians was obvious. At the same time it must be realized that a balanced system of national education required also workers in the fields of pure science and the humanities. He therefore, intended that in future a percentage of scholarships should be earmarked for study in such cultural subjects. The number of women who had secured scholarship under the scheme had been very small. The main reason had been that scholarship were confined to technical and industrial scientific subjects. The expansion of the scheme to include both

pure science and the humanities would allow women greater scope. "The future development" of education in India demands that a large number of women scholars should go abroad and study such subjects. If the expansion in the list of subjects for the award of scholarships serves this purpose, well and good; otherwise I will consider the desirability of earmarking a percentage of scholarships for women.

Maulana Azad realised the necessity of looking into the problem of selection and for this purpose a committee would be formed shortly to make recommendations in the light of the experience of the past three years. The committee might not be purely departmental. Experts might be taken from outside also.

"The method of selection followed till now," he said "has been satisfactory. As however, the scholars are required to sign a bond to serve under government, it is considered desirable to associate the Federal Public Service Commission with the selection. The department is considering alternative methods for doing so.

Question of Employment

"I feel that the time has also come to consider the terms of the bond which students have till now executed. They are required to pledge themselves to serve government for a period of five years after completion of their training. Such bonds may at times prove harsh on a scholar if the Government is not in a position to offer him employment, as no period is laid down to define the termination of his obligation. ^A possible solution would be to fix a period during which the Government would have the first call on the services of the trained scholar. If the Government ^{during this period, the scholar would be free to accept} are unable to find him suitable employment elsewhere. I will soon announce my decision on this question."

MAULANA AZAD'S MESSAGE on Independence Day.
(August 15, 1947)

The first phase of our national struggle has successfully ended. We have achieved freedom. This we could not have done without the fullest co-operation, unity and steadfastness of the entire nation. We would need these qualities still more in our second and more vital stage of national reconstruction. We should ~~not~~ endeavour to utilise our newly won freedom in a manner which will make our freedom a real fulfilment of our hopes. Every Indian must, in this hour of need, respond to the call of the country and perform his or her duty loyally in whatever station of life he or she may be--MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD.

English Translation of the Convocation Address of the Hon'ble Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Minister of Education, Government of India, at the Aligarh University on the 20th February, 1949.

YOUR HIGHNESS AND FRIENDS,

In accepting the invitation extended so cordially by your Vice-Chancellor to come and address the annual Convocation of the Aligarh University, it was but natural that my thoughts should turn to the occasion when I first came in contact with it. That was 36 years ago and took place in circumstances which represented me to many as an opponent of this Institution.

The facts of the case were, however, entirely different. It was a time when Indian Muslims not only stood aloof from all political movements of the day but were inclined to oppose the country's struggle for emancipation. The single largest factor responsible for such political inertia of the Indian Muslims was the lead which the *late* Sir Syed Ahmed, founder of this Institution had given in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The Aligarh party which continued his policy tried to keep the Muslims out of the Indian National Congress and was generally successful except in the case of a few distinguished individuals.

It was in this background that I brought out the AL HILAL in 1912. From the beginning of my political life, I was convinced that Indian Muslims must participate in the movement for emancipation and work towards that end through the National Congress. It was inevitable that I should criticise the political lead which the *late* Sir Syed Ahmed had given and which represented the policy of the Aligarh party. I, therefore, came into a clash with this

party on the political issue. This was, however, regarded by its members as opposition not only to the founder's political policy but to the institution itself. In fact, some of them went so far as to look upon me not only as an opponent but an enemy of Sir Syed Ahmed and Aligarh.

Nothing was, however, farther from the truth. It is true that I regarded the political lead of Sir Syed Ahmed as a grave blunder but at the same time I had the highest admiration for the educational and other reforms which he carried out. I regarded, and still regard, him as one of the greatest Indians of the Nineteenth Century. His achievement in the field of education and social reform could not however blind me to the wrong lead he gave to Indian Muslims in the fields of politics. Thirty-six years have passed since then but as I survey the course of events during this period, I find no reason to revise my judgment on this issue. I then held and still hold that Sir Syed was a great reformer in the educational and social fields, but the wrong lead he gave in politics has been responsible for many of the evils from which we have suffered. It is, however, not my purpose to discuss the political role to-day but to pay my tribute to the memory of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the educational reformer who laid the foundation of modern education among Indian Muslims.

To-day, western education has become a part of our national life and we naturally think of it when we use the term education. It is, therefore, difficult to realise the opposition and struggle which a hundred years ago faced the reformers who wanted to introduce this new education to India. They had not only to blaze a new trail but had to contend with obstacles and difficulties at every step. They had to face all those forces which any reform movement has to face. The prejudices and superstitions of ages clouded the minds of the people. Accepted beliefs and age-old sentiments were both against such change. The cry of religion supplied the opponents of progress with one of their most

poent weapons. The path of religion is not in fact opposed to that of reason and knowledge but unfortunately this has often been represented to be so. The usual cry was that Western education is opposed to the teachings of religion and those who hold religion dear must, therefore, stick to the old education.

Human thought has had to face this conflict at different times in different countries. Europe went through this struggle in the 17th and 18th centuries while the Eastern countries faced this conflict in the 19th century. The Hindus of India faced this struggle earlier and quickly ended it. Among the Muslims, it took a longer time but in the end the inevitable happened. The forces of change triumphed and the new order had to replace the old. So far as Muslims of India are concerned, one can assert without fear of contradiction that the man who played the most important role in this struggle is the presiding spirit of this University. The battle was fought here in Aligarh and Aligarh is a visible embodiment of the victory of the forces of progress.

Some of our writers have compared Sir Syed Ahmed Khan with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. To a large extent the comparison is valid. What Raja Ram Mohan Roy did for Bengal was done by Sir Syed Ahmed 40 years later for Northern India and especially for the Muslims of the country. The only difference between the two is that the main reforms of Raja Ram Mohan Roy were in the field of religion while those of Sir Syed were in the field of education. They have, however, left the stamp of their personality in all spheres of intellectual activity. Religion, education, social life, language, literature and journalism bear witness to their spirit of reform and creative energy.

We have also to remember that even though Sir Syed Ahmed was opposed to the political movement of the Congress there was not the least tinge of communal politics in his attitude. His activities even in the political field

comprised both Hindus and Muslims. He was throughout his life a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. He opposed whatever was in any way likely to cause dissension or difference between them. In his speeches, he again and again used the beautiful metaphor that Hindus and Muslims are the two eyes of Mother India. If any one of the eyes were hurt, it would disfigure Mother India's face.

We can form some idea of his outlook on Indian nationalism from the significance he gave to the term 'Hindu'. In addressing an association of Hindus in Lahore he said "I am sorry that you have restricted in this manner the application of the term 'Hindu'. You have applied it to a particular religious group. But to my mind this application is wrong. I count as Hindu all those who are the inhabitants of this country whatever be their religion or race. This is the reason why I take pride in the fact that I am a Hindu". If the Hindus and Muslims of India had understood the spirit of this teaching and followed it, the whole course of recent events would have taken a different turn.

Sir Syed Ahmed laid the foundations of this educational institution with a specific object. He had been impressed by the spirit of English education and realised that its excellence lay not in mere imparting of instruction but in training of a special kind. The peculiarity of this training was that it developed the character of young men and women and gave them a distinct stamp. He also felt that along with European education, the Muslims must have religious instruction and training. He knew that without such provision the new education would not be popular among the Muslims. He realised that his objects could not be achieved without a special institution for the purpose. He, therefore, dedicated the remaining years of his life to the creation of the Aligarh College. We must remember that this was the first Institution in India which sought to create the atmosphere of a British Public School.

The scheme he had in mind initially was the establishment of a residential university on the lines of Cambridge. He had, however, to content himself with the establishment of only a College. Considering the prevalent conditions, this was no mean achievement. The movement for the University was started after his death as a memorial to him and was accomplished after hard labour of some 20 years.

Sir Syed had established in Aligarh not only a College but an intellectual and cultural centre in tune with the progressive spirit of the times. The centre of this circle was Sir Syed himself and he attracted round him some of the best intellects of the day. Perhaps no journal in India has ever had such influence upon the mind of the generation as his TEHZIB-UL-AKHLAQ. Sir Syed founded this journal after return from his English tour. He and his colleagues were its main contributors. In fact, this journal laid the foundation of modern Urdu literature and so developed the language that to-day it is capable of expressing the highest and most abstruse thought. Perhaps there was not a single literary figure among the Moslems of the day who was not influenced by his circle. The best Muslim authors of the modern age were nourished here. Here developed the new schools of research, interpretation and reconstruction of Muslim thought. Though modern Urdu poetry was born in Lahore, it was here that it found the atmosphere most conducive to its growth. Poems of a new style were composed and read at the sessions of the Mohammadan Education Conference. This was also the first forum of Urdu oratory. All the important speakers of the day were created or nurtured on this platform.

The 19th century was for India, as for other regions in the East, a transitional age. The old forms of life and thought were being demolished and new ones set up in their place. The old earth of India was being moulded into a new form. So far as the Indian Moslems are concerned, one can say that it was in Aligarh that these movements of reform were consummated. It was one of the regions which took the lead

in the creation of a new India. The 19th Century marked a period of renaissance for the Indian spirit and Aligarh was one of the centres of such renaissance.

It is true that with the death of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Aligarh lost many of its distinctive features. Though the College was raised to a University, it could not revive the traditions of its early glory. Nevertheless, you must remember that this glorious heritage is yours, and it is for you to revive the past splendour of Aligarh. The inscriptions which have been carved on the walls of your Strachy Hall may fade with the passage of time, but the inscriptions which Aligarh has written on the modern period of Indian history can never fade. Future historians will discover in Aligarh one of the main sources which has contributed to the evolution of modern India.

An educational institution which has such a glorious past must necessarily hold the promise of an equally glorious future. I am not aware what is the state of your minds today, nor in what colours the future appears to you. Does it bring to you the message of closing doors or of opening gates that introduce you to new vistas of experience? I do not know what visions are before you, but I will tell you what visions I see. You perhaps feel that doors that were open have been closed. I see that doors that were locked have now opened. In the words of the Persian poet,

Tafawut ast mian-i-shanidan-i-man-o-to

Tu bastan-i-dar, o, man jatahe-bab me shanwam.

What you and I hear are different. You hear the sound of closing doors but I of doors that open.

I want that I should speak to you frankly and without mental reservations and I am sure that this is what you expect of me. If I thought that you are still living in that atmosphere of communal politics which was prevalent before the 15th of August, 1947, I would without hesitation say that your future does not hold that promise which, as an Indian

Muslim, I would like you to have. I am glad that there has been a profound change since then and the signs of a new era are becoming clearer every day. You have realised in good time what must be the intellectual atmosphere of this institution in the changed circumstances of today. You have responded to the call of new times and created conditions which are in conformity with the changed outlook. I have no hesitation in saying that by conforming to the spirit of the times, you have rendered a great service not only to this institution but to all Muslims of the Indian Union. For this, I extend to you my sincere congratulations.

I would like to describe to you briefly the Central Government's plan and programme of national education and the place which an institution like Aligarh will have in that new scheme. I think you will agree that the educational set up for a secular and democratic State must be secular. It should provide for all citizens of the State the same type of Education without any distinction. It should have its own intellectual flavour and its own national character. It should have as its aim the ideal of human progress and prosperity. The Indian Union has set before itself such a scheme of common education for all without distinction or discrimination in favour of any community or group.

At the same time, it recognizes that there is scope for educational institutions which emphasise certain special types of learning. Their doors should, however, be open to all who are interested in such studies. This is the sphere of national education in which your institution can find its proper place in conformity with the spirit of the times. In this way, you will, inspite of your special characteristics, be a part of the general scheme of education and serve a special function in it. For this you must, however, display the widest catholicity of spirit. It is said that Plato had the following text inscribed on his Academy: "Those who do not know Geometry, have no place here." Your Institution must not have even such a restricting clause. Your motto should be that you will wel-

come both those who "know Geometry" as well as those who do not.

I am aware that the governing principle in your Institution has been from the very beginning wide and liberal. When your College was founded, the very first batch of students included Hindus as well as Muslims. Your staff has also been recruited from all communities. The names of certain Hindu professors have become part of your institution's history. I am sure that these traditions will be broadened and further enriched in the course of time.

Study and research in Islamic learning and Islamic History have been part of your tradition. I must say that, after the death of Sir Syed, it no longer displayed the vigour it had during his days. Even after the University was established, old hopes were not fulfilled. Your duty today is to revive those old traditions and to create in your University an atmosphere of research and enquiry into all the spheres of knowledge.

I have already reminded you that Aligarh was the place where modern Urdu literature developed. This is an achievement of which your University can be rightly proud. It is your duty to cherish this heritage and further enrich it. I must, however, remind you that your literary efforts, must have a wider field than in the past. You should take an equal interest in Hindi literature. Muslims have been noted for their interest in different languages and literatures. Hindi literature has the same claim on Muslims as on Hindus of India. Both the communities have contributed equally to the development of Urdu and Hindi literature. The new literature in Brij Bhasha which commenced in the Mughul period was the result of the patronage of rulers like Akbar and Jehangir and the contributions of writers of genius like Mohammad Jayesi, Khan Khanan and Abdul Jalil Bilgrami. We find that up to the end of the 18th century, the number of Muslim poets who wrote in Brij Bhasha is considerable.

felt the tremendous changes which have taken place since the days you entered the portals of this University. When you first joined this Institution, you were members of a subject nation. To-day you are leaving this University as free citizens of an independent India. I am not sure if all of you appreciate fully the extent of this tremendous change. As members of a subject nation, you suffered many disabilities. As citizens of a free State you enter into new responsibilities. The widening of opportunity which freedom has brought has also necessarily brought with it the need for greater loyalty and devotion to your State. To-day there are no limits to what you can achieve but this very fact imposes upon you the duties which freedom brings.

You are the citizens of a free India—a State which is determined to develop its political and social life on secular and democratic lines. The essence of a secular and democratic State is freedom of opportunity for the individual without regard to race, religion, caste or community. As members of such a State you have, therefore, the right—provided you have the necessary qualities of character and attainment—to expect all doors open to you, whether in the fields of politics, trade, industry, service or the professions. There is no gain-saying the fact that in the past many of the alumni of this Institution looked to nothing but employment under Government. Freedom must bring it a widening of the mind and an enlargement of your ambitions. You must, therefore, look forward in a free India to the utilisation of your talents in the manner best suited to the needs of the Nation.

I have no doubt in my mind that if you can imbibe this spirit of progressive nationalism which is the motto of our secular democratic State, there will be no position in any field of life that will be beyond your reach. I would, therefore, urge upon you to develop and strengthen your character and acquire knowledge that will fit you to play your rightful part for the future progress and prosperity of the country.

The time has come when you must revive that old tradition. I desire that this institution should produce a large number of writers who are equally at home with Hindi and Urdu literature.

The question of script is one of the controversial problems of today. You know what the opinion of Gandhiji was in this respect. His sincere desire was that every Indian should know both the Urdu and the Devnagri scripts. That is why he founded the Hindustani Prachar Sabha and made it an essential condition for its workers that they must know both the scripts. This has also been my opinion for years. I feel that this is the only solution which is possible in the present circumstances. I hope that the lovers of Urdu literature will not wait to find out the reactions of the advocates of Hindi literature, but will themselves do what they regard as conducive to the best interests of the country. In every other sphere of life, one may wait to see what others do, but in the field of learning we can wait for others only at the risk of detracting from our credit. If the others are content to know only one script, we need not be sorry that we have learnt two. My sincere desire is that every Muslim in India should learn both the scripts, and thus set an example before the country. This was the message of Mahatma Gandhi, and I am confident that Muslims will act up to it with enthusiasm.

I am glad to find that there is already a recognition of the importance of such work on all sides, and that books have been written in Urdu which make it easy to learn Devnagri script and become familiar with Hindi literature. Some organisations have been set up in different parts of the country for this purpose. They have already started their activities. I am sure that you have realised the importance of this work and your institution will be recognised as one of its most active centres.

I will now conclude with a few words of advice to the young graduates who have taken their degrees to-day and are entering into the responsibilities of life. You have no doubt yourself



PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS



SPECIAL SESSIONS
OF
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

HELD AT DELHI IN SEPTEMBER, 1923.

DELIVERED ON SATURDAY, THE 15TH SEPTEMBER

BY

MAULANA ABULKALAM AZAD

(TRANSLATED FROM THE URDU)



ALIGARH



We meet today at a critical and decisive moment of our national struggle—a moment so critical indeed that we have been constrained by force of circumstances to convene a special session of the Congress before the expiry of the year, in order to obtain a solution of and guidance as to the intricate problems confronting us. When I say that the difficulties of the hour, and the task before us are unprecedented in the history of the Congress, then I believe that I am merely voicing the sentiments of every individual in this assembly. It is three years since you came together in a similar and special session at Calcutta: that also was a memorable day in your history. The greatness of that day was even as the greatness of those days when nations issue declarations of war for freedom. But in the importance of today's session is to be found a glimmer of those days in history when nations have had to deal not with declarations of wars but with the intricate and decisive issues arising from such declarations. Then your thoughts were for the commencing struggle; today you strive to protect the conclusion of the war from danger. Then you were anxious to begin your march; today there has arisen the danger of losing your way. Then you were about to launch your boat fearlessly from the shore; today, in the words of the immortal Persian poet Hafiz, "The boat has set sail from one shore, but the other shore is yet far distant and the waves are rising up against the bark from all sides."

Gentlemen, when your choice has fallen upon me to preside at an occasion so momentous in your history, I feel that you have reposed such confidence in me and conferred on me such honour that never can I credit myself with having deserved it. I can only believe that you have been very generous in your good opinion of me. If any poor services of mine had deserved so signal a mark of your confidence in me then I should rest assured that your action is a very gratifying recognition of my humble efforts from my countrymen and my country. I am most profoundly thankful to you for the honour you have done me and it is to you that I turn for help and guidance in this responsibility which is a pledge of your confidence in me. We are undoubtedly face to face at a very difficult time with a very difficult problem but our determination remains unshaken and although we may be in doubt about our methods we are in no doubt about our aims. Our humble efforts are for truth and justice and in this world which is God's Kingdom such strivings must meet with success. Hence, though we may be anxious about the weary length and the perils of the journey, and fully and painfully aware of the difficulties and the obstacles in our path, never should this knowledge make us despair. It should rather assure us that the Divine Providence which guarded us when we were weak and helpless will protect us on our way through all our trials—till success is ours and we have reached the journey's end.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE TIME.

Gentlemen, I am not unaware of the limitations upon the province of my discussion. However urgent and pressing may be my thoughts, and however numerous the subjects which I am tempted to discuss, I must guard against trespassing on those matters which should be reserved exclusively for the president of the annual Congress, more particularly when your choice for President of the annual

session has fallen upon so ardent a patriot so able a councillor and so distinguished a leader as is Mouiana Mohamed Ali.

Even if I were expected to deal with events and perplexities of the time, for me silence would be preferable to speech. There is nothing in the events of these days which need cause surprise. There was a time when expressions of Indian national sentiments were confined to criticism of bureaucratic injustice. Criticism developed into complaint and complaint into agitation and protest. For long it remained the practice of the Congress to wail over every new instance of bureaucratic wrongdoing. But now we have passed that stage. Firm decision and strenuous work are before us. The phenomena of injustice are now so familiar that they have become part of our every day life. To talk of injustice now would not only be unnecessary but would also suggest that we have hitherto not been utterly and finally convinced as to the existence of injustice, whereas our certainty has now reached that last stage at which no increase in it is possible. We need not await the rising of a curtain to reveal to us the truth. We are sure that the treatment meted out to us will continue unless our own efforts bring about a change in the present sorry state of affairs. We are not concerned with individuals, whose characters may change; our problems are not temporary and will not be solved by time alone. We are confronted with a system of which we can postulate with certainty that injustice is the law of its nature and which has continued to exist till now not on account of any innate strength of its own but simply because our neglect has provided pillars to strengthen and support it. Injustice is the essence and not an accident of that system. Therefore, our best efforts should be directed against the life of that system.

NEW ADMISSION OF OLD TRUTHS.

Nonetheless, I frankly welcome the admission of the truth that comes from our brothers who have hitherto maintained that our programme was founded on despair. Now, at last, many of them are constrained to admit that the Reforms are "mere deceptions", that "Indian self-respect cannot be maintained under present conditions", and that no reliance can be placed on the broken promises of England. They feel that the boycott is our only recourse and that India should firmly non-co-operate with the British Empire Exhibition. Three years' bitter experience of the "Reformed Councils", the Salt Tax, the unfulfilled promise of Indianising the Public Services have taught us nothing new. We do not see any novelty in the injustice of the Kenya decision but simply the repetition of an old and expected wrong originating from national and racial prejudices. When was it that these things did not exist? Britain has broken her promises; but how many of the famous promises of Britain remain unbroken? Indian self-respect has been slighted; but does our experience supply us with a single instance in which it has been honoured and respected? But all these events, and especially the last, have come as startling revelations to those gentlemen who apparently needed such to complete their education and teach them the truth.

Gentlemen, we will not complain that our brothers have been so long in arriving at the truth. We will forget that the truth was known three years before the Kenya decision as after it. For an admission of the truth is praiseworthy whether it come soon or late. Consequently, we welcome this admission by our countrymen and we wish to tell them that our only need

their services to-day as much as it did three years ago. If we sincerely believe that the time for protecting Indian honour has arrived, why should we not, inspite of petty differences as to method, unite in order to guard it ?

THE GREAT TURKISH VICTORY.

Gentlemen, I am sure the first thing you will expect of me to-day is that I should have the honour of voicing your sentiments of joy at an event which is so curiously, and yet so honourably, connected with your national struggle and marks a glorious epoch of your national history. It was the will of God that two distant nations of the East should be so closely connected in their struggle for justice and freedom that the sufferings of one are a cause of grief to the other and the victory of either is an occasion of rejoicing for both. India while treading the up-hill path that leads to her own freedom has made the Muslim Khilafat and the independence and honour of Turkey one of her national demands ; while the new-born nationalism of Turkey and her overwhelming victories have appeared as a miracle before the world and her courageous and exemplary patriotism has infused a new life into all the nations of the East.

Gentlemen, about nine months ago the Congress congratulated the Turkish nationalists on the success of their armies on the field of battle. But as a matter of fact those victories were merely the fore-runners of a greater victory to come ; for though they were military successes only, yet they came as heralding the moral and political victory which has followed. It is the first instalment of a complete victory substituting a new-born greatness for an ancient grandeur which had seemed to be in the throes of death. It is a proclamation to the world that the community of nations must welcome a new and victorious member. It has been a glorious and successful march which, inspite of the attempts of the greatest Powers of the Earth to place obstacles in its path in their futile opposition, has progressed onwards driven by the overpowering strength of its patriotic fervour. The goal has now been reached and history has begun the first chapter of the story of a conquering nation. The signing of the Turkish Peace Treaty on the 24th of July last marks the beginning of a new epoch of national greatness and the consummation of those victories which are indispensable to the life and honour of a nation. It was a moral victory rather than a victory of the sword. It was a victory of character and intellect, without which all diplomatic and military victories are useless and futile.

UNIVERSAL CONGRATULATIONS.

Gentlemen, India cannot rejoice too greatly in congratulating the Turks on their marvellous victories, for she sees not so much the events as the mighty moral to which they point. She views in the success of Turkey not only the fulfilment of the Turkish aims but the victory of the whole East. I beg, first of all, to convey the good-wishes of India to His Majesty the Caliph of the Mussalmans. Next, I wish to congratulate the National Assembly of Angora on the victorious advent of their democratic government. And our eyes turn inevitably to that unique personality to whom all these successes are in due measure due. I congratulate Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha on behalf of the Indian people.

Gentlemen, I do not fulfil my duty by congratulating India and Turkey only. My duty is far more extensive and is not confined to any particular

nation or country. The struggle which for the past five years made the peace of the world impossible, was not merely a war of governments and nations. It was something more. The vigorous statesmanship of Ismet Pasha in opposition to the futile threats of Lord Curzon did not merely represent the struggle of Turkey and Britain or of East and West. It was a war of principles, of opposed and conflicting faiths. On one side was the pride of power denying to all weaker nations the right to exist; on the other side was the determination of justice and truth proclaiming that all nations had a right to exist if they wished to do so. The will of God has decided the issue. Force has failed, in spite of its strength; justice has triumphed in spite of its apparent weakness and temporary set-backs. The success of Turkey is an achievement too great to be interpreted as the victory of Asia or the East. It is the victory of justice, and justice is above all national patriotism and knows no distinctions of East and West. It concerns itself with all mankind. Permit me, therefore, to congratulate the whole of mankind on this victory, and every individual in the East or the West who is a lover of justice and respects the freedom of man.

But although promises have been fulfilled and justice has been done, to make our picture complete, we are bound to say that this has come about not through any generous desire on the part of the Powers to keep their 'promises', but simply because due performance of their pledges was exacted. For when the Powers are compelled to make good their promises at the point of the sword, they are liberal enough to concede even more than they promised. They accede to all the demands of the Conqueror who will yield nothing to satisfy the claims of justice.

Gentlemen, the Turkish Peace is an event from which History will draw many morals. Justice has undoubtedly been done and the deserving have prospered. But what have the Powers, who had sworn to trample justice underfoot, gained by their futile opposition? What has England gained by scattering her broken promises through the world for the last four years, — by supporting tyranny and oppression with a strength of resolution she has never brought to the service of justice? She wished to crush Turkey and Turkey has grown strong in spite of British intrigues and designs. Britain refused to yield to the claims of justice but she has bowed her head before the will of a nation. She often wrote her decisions with the pen; they were torn to pieces with the sword. When posing as supreme arbiter of the fate of nations, she wrote her peace treaties, India cried out against them in the name of truth and justice and she replied to the protest with contempt. But when Mustafa Kemal drew up his demands with the point of the sword, she bowed like a conquered nation and dared not refuse them. We need not await the historian's answer. The world has replied already. England has surrendered everything to Turkey; all she has obtained for herself is ill-fame for an attempt at injustice. The imputation was formerly cast at her back but now she bears the stain of it on her forehead.

THE NEW EAST.

We must remember that the significance of great events is so obvious to later historians is not visible to contemporary observers. We are living through an epoch of change which is exactly like those periods of the past which historians have traced the origin of world-wide revolutions. The world is rapidly altering

its concepts. What till yesterday were considered unassailable truths are now in process of dissolution and the outlines of maps are changing like the world's principles and faiths. The world's heights are reduced to depressions; depressions are elevated to heights. The nadir of success leads to the beginning of decline. The increasing darkness of despair carries us to the coming of the dawn. No-one can foresee what the immediate future will bring, but that what is happening at present will lead to the evolution of a New East is very clear to us. The awakening of the East, which for the last quarter of a century was but a bare consciousness, has been galvanised by the sufferings of the Great War which have quickened it with new life and unrest. Ghazi Mustafa Kemal Pasha's wonder-working hand has not only awakened the sleeping life of Turkey but has also knocked so loudly at our Eastern gate that echoes resound across the plains of Central Asia, fill the African desert and ring across the Indian Ocean. Who can say that the reverberations will not arouse every corner of the Eastern World?

Gentlemen, India cannot ignore her natural and geographical connection with the universal struggle of the East, and in making common cause with it she harbours all those emotions of sympathy which the similarity of time, conditions, and aims naturally produce among people of the same regions. She welcomes every Eastern nation that embarks on a struggle for justice and freedom, and regrets the fate of those nations which have been left behind their comrades. She assures the nationalists of Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Morocco, and all other eastern countries that the hearts of India's millions are eager for their success and hold their freedom no less dear than the freedom of their own beloved motherland.

JAZIRAT-UL-ARAB.

In particular, India today reaffirms her old determination to secure the independence of the Jazirat-ul-Arab. This was the most important and unalterable item of the Khilafat demands which the Congress proclaimed in 1920. The demand is important to India not merely because it is part of the religious faith of a large section of her people. It is also to advance the cause of her own freedom India cannot afford to ignore it. India, Egypt, and Arabia are so placed by geography and nature that their political fortunes have been linked for ever. The existence of a fettered India is the first link of a chain that binds its neighbours. It was the desire to perpetuate the slavery of India which made it necessary that the Suez Canal should remain in British hands. And now the independence of Arabia is being sacrificed to maintain India's evil plight. For if Arabia, whose freedom has been trampled upon with the help of Indian armies, becomes a new stronghold of British power, then the frontiers of Indian slavery will begin not from the Indian Ocean but from the coast of Syria and the Persian Gulf, — from Mosul and Diar-i-Bakr. India assures the people of Arabia that their independence and freedom from foreign interference is as much an object of her struggle today as it was when she made her proclamation of 1920, and that she will continue her struggle for so long as any portion of the Arabian countries remains in subjugation to a foreign yoke.

CONSTANTINOPLE AND YERAVADA JAIL

Gentlemen, though we are directing our gaze at the splendid palaces of the Khilafat at Constantinople in tendering our congratulations on the great

Turkish Victory, our thoughts turn involuntarily towards an Indian Jail in whose cell the greatest man in India lies, a convict. I am certain that if outside Turkey any person deserves first to be congratulated on the Turkish Victory then it is that great Generalissimo of India—Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi raised his voice in support of the Turkish cause when even within Turkey no cry of national protest whatever had been heard. It was his perception of fact and insight into reality which at the very first survey enabled him to grasp all the depths and bearings of this problem, and to invite all India to realise that this was not merely a demand of the Mohammedans of India, but of the entire country. Gentlemen, the efforts and endeavours of India under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi in support of the Khilafat demands, form, in fact, an important and special aspect of the present struggle. History will discuss its consequences. Perhaps it is premature that we should try to estimate all the effects of the Khilafat struggle but still there are some effects which we now perceive without survey or discussion, and each of these is so great that alone it was enough to have induced this national struggle. Hindu-Muslim unity, without which the freedom of India is nothing more than a phantasm, has triumphed by reason of the Khilafat struggle over those difficulties which for a long time had beset its path. The international prestige of India in the entire Orient, a prestige which has given India an eminent position amongst the newly-awakened lands of the East, is a consequence of this very struggle. But for it, what would have been the status of India today in all Asia and Africa? It was her armies that had trampled under-foot the freedom of Turkey and Arabia; hence it is obvious that the contempt and reprobation of the entire East would have fallen on her. Wherever a single Indian showed his face the finger of scorn would have been lifted: "Lo! There goes a fellow of an unfortunate country! He is not only the cause of his own miserable lot; he is the cause of the sad plight of the free nations of the East!" But today India can lift her head high and say, "The stain wherewith helplessness had sullied my garments, my will and desire have washed away." If it has so happened that without their will and desire thousands of Indians marched to the field of battle to unsheathe their swords against the Turks and Arabs, then of their own wish and desire thousands of Indians marched to jail that justice might be meted out to the Arabs and Turks. Today from every quarter of the East there are choral voices raised to proclaim India's honour and reputation. In Constantinople her name is sounded as though she were the standard-bearer of the freedom of the East. In the bazars of Cairo there is on every tongue the cry, "God grant thee victory, O Gandhi"! This is in truth an honour like that usually accorded only to free nations and which subjugated India has acquired undoubtedly as a result of the Khilafat struggle. And what appears to us even greater than these two effects is that intellectual development which manifests itself in love of Liberty, and which India has acquired as a result of this struggle. For any country that is to become free, the first requisite is that she should prove that she herself does fully appreciate the value of liberty. So when India demanded the freedom of Turkey and Arabia, then simultaneously with this demand she affirmed that she herself could not live deprived of liberty. Subjugated nations have neither desire nor will. If India could express her "will" about Turkey, she could determinedly struggle to secure the fulfilment of that "will" then she would secure freedom for herself because the securing of freedom is really a synonym for the expression of the people's will.

Gentlemen, I desire your permission to say that my personal feeling about whatever I have done during the last four years in connection with the Khilafat demands has always been that action was merely my duty not only as a Mohamedan but also as an Indian. It is my belief that his support of the Khilafat movement in India was the greatest service which that great personality in Indian history, Mahatma Gandhi, has rendered to his country.

DIFFICULTIES OF THE TIME.

I have referred at the beginning of my address to the difficulties of the time. For the success of any mass-effort unity of action is imperative and disunity is disastrous. At this moment our unity has weakened and therefore danger threatens us. But I must first invite your attention to the difficulties of the moment in order that we may adequately estimate their nature and extent. If our estimate be ever so little beyond the facts or ever so little short of them, it will not be surprising if we fall into fresh danger. We stand today in such a position that negligence is on one side and despair on the other. If we assess these difficulties as being less than they actually are we may fall into negligence and if we take an exaggerated view of our difficulties we are in danger of plunging into despair. We must be neither negligent nor appalled. We must face difficulties and overcome them. But this is only possible when we have quite accurately estimated them. For our purpose, scales and measurements are needed more than arms.

THE UNIFORMITY OF LAWS OF SOCIAL LIFE

We should at this stage reflect on those natural Laws governing the social life of the world which, though they may be accepted by intellect are often obscured by strong emotions. We are as much the product of the life and the movement on this wonderful globe as are other countless and obscure creatures who are brought into existence by its uniform revolutions and are even now scattered over its bosom. Our world itself is but a small fraction of a universe of which we can find neither the length nor the breadth; but we have discovered that it is uniform in all its changes, and though it displays innumerable forms of life and movement, yet, like the will of their Creator the Law of their existence is one. It is uniform, all-embracing, unchangeing and unique. What has happened once will continue to happen always. The experiences of one will be repeated by all others; no event really new ever takes place; nothing is really dissimilar to, and distinct from all other things. In the words of Umar Khayyam the philosopher—poet of Persia: "There is but one story of her life which is always repeated under new names and new forms" Or to quote the brief words of the famous French writer Victor Hugo, "The story of the world's events is a continuous repetition."

Just as the poets have mused upon this perfect similarity of the events of the world and the unchanging uniformity of the laws of life, historians have observed and philosophers have drawn their conclusions therefrom. We as political workers should also open our eyes to this truth, for this uniformity of law applies to society just as it applies to individuals. Even as the individuals have bodies and brains and all the powers and qualities which appertain to them,—similarly, societies have bodies, and brains, and psychological states produced by their

combinations. It is inevitable that the same types of mind and the same environments should be similarly affected. Just as the acts of individuals are the result not of their individuality but of their mental and physical conditions, so also the acts of societies are not due to their peculiar individuality but are the results of their mental condition and environment. Societies having the same temperament will react similarly under the same environment. The beginning and the end of nations their rise and fall, their lethargy and energy, their freedom and their subjugation, their successes and their failures are all subject to one law. Exactly that which has happened to one nation will happen to all other nations that come after it. This wonderful uniformity of the laws of social life has been thus expressed by a philosopher-historian of the thirteenth century of the Christian era, Abdul Rahman Ibn al-Khaladoun, who first formulated the principles of the philosophy of history, "If we eliminate all references to names and time, the history of one nation will be exactly the history of all other nations at all other times; for men and dates constitute the only difference in the histories of different nations." The same truth has been expressed by a famous French writer of these days, Dr. Gustave Le Bon, in a more comprehensive and learned form: "When we have discovered and formulated the laws of social psychology in the same way as those of individual psychology, it will become possible for us to write the history of a particular nation and civilization, and use it as the history of every other nation and civilization. It will be permanently useful to us—like a millenium calendar."

NATIONAL STRUGGLE AND ITS STAGES

Gentlemen, It is absolutely necessary for us today to consider the essential implications of this law of national existence. This, and this alone, will remove unreasonable astonishment and fears. We should remember that what is happening today is neither new nor unusual. It is an old, invariable and unavoidable accompaniment of the ordeal of national endeavour and struggle through which India is passing. We are only doing what has been done before us is a spectacle which the lives of past generations have foreshadowed. In adding a new page to the history of nations we have merely provided an illustration of the universality of this law of social life.

It is a well-established fact that nations awaken after periods of dormancy and that after their mental and moral conditions have altered, their material conditions also undergoes a gradual change. To borrow the metaphor of an old Greek metaphysician, named Herman, "When individuals are in a state of apathy and indifference the national soul is asleep; at the time of their mental revolution they dream; when their feelings are roused it stirs till at last it rises and sets the path of endeavour." On this road, gentlemen, there are definite stages, fixed, unalterable rules for the guidance of travellers. Every caravan that travels along this road must pass every single one of these stages. The trials awaiting the successful caravan are glorious, but the obstacles before it are insurmountable; its victory will be momentous, but the hardships on the way are grievous and unavoidable. The difficulties facing it are internal as well as external. It has to undergo mental and physical trials and to suffer internal excitements and from without. The path is full of stumbling blocks and pitfalls and the caravan cannot proceed at an even pace. It is forced to halt at times and

cautiously. It must nerve itself for a fresh effort after every set-back and increase its speed after every halt. This journey is not a consistent progress from triumph to triumph, but ultimately success must attend us. Victory cannot be achieved at every step but it comes at last and is sublime!

Gentlemen, the divine law of existence cannot be suspended for our benefit. Now that we have set out on this journey all its stages lie ahead of us and must be traversed. If our speed has slackened there is nothing unusual or strange about it, and it is time we quickened our pace again. If our march has come to a dead halt we must start afresh. If we have been unable to agree on a particular question, if there has been a rift in our unity, it does not matter in the least. Why should we not re-unite? This is merely a test to which we have been subjected as have all our predecessors on the path of liberty, and we must come triumphantly through it as other heroic nations have come through it in the past. There is no occasion for fear or despair. The lightning which has stricken us is one of the ordinary accidents of this venture. It has overtaken many before us and will overtake many who will come after us.

A STAGE OF TRIAL.

Let us for a moment examine the real nature of the difficulties before us from the stand-point of the psychology of social action. It is unnecessary to say that as in the case of individuals, the brain is the original fountain-head of the actions of nations. When the mental growth of the individuals of a nation reaches a stage where it can make itself felt externally, it awaits a suitable opportunity. Under favourable circumstances it requires more than anything else a strong incentive that, prevailing over all divergencies and differences of thought and opinion, provides a converging point for all the scattered elements of the people. When the brains of individuals are united into the composite brain of the community, then the element of emotion becomes more operative therein than reason or perception. So this converging centre also is born of sentiment and not of perception. And when such a condition is brought about, active effort makes its appearance, and, in proportion to its energy, it rises and clashes with opposing forces. Then it either succeeds in reaching a definite limit or in obedience to natural laws it suffers repeated interruptions. These also have their various aspects and are governed by different rules. But in every condition it is imperative that at some stage or the other the law of reaction should have effect. Then all of a sudden, symptoms of depression and despondency supervene, and their greatest effect is on equanimity of thought. It is as though innumerable pages were bound together in a binder which has become loose or unfastened. New differences arise; disintegration supervenes and there comes a time of great trial for national effort. Since, like all conditions of society, this condition is also natural, knowledge and perception can influence it in only a small degree. Howsoever judiciously minded and well-acquainted with past experiences of the world the individuals of a nation or a community may be, they cannot stifle their natural sentiments, or eliminate conditions and effects arising from them. But, if the brain and heart of effort be sound and unaffected then everything that happens is a mere minor ailment of the body. The life of effort is safe from danger. Often there arises the phase of arrested activity and sometimes this assumes the aspects of a dangerous suspension of life. But, as soon as that period passes which was necessary to allow the after-effects of this disorder to wear off, then immediately

this temporary seeming-depression is dispelled and effort manifests itself in all its original energy and fervour. Or rather, in many cases effort becomes stronger and more sustained than before, because this temporary suspension was merely peripheral. The inner forces had remained continually at work. Now in its later manifestations there is an addition to effort of newer forces to those previously existing.

Like all the changes and alterations of this world, the actions of communities either languish or persist. They are not always born afresh; there are rises and falls. We make a mistake in interpreting a fall as a cessation, and a rise as a new birth. We would be in error in regarding the suspension of any national activity as a cessation of activity—an error similar to that of concluding that the tides of the ocean will not rise tomorrow because they have ebbed to-day.

Thus, our national struggle has suffered suspension after activity. The struggle was proceeding at a rapid pace, when suddenly the Bardoli decision signalled a halt. In obedience, we paused abruptly, and it was only natural that the sudden pause should produce a shock. From this shock all those effects ensued which are the natural results of suspended activities. It is an effect of that shock that our organisation has been shaken. It appears that the goods which were packed and fastened are being rapidly unpacked and unfastened. The general inactivity of the movement, the split in the Congress, the rupture in Hindu-Muslim unity, the failure of all attempts to bring about a union—all these are natural results of the shock our movement has received.

Gentlemen, this is a stern trial from which we must emerge triumphantly nerved by our determination to secure victory, and we should not be surprised if we have to strive very hard indeed for success. But nonetheless, I hope that you will not take incidents to heart more bitterly than the case warrants. To one who understands the psychology of nations and is a student of history this condition appears exactly like that of a man who has paused for a breathing space while running a long race.

We should not object if our opponents and critics prefer to be deceived by our present condition for they are in such a mental state that they will recognise power only when it is brought face to face with them. But we should have no doubts as to the real strength of our position. What is it that we have lost? All the intellectual springs of our efforts are still strong and its foundations are still unshaken. Why should we be despondent about lassitude affecting our limbs when there is no slackening of vigour in the beating of our hearts? Can we doubt the evidence of our senses? Do we not feel that there is a faith engraved on our hearts and ever present as an ideal before our eyes, infusing with its spirit every vein and artery of our body?

Gentlemen, Permit me today to make an announcement on your behalf which will be a real interpretation of your convictions. I assert with the greatest confidence that our struggle continues as before. We are in a state of suspended animation which has delayed our arriving at a definite decision, but which has not stopped the struggle. Problems concerning intelligence, enthusiasm, and effort have arisen, but we emphatically deny that there can be any question of our relinquishing the struggle or even of temporary despair.

But while I have drawn your attention to the fact that there is no cause

for despair. I must tell you that there is also no excuse for slackening our efforts. We should not forget the experiences of every day life that, however trifling an indisposition may be it can be rendered fatal through neglect. The trial before us today is a temporary slackening of our activities provided we do not let our ailment grow into anything serious. How can we guard against this? What is the solution of the problems of the time? The answer is known to every one of us but it is difficult to act accordingly. Unity is all we need and it is in order to establish it that we have gathered here today.

This memorable day should provide us with a welcome opportunity of passing through the present trial. We have invited the world to watch our trial and its consequences. Will we use our opportunities correctly and well? A few hours will provide an answer.

NON-VIOLENT NON-CO-OPERATION.

We must base our discussion on elementary principles, and we have already adopted the principle of Non-violent Non-co-operation for the achievement of our objects. Non-co-operation is based on that simple but universal faith of the world that we should not co-operate with evil lest it should increase, and therefore it is our duty to leave it alone. It is a truth preached in common by all the religions and moral philosophies of the world. And if in this definition the word "injury" be substituted for the word "evil" (and in my opinion the two are synonymous) then we find non co-operation to be not only be a universal belief of mankind but a natural tendency in the animal world. The preachings of all religions ring in our ears. Islam has made 'Tark-i-Mawalat' (Non-co-operation) compulsory upon its followers, with the intention that they should not support or strengthen those individuals or bodies whose activities are injurious to their nation. The same doctrine is found in other countries also. Similarly in the sphere of national effort, there is not only a common belief in the principle of Non-co-operation but Non-co-operation has even been adopted as the universal principle of action; for it is very obvious that no community or nation in the world can win its rights through co-operation. All nations have won freedom through their own efforts, and effort implies opposition and struggle—not co-operation. The boycott and passive resistance, the greatest weapons of a Non-co-operator, are not the fruit of new doctrines.

Wherever weak individuals and communities have been unable to offer armed resistance to tyranny they have adopted this method as the only means of attaining their object. "Suffer everything, but never turn your face away from what you consider to be right." This has been for ages the common advice of religion, morality and nationalism in this world. It can truly be said that in the weak and helpless beginnings of every religion, these principles are its only support and strength. We see it engraved upon the cross of Jerusalem. The streets of Mecca have heard its grand appeal. The first two centuries in the history of the Christian faith were a romance of this principle. When in the time of the Roman Emperor, Severus, the weak foundations of the Christian Church were being shaken by the storms of tyranny and injustice, it was the unconquerable spirit of this principle that maintained the structure intact. A Christian martyr of that period, Tertulian, read a statement before the Roman judges which has been preserved, and which you now read in the famous American writer, Draper's *Conflict*

between Religion and Science, "Our community has not been existing for long, but is there a place where we are not found? Cities, islands, provinces, forts, the barracks of the armies, the court of the Empire, the chamber of the Senate—we are always found in the great places of your government. We have left you nothing in your province except your places of worship. Think over it. We can raise a storm of civil war if we so desire, but our religion teaches us that it is better to be killed than to kill. Consequently, we suffer and do not strive." What more perfect and more effective expression to passive resistance can there be? And today after seventeen hundred years we can act precisely on the words of that Christian martyr.

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY.

Probably the first man, who in modern times has preached passive resistance as a weapon to obtain political rights and to oppose the injustice of government as a substitute for armed revolution, was the great and truly Christian teacher of Russia, Count Leo Tolstoy. He has brought it into prominence in his world-famous teaching. The intellect of that great teacher made a vehement protest against the soulless materialism of Western civilization, the intolerable inequality of social conditions, the ruthless oppressions by capitalism, and the tyranny of the Orthodox Russian Church. It is owing to this extremist tendency in Tolstoy, that an ex-president of America remarked concerning his revolutionary theories in the *American Outlook* that "they have without hesitation, passed the bounds of moderation and practicability." But, in all the teachings of Tolstoy, passive resistance is a doctrine the simplicity and practicability of which is obvious, and beyond doubt shows the world the easiest way to its aspirations.

The essential spirit of Tolstoy's teaching is that war and murder must be brought to an end and justice and human rights need not and should not be opposed with arms; for their power is based on the institutions which they have spread broadcast, and if people will merely refrain from helping them to prosper by taking no part in these institutions, they will not be able to survive for a moment.

MAHATMA GANDHI.

The world has always needed practical guidance more than theoretical preaching. The truth is not new to the world, but that which gives truth new greatness and success is the recognition of truth and pursuit of it. Everyone knows that it is our duty to fight for freedom. But though Tolstoy first gave form to the practice of Non-co-operation, nevertheless, his work waited practical exposition at the hands of another personality—so great a personality that he seems to have been selected by Providence for his task. This was Mahatma Gandhi. Even before Tolstoy had preached, the world knew of the truth of the Non-co-operation ~~movement~~ but before Mahatma Gandhi's advent it did not understand how soul-force could be employed in actual practice.

THE PROGRAMME OF NON-CO-OPERATION.

The method of Non-co-operation which India has adopted under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, although in its first principles the same as the world has seen before, has changed in several respects. At first it was an ethical course; now it is a political programme. As presented by Tolstoy the beliefs and principles

were so extremely comprehensive that, on the one hand, they clashed with the existing thoughts and beliefs of men and with many of their rules of conduct, and on the other, they were faced by extreme practical difficulties. But the present form of Non-co-operation has acquired a complete definiteness. There is nothing in it now which conflicts with religious or political beliefs—nothing of any such complexity that it cannot be brought into operation within a very short time. Non-violence is really the soul of Non-co-operation but if non-violence be not accepted as an article of faith it is enough if it be accepted as expedient and politic. To sever all those connections which bind the bureaucratic power to the people of India is the central belief of Non-co-operation but it has greatly limited its sphere of activities. It desires to be so operative that however rigorous its application may be, it occasions the least possible suffering to those who use it as a weapon.

Self-sacrifice, self-restraint and the strength of our moral spirit are the weapons prescribed for use in this battle. But the movement allows us full latitude, and except from a select body of men who can be an example to the country, it does not demand from the mass of the people anything that is very difficult. It can be asserted with the utmost confidence that for all people struggling for their rights it has become a principle of political action which is extremely simple and therefore practical. It assures a bloodless victory to all the nations of the world, and keeps in view not only the truth of principles but also the difficulties of action.

FORMULATION OF THE PROGRAMME.

Gentlemen, many differences have arisen amongst us concerning certain items of the Non-co-operation programme. These really concern only parts of the method of work but they have led to arguments, and discussions from which as is usual new questions have cropped up. The first of these questions to come before us is the nature of our programme. This programme when it was once put into practice produced its natural consequences. But it has not led us to the conclusion of the struggle and all its battles have yet to be fought. Now, what is the nature of this programme? Is it a programme capable of being put into practice once only, so that if it fails we must find another? Or is it like the unchanging and eternal truths of morality and religion which must be preached for an indefinite period since their object will be achieved only when the country or the greater part of the country has accepted them? My answer to both the above questions is in the negative. The programme was not merely a temporary makeshift for a momentary occasion nor is it anything eternal or unchanging. Both positions are extreme and the truth lies between them. The programme has the strength of religion and the flexibility of the principle of political action. It takes into consideration exigencies of both necessity and duty.

But in order to come to a clear understanding it is necessary for us to recall how the programme originated. In this connection I wish to place before you my views, which have not changed in the least since the beginning of the Non-co-operation movement. The Non-co-operation programme was fully formulated before it was accepted by the special session of the Congress at Calcutta. From that time down to the present day I have never for a moment imagined that the Non-co-operation programme stood for either of the extreme positions I have mentioned above.

NATURE OF THE PROGRAMME.

The fundamental principle of this programme is this, that we should obtain by our unarmed and non-violent struggle such a victory against the present armed bureaucracy of India that it be compelled to lay down its arms before the will of the Indian people. We have interpreted the will of India as expressing itself in the Khilafat, the Punjab and Swaraj demands. But our aims are not comprised in many words; they are expressed in one brief sentence. As with any other country so with India the question that awaits a decision is only this, "Should the will of the people prevail, or only such rule as has been established by armed force"?

How will our unarmed struggle be put into practice? For a reply to this question our programme undoubtedly invites us to action which is not inspired by mere necessity or expediency but rather by firm conviction. It tells us that we must hold aloof from co-operation with the present system of government for this reason that we should not side with a power for evil and for this additional reason that by non-co-operating with it we can so weaken it that it will become incapable of opposing us. This programme comprises both duty and necessity: that is the unanimous verdict of religion, ethics, experience, and history. We should not become an instrument of the injustice meted out to us—and who can controvert this? It is the decisive evidence of experience and history that no nation in the world has won freedom by co-operating with an alien power; nor has any nation been granted its freedom as a free gift since such would be opposed to the very nature of power—as none will deny.

If our withdrawal from active co-operation be brought about simultaneously and unanimously then no thinking mind can doubt that the history of India can be changed between the rising and setting of a single sun. But how can this be brought about? All our difficulties lie in this simple question. In this war, which is not a war, the answer to the question must be our first concern.

I will not enumerate in detail the difficulties before us. I need only mention that out of regard for these difficulties our movement has adopted a principle of action which solves them altogether. It is not deemed at all necessary for success that our movement should wait for a time when all the co-operators in the country will have become non-co-operators or till an overwhelming majority are prepared to act according to the programme of Non-co-operation. For the purposes of our movement, action by a certain limited number of persons is sufficient. If that number is forthcoming the individuals forming it will wish to be joined by the rest but they will not wait for them. The Non-co-operation movement has divided its work into two natural compartments. The first is the collection of the material of war and the second is the prosecution of the war itself. By the material of warfare we mean men inspired with the spirit of passive resistance. The war is a conflict between our passive strength and bureaucratic power and it must come sooner or later to a decisive issue. To secure its first object, the movement has appealed to those in the councils, educational institutions and courts of the government to non-co-operate, because it believes that in these centres of co-operation are to be found men who make the best warriors for the maintenance of the bureaucratic ascendancy as also as for the prosecution of the national struggle. That is, Non-co-operation invites their aid with the two-fold object of depriving the enemy

of his finest troops and of providing itself with the best fighting material. When in response to this appeal a number of men have been collected the first army of Non-co-operation is in the field. This army will be the chief and central actors in the struggle, and the future hopes of the movement will rest not on the country but on the army. On the one hand, this first army will embark on the campaign without delay; and, on the other, it will absorb into it, from time to time, new forces by the magnetism of its call and its practical example.

To accomplish its final purpose, it has adopted the programme of Civil Disobedience. This is its real battle and on this depends the determining of the issue. This course of action has rendered unimportant the question whether the whole of the country will be able to act up to the programme of Non-co-operation within a definite period of time. It has also obviated the question which will arise (if in compliance with its appeal large numbers quit the Government educational institutions and law courts) as to whether we will be able to hold the people together firmly throughout the course of the campaign. It will have little effect on the movement if the whole country cannot support it. The numbers of its supporters do not matter. Failure to support it will occasion regret to the movement but not despair. Doubtless it appeals to the sense of duty and convictions of all people, but as the programme of the struggle, it does not stand in need of uniform or complete support. It is not blind to the fact that the actions of communities are not governed by logic and reason. It realises that mass action is rather the creature of sentiments and emotions. Either the community progresses rapidly or it is motionless. It very rarely moves at a uniform speed. The alternation of ebb and flow is, therefore, inevitable. When a certain atmosphere has been created the merest sign will draw thousands to the post of action. But when the atmosphere changes, not even repeated invitations will stir a single individual. How can such an atmosphere be generated? It can come only through a struggle—in this case the struggle is Civil Disobedience. If therefore the movement is at all anxious about anything, its apprehensions are only for its first army. The victory of the movement or its defeat on the field of battle depends entirely on the moral success or failure of its army. It requires that this pioneering army, however small in numbers, should possess not quantitative but qualitative strength. It should convert itself into a living example of the Non-co-operation creed—immovable as a mountain, resistless as the sea. It should persevere in sacrifices and defeat the lethargy and indifference of the country by the powerful force of its magnetism and attractiveness. It believes that if such a force is established in the country and it perseveres in the struggle, there will soon be many occasions for conflict and trials of strength. Such is the law of such a struggle. And once the atmosphere necessary for such a campaign is created people will hasten to join it of their own accord and there will be no dearth of recruits.

If the movement does not succeed in its purpose at the first attempt it does not matter in the least. That soldiers have been wounded will not dishearten it. It will persevere in its task and spend the intervening period of time in such a way as to create as early as possible the atmosphere needed for the next attack. When the necessary atmosphere have been worked up, it will again be found braving the dangers of the struggle.

Doubtless its programme in itself seems to attain its objects within a definite period. It does not prescribe sustained effort. That is why its leaders had thought that the results of the first attempt would mature within a year.

I believe that the question raised by the present discussion is settled *ipso facto* by this explanation of the order and course of action. Both aspects of the question are really irrelevant to the issue. This was not a programme to be acted upon once and then discarded; nor is it right that we should continue preaching it as a moral principle irrespective of results and circumstances. One half of it is not warfare really but a demand for the soldiers for warfare. Its plan of campaign stands us in good stead again and again as we engage in fresh conflicts. The second part of the struggle depends upon the securing of a suitable field of action and it may not be very conclusive at the first skirmish.

THE NON-CO-OPERATION MENTALITY.

From the above it is clear how irrelevant are the misunderstandings audaciously propagated about the mentality of the Non-co-operation movement. It has been alleged that it is a challenge to western civilization and science, that it preaches instead of politics a new code of morals and a new religion and that advocating a complete divorce from worldly activities it stands for retrogression rather than progress. I assert emphatically that this is an interpretation of our ideas to which we do not give countenance. Non-co-operation has nothing to do directly with educational social or civic questions. Without doubt, there are in India various schools of thought about the good and bad elements in Western culture and civilization. In fact even the mental tranquility of Europe and America has been disturbed and new principles and ideas are inundating the human mind. Of course, Gandhi, like Tolstoy, has his own ideas about the question but the Non-co-operation movement has no views beyond its single aim. It teaches no new religious creed to its followers nor does it raise up a new edifice of prayer and renunciation. It is in all its bearings, a political programme based on facts and truths. That is why religion, morality and history all recognise it equally and give it their own names. If it preaches a boycott of schools and law courts, it does so, not because it is opposed to European sciences and legal practice but because it is antagonistic to the power under which Indians have to work in these institutions and remain useful tools of the bureaucracy. If it insists on the use of Khaddar it does so not because it has set itself against costly dress or any particular style but because it prefers home-made cloth to foreign—also because it believes that the country requires for its political salvation and freedom the adoption of simple, social habits and the spirit of rigorous self-discipline.

FIRST EXPERIMENTS

Let us now consider our present condition. In accordance with the first part of our programme, we issued a call to the people; they flocked to our standard and a first group of workers was formed. As provided for by the movement itself, circumstances then brought about an atmosphere of tension and the contest began. This happened in December 1921. Now this is a very important question not only for us but for the whole world—How far did our programme work out successfully?

What is the true criterion of success? We are judging two distinct things. The same criterion cannot apply to both. There is first, the programme of Non-co-operation; then, there is the effort we expended on its realization. If we could not gain our ultimate ends at a first attempt surely it is not just to lay the responsibility for the failure at the door of the programme. As a

practical programme its success consists in demonstrating by experience its practicability, effectiveness and fruitfulness. If such evidence is procurable, nought remains needed to show its success. Our own success, of course, hangs in the balance still. As to the success of our endeavours, I refuse to believe that the attainment of the ultimate goal is its criterion. To gain the end in view is not merely a success but final and complete victory and it is necessary to achieve several successes before we win a final victory. It remains for us therefore to see if we have achieved any of these preliminary successes.

THE SUCCESSES OF THE EXPERIMENT.

Gentlemen, I venture to assert that to my mind the programme has not only succeeded, but succeeded to the greatest extent possible of such a programme. If three years before, it was a principle the success for which could be demonstrated by logical reasoning, it is today a tried belief for whose effectiveness observation and experience stand witness.

Conjure up for a minute all the difficulties and obstacles lying in its way; consider also the short time allowed to it for progress through the three stages of theoretical exposition, training and practice; do not forget that it was the first practical step the country took towards freedom—then you will see what wonderful results have been arrived at. How is it possible for us to think of failure? Which one of the items of Non-co-operation has proved practicable and which one of its practices are manifestly ineffective? Did not numerous people quit the Government institutions? Did they not renounce all those worldly advantages and comforts which they enjoyed? Did not sentiments of self-sacrifice sweep the whole of the country? Did not thousands of people willingly betake themselves to the gaols? Did not the entire military organization of the Government failed to open the door of a single shop on the occasion of the *hartal* consequent upon the Prince's visit? Does not every morning and every evening of the year 1921 bear testimony to the existence of a national will in India that can stand firm in the stress of battle.

National revolutions are first brought about, not on the surface of the land, but in the depths of human hearts and minds. Non-co-operation completely changed Indian mentality in twelve months. It suddenly promoted the political capacity of all the classes of the nation. It wafted the message of liberty and patriotism to every single individual of this continent. It altered entirely the course of life for thousands of people. So completely did it eradicate fear of punishments and pains in the cause of liberty that imprisonment has become a sport and formidable law courts, theatres of public entertainment. In short, there is not a single avenue in the struggle for liberty that it has not laid open to us. If all these are events of yesterday's happening what more is needed to demonstrate that the programme is wise, practical and unerringly effective. The Non-co-operation movement never claimed to repeat the traditional miracles of old. It humbly held that if the country acted up to it, it could without the use of violence or weapons acquire such strength as would prove irresistible to the bureaucratic power. Do not all these results then constitute a conclusive proof of success?

THE FIRST BATTLE.

If I am asked how far our endeavours have succeeded in open conflict I should like to review the events of December 1921 when the bureaucratic

powers had cleared for us the way to defensive Civil Disobedience by the enforcement of the Criminal Law Amendment Act. This was our real encounter. I want to place upon record this fact of history that the contest commenced on the 2nd of December and two weeks had not quite elapsed when signs of the defeat of bureaucratic domination were already visible and our opponents had perforce to acknowledge the strength of our movement. There was nothing left for the bureaucracy but to consent to a postponement of hostilities or to peace. Non-co-operation was, therefore, then sufficiently advanced as to deal with the opposition as with an equal adversary—in a position to treat on terms stipulating that the question of defeat for either side be waived, that both should temporarily suspend their activities, that the Government should withdraw the Criminal Law Amendment Act and release the prisoners, that the Congress should abandon the boycott of the Prince's visit and that a Round Table Conference be summoned later to deliberate over the demands the country. On the 21st of December, the Viceroy, in replying to a Deputation at Calcutta, appealed for the coming together of a Round Table Conference in such a tone as spokesmen for the bureaucracy have never formerly employed. He expressed his earnest desire to secure by any means possible either a truce or peace. I have mentioned this incident not because I consider it a great triumph of our cause, for our aims are high and, in keeping with them, the standard of our success is also high. It is not a mighty achievement for us that a desire for unconditional peace arose in the other camp. I believe it to be merely a preliminary success. It has shown that our course of action is effective and unerring, and that our methods are capable of changing an overbearing and hostile attitude in the Government into one of compliance and concession.

A LULL

Gentlemen, in a perusal of the history of national struggles we always encounter records of a few mistakes, side by side with many remarkable achievements. Under circumstances of conflict mistakes are as it were, almost inevitable. I believe that the decision at Bardoli was, so far as our struggle is concerned, such a mistake. We cannot, of course, help regretting it but we feel that it was bound to happen. We could not avoid it. As a matter of fact, the first decisive stage of our struggle came to an end with the Bardoli decision. Since then we have paused in the struggle so that the war continues but there is a period of inactivity before the actual contest.

THE COUNCILS CONTROVERSY

Gentlemen, since I was released from gaol last January I have felt that my first duty was to remove the present division of opinion. As it was necessary for the purpose to withhold from espousing any side by the expression of my personal views, I have not yet had an opportunity of putting forward my views as to the actual controversy. Today is the first time that I declare myself. I have personal friends in both the parties which the controversy has created and I have as much respect for their abilities and services as every Indian citizen must have. This, however, does not deter me from clearly expressing my own line of thought. For, if I refrained from doing so, I would not only be lacking in a sense of duty but would be guilty of a betrayal of the confidence that you have reposed in me.

The first thing I would like to mention about this controversy is that I believe far too much importance has been ascribed to it by both the parties to the dispute. I venture to affirm that the cause of our present difficulties lies in this mistake.

Obviously, whenever there is a difference of opinion, we should pause to consider if it is a difference of principle or of details.

Does it strike at the root, or at a branch only? If it is a difference of principle, it is our duty to hold to our opinions with the utmost steadfastness and determination. There is then no scope for compromise or for smoothing differences over. The question of the majority or minority of opinions is irrelevant. Even the question of discipline cannot affect it. If, on the contrary, we differ as to details the position is completely altered. Of course, we have no reason in this case to change our opinions but we need not be so very rigid in their application as to admit of no elasticity. If necessary, we may even ignore our own opinions. If necessary we can sacrifice small things to expediency. Unity in the party, obedience to the will of the majority and orderliness of discipline must be maintained at all costs. Resolution and perseverance are qualities of the first order for people, but only when they are expended in the proper place and in wise proportion.

I can unhesitatingly assert that this difference was really not one of principle for the Non-co-operation movement. What is Non-co-operation considered as a Principle? I am sure no-one would urge in reply that it is those items of the programme where educational institutions, law courts and Councils are specifically mentioned. It is certainly not synonymous with the boycott of government institutions or with dissuading voters from going to the polls. It is something higher than all these things. But we know that this difference was not whether or no we should co-operate with the Councils but whether we should adopt the same attitude towards the second elections to the Councils as we had done at the first or introduce any changes into our attitude. I fail to comprehend why strict adherence to the creed of Non-co-operation should not accommodate several schools of thought. It is a case of a difference in opinions as to one of the items of the programme. I should like to ask why even the question of the entire change of the Non-co-operation programme should be considered a question of principle? The basis of Non-co-operation is that we cannot co-operate with the bureaucratic administration. When a person admits this, he is a non-co-operator. Of course whatever we decide will be binding upon the people. But it is in no way a principle; it is a detail; not the goal but the means. If there is a difference of opinion in this matter the same significance cannot be attached to it as to a difference in principle.

Freedom is our goal and non-violence and Non-co-operation are our principles. For the attainment of our goal we have adopted a programme every one of whose items is a means to the end. We cannot change the creed or renounce the principle but we can change our tactics any moment at will. If we refuse to introduce such changes, it means that we refuse to fight.

But it is to be greatly regretted that this difference has acquired for the parties concerned the significance of a difference in principle. Such energy has been expended upon the question as though the very life of the national struggle hung upon it. On the one side, it has been affirmed that it is a difference of principle. If the principle of Non-co-operation were really so narrow I would

respectfully say that Non-co-operation is impracticable. On the other hand, emphasis has been laid upon the fact that the divergences have led to a division in the united strength of the Congress. But, if such minor differences warrant division and the formation of parties in the body politic of the Congress, I will have to admit regretfully that no organization in the world can exist under such circumstances. However, I do not agree with the importance given to the matter under discussion. This question was assuredly not one for which we should have risked all our union, our enthusiasm and all that we had hitherto acquired. I can confidently say that—whatever may be the decision of the Gaya Congress about the boycott or otherwise of the Councils—if we had remained united, none of our present difficulties which have been responsible for frittering away the valuable year 1923 could have survived. What is the real cause of the breach in Hindu-Muslim unity? I say it is merely this difference in your midst and the lack of employment and work before the country consequent upon it. When the people had no longer the task on which they had set their hearts, it was inevitable that internecine disputes should arise. When you are expending so great an amount of energy on giving the programme a certain shape, you might as well consider for a moment that the real secret of success lies not merely in the quality of the weapons and the highroads chosen, but in the actual strength of the army itself. As to what the weapons should be is a question of minor importance. The real question is what the soldiers should be like. What should their moral fibre be? So far as the weapons are concerned it is enough to ensure that they are effective for their intended purpose. If they are not of superlative quality, it matters little. It is unity and firmness in our forces that is an essential requisite. An army, firmly united, can win a battle even with inferior weapons. But the very best of weapons cannot win success for a scattered and disheartened force. For the last year we have been quarrelling about the nature of our weapons, not troubling to notice the state of the army. If the army is once scattered how will the best of weapons help it? Admit for a moment that the boycott of the Councils is the most important task before us or that entire victory consists in capturing the Councils. But when you have no united strength, when your organization has become chaotic, the discipline of the national centres destroyed and above all Hindu-Muslim unity fractured, how will you successfully boycott the Councils—how capture their seats?

EXCESSES.

Gentlemen, what we must needs cherish with care are not minor details but actual principles. It will therefore, be folly to be so carried away by zeal for a minor matter that the danger may arise of the birth of new principles, and this may later on create for us great difficulties. When this difference brought about a division and took the shape of partisan quarrels and dissension it was inevitable that there should be an inclination to excesses. It is our duty, however, to divorce our brains and hearts rigorously from division and never to preach blind obedience though we should be strong in discipline. By blind obedience, I mean a state of mind in which a person exceeds the limits of moderation in following a great man. Instead of using his own mental faculties, the word of one person becomes the criterion of right and wrong, truth and untruth for him. Such blind obedience has been the greatest obstacle in the way of human progress and development both in the departments of religion and science. We should never import this mentality into our politics.

By discipline, on the other hand, is meant obedience such as the soldier owes to his commander. Just as blind obedience is a stumbling block in the way of all success and progress, discipline is the requisite condition for all corporate action. It is possible that the commander may issue wrong orders but the soldier must obey them even though he differs from his leader about their suitability. Even if the commander issues wrong commands we should prefer to be killed like the English regiment at Sebastopol for whom Tennyson has written the famous elegy, rather than disobey. To suffer the consequences of wrong leadership is better than the defection of an entire army on the field of battle.

Today, the Indian National Congress is the only governing body for us. We are in a state of war. We should not, of course, obey blindly either the mandate of the Congress or the views of our greatest leaders but we should not disturb discipline either. I regret to say the party opposed to all changes must beware lest we should inadvertently be betrayed into blind obedience or total inertia and the party insisting on the introduction of changes have failed to realise that we must not ruin the discipline of our organization for the sake of a minor difference.

OUR FUTURE PROGRAMME.

Gentlemen, permit me now to place before you my opinion concerning our present condition and our future method of work. I believe that the true guidance for us is that of Mahatma Gandhi, and it is under that guidance alone that India can ever gain salvation and freedom. There are three courses before India today—contentment with the present situation, armed revolution and the Non-co-operation movement. We cannot remain satisfied with our present lot; we cannot bring about an armed revolution and do not desire it. The third course, Non-co-operation, alone remains open to us. As to the programme of Non-co-operation, there is no reason why we should make any change in its principles. It must, no doubt, be admitted that the first conflict is over. The struggle has, for the moment, been suspended. But we must prepare for its resumption. Civil disobedience, and civil disobedience alone, can be the decisive factor. Even if we do not resort to mass civil disobedience for the time being, we have full faith in the power of defensive civil obedience.

Defensive civil disobedience requires conditions, some of which depend on our own preparedness, while others depend on the behaviour of the bureaucratic authorities. When the bureaucracy behaves in a particular way, the conditions we require are present,—as for instance when it tries to stop our activities with severity and force and strains and misinterprets the law as it has often done in the past.

No doubt this is a condition the fulfilment of which is not in our power, nonetheless we can be confident that the natural tendencies of the moment are working in our favour. Not only do we know that we are in the right path, we are also sure that the adversary facing us is altogether in the wrong, and that the inevitable outcome of the struggle is that he should meet with defeat. The struggle today is not between the individuals forming the bureaucracy and the intellect of India, but between a wrong system and righteous demands. As a necessary consequence, on the one hand, mistakes will be piled on mistakes, and on the other, the party of the nation will acquire new sources of strength. We should be confident that if we continue our preparations, an atmosphere will soon be created in which it will be possible for us to begin our second decisive

battle ; and the battle will offer an attraction to our non-violent soldiers, and we will then see that the beds of those now in hospital are empty and the field of battle filled with men.

COUNCILS.

But how are we to utilise the time before us in order to create a proper atmosphere for renewing the struggle at the earliest moment and at the same time find full scope for our activities ? Will it be better for us to boycott the forthcoming elections, or should we, wherever we can secure a majority, go to the Councils, and make them a temporary sphere of our non-co-operation activities.

After considering all aspects of the question, I have come to the conclusion that under the present circumstances it is useless for us to boycott the Councils, and remain aloof. As on the occasion of the previous election a boycott was necessary for us, so under the present circumstances it is to our advantage to occupy as many seats as possible. We should try to enter the Councils and Assemblies and should follow such a policy that those Councils and Assemblies may become a sphere of our efforts. In my humble opinion our future programme should be that on the one hand a section of us enters the Councils while on the other hand our activities outside the Councils continue. The All-India Congress Committee should supervise both these activities so that the work remains under the direction of a single organisation. It ought to be decided once for all that entering the Councils means following a definite and fixed programme decided upon by the Congress. This programme should clearly specify all those conditions which may serve to prevent our activities being contaminated by co-operation. Since our object is not to co-operate, it is clear that our activities there cannot be continued for long. It must also be made clear that no responsible post can be accepted in the Councils even for a very short time with any intention whatsoever.

Now it remains to be decided what ought to be our programme after entering these Councils. Many courses are possible and much depends on the trend of events and circumstances at the time. But this much is obvious that at some opportune moment the non-co-operating members will have to leave the Councils and resort to civil disobedience along with those workers who have not gone to the Councils. We adopt the policy of entering the Councils in order to make the Councils a sphere of our activities, and not to boycott them,—for this will be a better preparation for the ultimate struggle.

If we were fully convinced today that instead of being in a state of suspense we are prepared to offer civil disobedience, I for one would not for a moment advise you even to think of entering the Councils. That is why, though I was entirely dissatisfied at the success of the Gaya programme, yet as long as there was the slightest hope of its success my best efforts were to make a united effort to make it successful without thinking of entering the Councils. However, if we wish we can today proceed to draw up a programme of our activities after entering the Councils or if we prefer it we can postpone it for the annual session. The last will be the better alternative.

What should be our programme outside the Councils ? This is the most important problem for us to consider and on this depends the utility of this new method of warfare. Regarding this I wish to place the following for your consideration.

1. On the constructive side of the programme the propaganda of Hindu-Muslim unity should begin anew. I will in a moment draw your attention to the details of the question.

2. The organisation of the labouring classes of the country, for we can do nothing in future while ignoring them.

3. The political education of the masses by means of speeches and writings. In our former activities we had to undertake the work of preparation, canvassing, and opposition at the same time. We should not ignore this work while we are in our present state of suspense. We should try to engrave the principle and aims of national unity, Non-co-operation, non-violence, and civil disobedience on the hearts of the masses. They should follow us not on the grounds of religious belief; they should consider it their duty from sentiments of pure patriotism. A mass of political literature should be prepared in different languages of India and distributed broadcast. The workers and volunteers of the Congress Committees should tour through towns and villages to instruct the people and open temporary political schools everywhere. A programme of work for three or six months should be drawn up for this work and in that time we will be able to instruct the people up to a certain definite standard. If the government puts hindrances in our path it will be all the more useful to us. It is quite possible that we may thus be able to attain our goal.

THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME :

4. I wish to make it quite clear that there can be only one possible method of our entering the Councils: the Congress should not only issue a mandate but also undertake direction. But today if you decide against entering the Councils no single person or party, as I have already emphasised at length, should advance one step further. I altogether deny that the question is of a character to justify our disobeying the National organisation in case of a difference of opinion. If today you again decide against entering the Councils I would in that case think that a boycott of them is preferable to entering. For the chief need is united effort. The method adopted by us unanimously will be better than any which have been individually chosen, and for as long as no question of principles is involved we should not disobey our National organisation.

Gentlemen, on the occasion of the Gaya Congress the Conference of Muslim Ulema decided that Musalmans should not stand for election to the Councils. In fact, from the religious aspect of the question only, the principle of Non-co-operation was in view, and so far as its programme of work was concerned the Ulema were naturally opposed to all those methods from which the least danger to the principle could be apprehended. Whether entering the Councils would be harmful or beneficial to the principles could only be decided by those who had gained some experience of these affairs. But as at that moment there were differences of opinion even among such persons, the Ulema naturally preferred the safer course. Opinions being divided, complete boycott appeared the safer alternative. But I assure you that if today you arrive at a satisfactory decision there is no reason for any insistence on their part.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

I have occupied so much of your time in describing the superstructure of our building, but the condition of the foundations of our efforts—Hindu-Muslim unity—remains to be considered. This is the foundation of our structure without which not only the freedom of India but all those factors necessary for the

life and progress of the country will remain a dream. Not only is our national freedom impossible without it, we cannot create without it primary principles of humanity within ourselves. If today an angel descending from the clouds were to declare from the top of the Minar of Delhi, "You will obtain Swaraj within twenty-four hours if you relinquish Hindu-Muslim unity," I would prefer to sacrifice Swaraj rather than Hindu-Muslim unity; for delay in the attainment of Swaraj will be a loss to India alone but if our unity disappears it will be a loss to the whole world of humanity.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY.

No one with a single particle of love and affection for India can view her present condition unmoved and callous. Four years ago we made the grandest proclamation of our national honour and self-respect. We asked the world to wait for our freedom. But just when the world was turning its ear to hear the tale of freedom we have prepared a tale of slavish shamelessness and mad riots. Instead of Swaraj and the Khilafat the noise of the *Shudhi* movement and its opponents, are heard on every side. "Save the Hindus from the Mohammedans" is said on the one hand and "Save Islam from the Hindus!" on the other. When the cry for the protection of Hindus and Musalmans rises so high it is obvious that our demand for the protection of a united India cannot be entertained. On one side the platform and the press invite the mad religious bigotry of the people and on the other side a duped and ignorant public is shedding its blood in the streets of Hindustan. There have been serious troubles at Ajmere, Palwal, Saharanpore, Agra, and Meerut. Who can say to what unfortunate consequences these troubles will lead?

Gentlemen, I wish to tell all those persons who are busy in inciting these feelings that this state of affairs is intolerable. I will even go a step further and tell them that we are treading the path of freedom and they should not impede our progress. They must not put hindrances in our way and if they do so it will be our duty to clear the path of all obstacles. I beg to lay before all of you who have come here from every corner of the country and who represent the intellect and the voice of India that it does not matter in the least whether you decide that the Non-co-operators should or should not go to the Councils; but, for God's sake, decide here and now whether India is to protect the maimed hopes of her freedom and emancipation, or whether she is to bury them in the blood-stained soil of Saharanpore and Agra. Today you should announce your clear decisions on this point and devote all your energies to it. If you allow such things for a day longer, be sure, that it will throw back your progress for years.

Gentlemen, Not long ago the Musalmans as a community took no part in the activities of the Congress. It was a common feeling among them that they were numerically inferior to the Hindus in India and were also very backward in education and wealth, and that if they participated in any national movement, they would be working to endanger their existence as a community. As a result of this feeling their activities were long confined to communal organisation while they held aloof from the national movement. But those of you who have been studying the progress in the corporate life of the Musalmans during the last twelve years will

doubtless recollect that the first voice raised in 1912 against this attitude was mine. I invited the attention of my co-religionists to the fact that by persisting in the policy of aloofness they were making their existence an obstacle to the liberty of the country and that they should trust their Hindu brothers, join the Congress, make the freedom of the country their goal, and abandon the policy of communal aloofness. At that time my message was not received well by my co-religionists and met with strong opposition. But soon the time arrived when Musalmans realised the truth. When I was interned at Ranchi in 1916 I used to hear that Musalmans were eagerly and in numbers entering the fold of the Congress.

Gentlemen, as in 1912 I raised my voice against the conduct of my co-religionists and fear of their opposition did not prevent me off from declaring the truth, so now I deem it my duty to raise my voice against those of our brothers who are raising the standard of a Hindu Sanghatan.

I am surprised to find that the mental condition of the Muslim political circles of those days is found in these persons now. But the Musalmans were prompted by the fear that they were numerically inferior, whereas this movement is exciting the hearts of those who are four times more numerous than the Musalmans. I unhesitatingly declare that today India wants neither a Hindu nor a Muslim Sanghatan. We require one and one, Sanghatan alone—that is the Indian National Congress.

Some of the responsible leaders of the Shudhi movement assert that it is not opposed to Hindu-Muslim unity because after preaching sermons of opposition and strife they invariably conclude with a message of cordiality and love. But I would say to these gentlemen that they have already led us along the wrong path, and they should not now invite us to deny human nature. The Lord Christ exhorted the people of the world to forgive their enemies. But the world has not been able to forgive even its friends to the present day. Do you imagine that after exciting passions of jealousy and revenge, you can maintain cordiality and love among the same people?

In like manner I must say of the Shudhi Movement that though we may separate in theory our united efforts for political salvation and our communal and religious quarrels no such dividing line between their activities can be drawn in practice. We want a united nation and we know that if on one side the cries of "Mlech" and on the other those of "Kafir" are permitted to be raised then it will be impossible to create that tolerant spirit without which the existence of unity will be very seriously jeopardised. Gentlemen, I appeal to all the parties in the country that they should once and for all decide the fate of India. If they want their country to be free and attain salvation, they must postpone all other activities for her sake. No matter how dear these activities be to them there is no other alternative.

I do not deny that every community in India has numerous duties of internal organisation and reforms before it, and it is necessary that every community should make efforts to remove its own peculiar defects and frailties. Nonetheless, I absolutely deny that under these conditions any movement which draws its motive power from internecine warfare and communal strife can be legitimate. The same sorts of arguments are repeated. The same kinds of reasons are put forwards

I do not wish to go into the details of the question. I refuse to acknowledge the validity of the arguments advanced in defence of communal or sectional movements. "In such and such a year", it is said "there was a disturbance in which one of the communities sustained a greater injury than the other. It is therefore necessary that it should organise a Sanghatan against the other community."

Now if we recognise the validity of such arguments for a single moment, be incumbent on every community of Hindustan to draw up a list of wrongs it has suffered and organize its Sanghatan. In Bombay alone during the last years many riots between the two Muslim sects have taken place in which one has had the satisfaction of killing and plundering the other. I must however frankly and openly declare that after the commencement of the new era of Hindu-Muslim unity, the Multan riot and the great injuries inflicted on the Hindus is an unfortunate catastrophe which should give pain to every Muslim heart. But in a country like India—a country inhabited by millions of people just entering upon a new phase of their existence, misdirected religious prejudices and untimely religious enthusiasms, are easily excited and such disturbances cannot completely be avoided. A disturbance now and then, is quite possible. Its remedy lies in the refusal of the other section of the community to view the matter in a sectarian spirit; they should blame the party that has been guilty of excess and sympathise with the party that has been wronged. You do not remedy the disease by exaggerating a local affair into a national and communal grievance, for this unites the opposition of the other community and starts a war that can never end. To-day from this platform, the cradle of united Indian nationalism and in the name of their common motherland, I appeal both to the Hindus and the Musalmans not to trample so cruelly upon national aspirations and hopes. Without further discussion as to what has happened we should at once stop all activities connected with the Shudhi movement. If the people cannot unite to stop them they should at least postpone them; if they did so they would be rendering the greatest service not only to their country, but to the whole of mankind.

THE NATIONAL PACT OF INDIA

Gentlemen, let me remind you in this connection that we should prepare without any further delay a national pact which will not only elucidate and define our national goal but will also decide the future relations of the various communities in the country and close the gate to future trouble. India is a wonderful land. It is quite possible that the freedom of three hundred millions of people will be delayed because a procession passed by a mosque singing and beating drums—or the branches of a tree on the high road were lopped. When such is the nature of the country's sufferings we should not delay in deciding these matters once and for all time. I hope that you will consider these matters during your deliberations. It would be advisable to form a committee of select persons and to prepare a draft scheme before the next session.

CONCLUSION

Gentlemen, Like the historic days of other Nations the consequences of this remarkable day may be of opposite kinds. To-day we can achieve the greatest possible success, but the greatest possible failure may fall to our lot. Our determination, our courage, and our patriotism are under a very great trial. Come, let us succeed in our task by devoting ourselves to the building up of our common deśh!

Jama Masjid (Delhi)



مسلمانانِ دلی کا اجتماع

جامع مسجد، دلی اکتوبر ۱۹۴۷ء

میرے عزیزو! آپ جانتے ہیں کہ وہ کون سی چیز ہے جو مجھے یہاں لے آئی ہے۔ میرے لیے شاہ جہان کی اس یادگار مسجد میں یہ اجتماع کوئی نئی بات نہیں ہے میں نے اُس زمانہ میں جس پر لیل و نہار کی بہت سی گزشتیں بیدت چکی ہیں، تمہیں یہیں سے خطاب کیا تھا۔ جب تمہارے چہروں پر انصاف کی بجائے اطمینان تھا اور تمہارے دلوں میں شک کی بجائے اعتماد۔ آج تمہارے چہروں کا اضطراب اور دلوں کی دیرانی دیکھتا ہوں تو مجھے بے اختیار پچھلے چند برسوں کی سبھولی بسری کہانیاں یاد آجاتی ہیں۔ تمہیں یاد ہے، میں نے تمہیں پکارا تھا تم نے میری زبان کاٹ لی؛ میں نے قلم اٹھایا اور تم نے میرے ہاتھ قلم کر دیے۔ میں چلنا چاہا تم نے میرے پاؤں کاٹ دیے۔ میں نے کمر دٹ لینی چاہی تم نے میری کمر توڑ دی۔ حتیٰ کہ پچھلے سات برس کی تلخ نوا سیاست جو تمہیں آج داغِ جدائی دے گئی ہے اس کے مہرِ شباب میں بھی میں نے تمہیں خطرے کی شاہراہ پر جھنجھوڑا، لیکن تم نے میری مدد سے صرف احتراز کیا بلکہ غفلت و انکار کی ساری سنتیں تازہ کر دیں۔ نتیجہ معلوم کہ آج ان ہی خطروں نے تمہیں گھیر لیا ہے جن کا اندیشہ تمہیں صراطِ مستقیم سے دور لے گیا تھا۔

خطبات آزاد

سچ پوچھو تو میں ایک جموں ہوں یا ایک دور افتادہ صدا، جس نے وطن میں رہ کر بھی غریب الوطنی کی زندگی گزاری ہے اس کا یہ مطلب نہیں ہے کہ جو مقام میں نے پہلے دن اپنے لیے چن لیا تھا وہاں میرے بال و پر کاٹ لیے گئے ہیں۔ یا میرے آشیائے کے لیے جگہ نہیں رہی بلکہ میں یہ کہنا چاہتا ہوں کہ میرے سامن کو تمہاری دست درازیوں سے گلہ ہے۔ میرا احساس ذہنی اور میرے دل کو مدد ہے۔ سوچو تو یہی تم نے کونسی راہ اختیار کی؟ کہاں پہنچے اور اب کہاں کھڑے ہو؟ کیا یہ خوف کی زندگی نہیں؟ کیا تمہارے حواس میں اقتلال نہیں آگیا ہے، یہ خوف تم نے خود ہی فراہم کیا ہے۔ یہ تمہارے اپنے اعمال کے پھل ہیں۔

ابھی کچھ زیادہ عرصہ نہیں بیتا، جب میں نے تم سے کہا تھا کہ دو قوموں کا نظریہ حیات یعنی مادی کے لیے مرض الموت کا دورہ کرتا ہے اس کو چھوڑ دو۔ یہ ستون جن پر تم نے بھروسہ کیا ہے نہایت تیزی سے ٹوٹ رہے ہیں۔ لیکن تم نے مٹی کی مٹی برابر کر دی اور یہ نہ سوچا کہ کونسی اور اس کی تیز رفتار تمہارے لیے اپنا ضابطہ تبدیل نہیں کر سکتے۔ وقت کی رفتار کتنی نہیں تم دیکھ رہے ہو کہ جن سہاروں پر تمہیں بھروسہ تھا ان تمہیں لاوارث سمجھ کر تقدیر کے حوالے کر گئے۔ وہ تقدیر جو تمہارے داعی لغت کی نشان سے مختلف مفہوم رکھتی ہے یعنی ان کے نزدیک فقدانِ ہمت کا نام تقدیر ہے۔

انگریز کی بساط تمہاری خواہش کے برخلاف اٹھا دی گئی، اور راہ نہائی کے وہ بت جو تم نے وضع کیے تھے وہ بھی دغا دے گئے، حالانکہ تم نے یہی سمجھا تھا کہ یہ بساط ہمیشہ کے لیے چھائی گئی ہے، اور ان ہی جوتوں کی پوجا میں تمہاری زندگی ہے۔ میں تمہارے زخموں کو کرینا نہیں چاہتا۔ اور تمہارے اضطراب میں مزید اضافہ میری خواہش نہیں۔ لیکن اگر کچھ دور ماضی کی طرف پلٹ جاؤ تو تمہارے لیے بہت سی گہری کھل سکتی ہیں۔ ایک وقت تھا میں نے ہندوستان کی آزادی کے حصول کا احساس دلاتے ہوئے تمہیں پکارا تھا اور کہا تھا۔

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نوبہ نے والا ہے اس کو کوئی قوم اپنی نحوست سے روک نہیں سکتی۔ ہندستان کی تقدیر میں سیاسی انقلاب لکھا جا چکا ہے اور اس کی غلامانہ زنجیریں بیسویں صدی کی ہولانے حریت سے کٹ کر گرنے والی ہیں۔ اگر تم نے وقت کے پہلو بہ پہلو قدم اٹھانے سے پہلو تہی کی اور عقل کی موجودہ زندگی کو اپنا شعار بنائے رکھا، تو مستقبل کا مورخ لکھے گا کہ تمہارے گروہ نے جو سات کروڑ انسانوں کا ایک غول تھا، ملک کی آزادی کے بارے میں وہ روٹی اختیار کیا، جو صفحہ ہستی سے محو ہو جانے والی قوموں کا شیوہ ہوا کرتا ہے۔ آج ہندستان کا جھنڈا اپنے پورے شکوہ سے لہرا رہا ہے۔ یہ وہی جھنڈا ہے جس کی اڑانوں سے حاکمانہ غرور کے دل آزار قبضے تمسخر کیا کرتے تھے۔

یہ ٹھیک ہے کہ وقت نے تمہاری خواہشوں کے مطابق انگوٹھی نہیں لی، بلکہ اس نے ایک قوم کے پیدائشی حق کے احترام میں کروٹ بدلی۔ اور یہی وہ انقلاب ہے جس کی ایک کروٹ نے تمہیں بہت حد تک خوفزدہ کر دیا ہے۔ تم خیال کرتے ہو کہ تم سے کوئی اچھی شے چھین گئی ہے اور اس کی جگہ بری شے آگئی ہے۔ ہاں، تمہاری بےقراری اسی لیے ہے کہ تم نے اپنے تئیں اچھی شے کے لیے تیار نہیں کیا تھا۔ اور بری شے کو ملجا وادی سمجھ رکھا تھا۔ میری مراد غیر ملکی غلامی سے ہے۔ جس کے ہاتھوں تم نے دقوں حاکمانہ طمع کا کلونا بن کر زندگی بسر کی ہے۔ ایک ن تھا کہ جب ہماری قوم کے قدم کسی جنگ کے آغاز کی طرف تھے، اور آج تم اس جنگ کے انجام سے مضطرب ہو۔ آخر تمہاری اس جھلت پر کیا کہوں؟ کہ اور سفر کی جستجو ختم نہیں ہوئی اور اور عمر بھی کا خطرہ بھی پیش آگیا!

میرے بھائی! میں نے ہمیشہ سیاست کو ذاتیات سے الگ رکھنے کی کوشش کی ہے۔ میں نے اس پر خار وادی میں قدم نہیں رکھا۔ یہی وجہ ہے کہ میری بہت سی باتیں کنایوں کا پہلو لیے ہوتی ہیں۔ لیکن مجھے آج جو کچھ کہنا ہے، اسے بے روک ہو کر کہنا چاہتا ہوں۔ متحد ہندستان کا بطورہ بنیادی طور پر غلط تھا۔ مذہبی اختلافات کو جس طرح ہوا دی گئی،

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اس کا لازمی نتیجہ ہی آثار و منظر ہر تھے جو ہم نے اپنی آنکھوں سے دیکھا اور بد قسمتی سے بعض مقامات میں آج بھی دیکھ رہے ہیں۔

پچھلے سات برس کے رویہ اور دہرانے سے کوئی فائدہ نہیں اور نہ اس سے کوئی اچھا نتیجہ نکل سکتا ہے۔ البتہ ہندستان کے مسلمانوں پر جو ریلا آیا ہے وہ یقیناً مسلم لیگ کی غلط قیادت کی فاش غلطیوں ہی کا نتیجہ ہے لیکن میرے لیے اس میں کوئی نئی بات نہیں۔ میں پچھلے دنوں ہی سے اس نتائج پر نظر رکھتا تھا۔

اب ہندستان کی سیاست کا رخ بدل چکا ہے مسلم لیگ کے لیے یہاں کوئی جگہ نہیں ہے۔ اب یہ ہمارے اپنے دماغوں پر منحصر ہے کہ ہم کسی اچھے انداز فکر میں بھی سوچ سکتے ہیں یا نہیں اسی لیے میں نے نومبر کے دوسرے ہفتہ میں ہندستان کے مسلمان رہنماؤں کو دہلی بلانے کا قصد کیا ہے۔ دعوت نامے بھیج دیے گئے ہیں۔ ہر اس کا موسم مارنٹی ہے۔ میں تم کو یقین دلاتا ہوں کہ ہم کو ہمارے سوا کوئی زیر نہیں کر سکتا۔ میں نے ہمیشہ کہا اور آج پھر کہتا ہوں کہ تذبذب کا راستہ چھوڑ دو، شک سے ہاتھ اٹھا لو، اور بد عملی کو ترک کر دو۔ یہ تین دھار کا انوکھا خنجر لو ہے کی اس دو دھاری تلوار سے زیادہ کاری ہے، جس کے گھاؤ کی کہانیاں میں نے تمہارے نوجوانوں کی زبانی سنی ہے۔

یہ فرار کی زندگی جو تم نے ہجرت کے مقدس نام پر اختیار کی ہے اس پر غور کرو، اپنے دلوں کو مضبوط بناؤ، اور اپنے دماغوں کو سوچنے کی عادت، ڈالو اور پھر دیکھو کہ تمہارے یہ فیصلے کتنے مایانہ ہیں۔ آخر کہاں جا رہے ہو اور کیوں جا رہے ہو؟

یہ دیکھو، مسجد کے بلند مینار تم سے اچک کر سوال کرتے ہیں کہ تم نے اپنی تاریخ کے صفحات کو کہاں گم کر دیا ہے؟ ابھی کل کی بات ہے کہ جتنا کے کنارے تمہارے قافلہ نے دنگل کیا تھا، اور آج تم ہو کہ تمہیں یہاں رہتے ہوئے خوف محسوس ہوتا ہے۔ حال کو دہلی تمہارے خون سے سینچی ہوئی ہے۔

عزیزو! اپنے اندر ایک بنیادی تبدیلی پیدا کرو جس طرح آج سے کچھ عرصے پہلے تمہارا جوش و خروش بجا تھا اسی طرح آج یہ تمہارا خوف دہراں بھی بجا ہے۔ مسلمان اور بزدلی یا مسلمان اور اشتغال ایک جگہ جمع نہیں ہو سکتے۔ سچے مسلمانوں کو نہ کوئی طمع ہلا سکتی ہے اور نہ کوئی خوف ڈرا سکتا ہے۔ چند انسانی چہروں کے فائب از نظر ہو جانے سے ڈر نہ نہیں انہوں نے تمہیں جانے کے لیے اکٹھا کیا تھا۔ آج انہوں نے تمہارے ہاتھ سے اپنا ہاتھ کھینچ لیا ہے تو یہ عیب کی بات نہیں۔ یہ دیکھو تمہارے دل تو ان کے ساتھ ہی رخصت نہیں ہو گئے۔ اگر دل ابھی تک تمہارے پاس ہیں تو اسے خدا کی جلوہ گاہ بناؤ جس نے آج سے تیرہ سو برس پہلے عرب کے ایک امی کی معرفت فرمایا تھا: جو خدا پر ایمان لائے اور اس پر جم گئے تو پھر ان کے لیے نہ تو کسی طرح کا درد ہے اور نہ کوئی غم! ہوائیں آتی ہیں اور گند جاتی ہیں۔ یہ مر مر سہی لیکن اس کی عمر کچھ زیادہ نہیں۔ ابھی دکھتی آنکھوں ابتلا کا موسم گزرنے والا ہے یوں بدل جاؤ جیسے تم پہلے کبھی اس حالت ہی میں نہ تھے۔

میں کلام میں تکرار کا عادی نہیں ہوں لیکن مجھے تمہاری تغافل کشی کے پیش نظر بار بار یہ کہنا پڑتا ہے کہ تیسری طاقت اپنی گھنڈ کا پشتارہ اٹھا کر رخصت ہو چکی ہے جو ہونا تھا وہ ہو کر رہا۔ سیاسی ذہنیت اپنا پھلا سا پنچ توڑ چکی ہے اور اب نیا سا پنچ بدل رہا ہے۔ اگر اب بھی تمہارے دلوں کا معاملہ بدلا نہیں اور دماغوں کی چھن ختم نہیں ہوتی تو پھر حالت دوسری ہے لیکن اگر واقعی تمہارے اندر سچی تبدیلی کی خواہش پیدا ہو گئی ہے تو پھر اس طرح بدلو جو جس طرح تاریخ نے اپنے تئیں بدل لیا ہے آج بھی کہ ہم ایک دور انقلاب کو پورا کر چکے ہیں ہمارے ملک کی تاریخ میں کچھ صفحے خالی ہیں اور ہم ان صفحوں میں زیب عنوان بن سکتے ہیں مگر شرط یہ ہے کہ ہم اس کے لیے تیار بھی ہوں۔

عزیزو! تبدیلیوں کے ساتھ چلو یہ دکھو کہ ہم اس تغیر کے لیے تیار نہ تھے بلکہ اب تیار ہو جاؤ۔ ستارے ٹوٹ گئے لیکن سورج تو چمک رہا ہے اس سے کڑ میں انگ لیا اور

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ان اندھیری راتوں میں بھاری جہاں اُجالے کی سخت ضرورت ہے۔

میں تم سے یہ نہیں کہتا کہ تم حاکمانہ اقتدار کے مدار سے سے وفاداری کا سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرو اور کاسرٹیفکیٹ کی وہی زندگی اختیار کرو جو غیر ملکی حاکموں کے عہد میں تمہارا اشارہ رہا ہے۔ میں کہتا ہوں کہ جو اچلے نقش و نگار تھیں اس ہندستان میں ماضی کی یادگار کے طور پر نظر آ رہے ہیں وہ تمہارا ہی قافلہ تھا، انہیں بھلاؤ نہیں، انہیں چھوڑو نہیں۔ ان کے وارث بن کر رہو، اور سمجھ لو کہ اگر تم بھاگنے کے لیے تیار نہیں تو پھر تمہیں کوئی طاقت بھگا نہیں سکتی۔ آؤ عہد کرو کہ یہ ملک ہمارا ہے ہم اس کے لیے ہیں اور اس کی تقدیر کے بنیادی فیصلے ہماری آواز کے بغیر دھورے ہی رہیں گے۔

آج زلزلوں سے ڈرتے ہو، کبھی تم خود اک زلزلہ تھے۔ آج اندھیرے سے کانپتے ہو کیا یاد نہیں کہ تمہارا وجود ایک اجالا تھا! یہ بادلوں نے میلا پانی برسا یا ہے تم نے بیگ جانے کے فہرے سے اپنے پائینے چڑھالیے ہیں۔ وہ تھا ایسے ہی اسلاف تھے جو سمندر میں اتر گئے، پہاڑوں کی چھاتیوں کو روند ڈالا۔ بھیلیاں آئیں تو ان پر مسکرا دیے۔ بادل گر جے تو قہقہوں سے جواب دیا۔ مر صرا سٹی تو اس کا رخ پھیر دیا۔ آندھیاں آئیں تو ان سے کہا کہ تمہارا راستہ یہ نہیں ہے۔ یہ ایمان کی جان کنی ہے کہ شہنشاہوں کے گریبانوں سے کیلنے والے آج خود اپنے گریبانوں سے کیلنے لگے۔ اور خدا سے اس درجہ فاضل ہو گئے کہ جیسے اس پر کبھی ایمان ہی نہیں تھا۔

عزیزو! میرے پاس تمہارے لیے کوئی نیا نسخہ نہیں ہے۔ وہی پرانا نسخہ ہے، جو برسوں پہلے کا ہے۔ وہ نسخہ جس کو کائناتِ انسانی کا سب سے بڑا مومن لایا تھا۔ وہ نسخہ ہے قرآن کا یہ اعلان کہ لَا تَتَّبِعُوا دِلًا تَحْزَنُوا وَأَنْتُمْ الْأَعْمَلُونَ إِنَّ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ ۝

آج کی صحبت ختم ہو گئی مجھے جو کچھ کہنا تھا وہ اختصار کے ساتھ کہ چکا ہوں۔ پھر کہتا

خطبات آزاد

ہوں اور بار بار کہتا ہوں: اپنے حواس پر قابو رکھو، اپنے گرد و پیش اپنی زندگی خود فراہم کرو۔ یہ منڈی کی چیز نہیں کہ تمہیں خرید کر لادوں۔ یہ تو دل کی دکان ہی میں سے اعمالِ صالحہ کی نقدی سے دستیاب ہو سکتی ہے۔

والسلام علیکم ورحمتہ اللہ وبرکاتہ