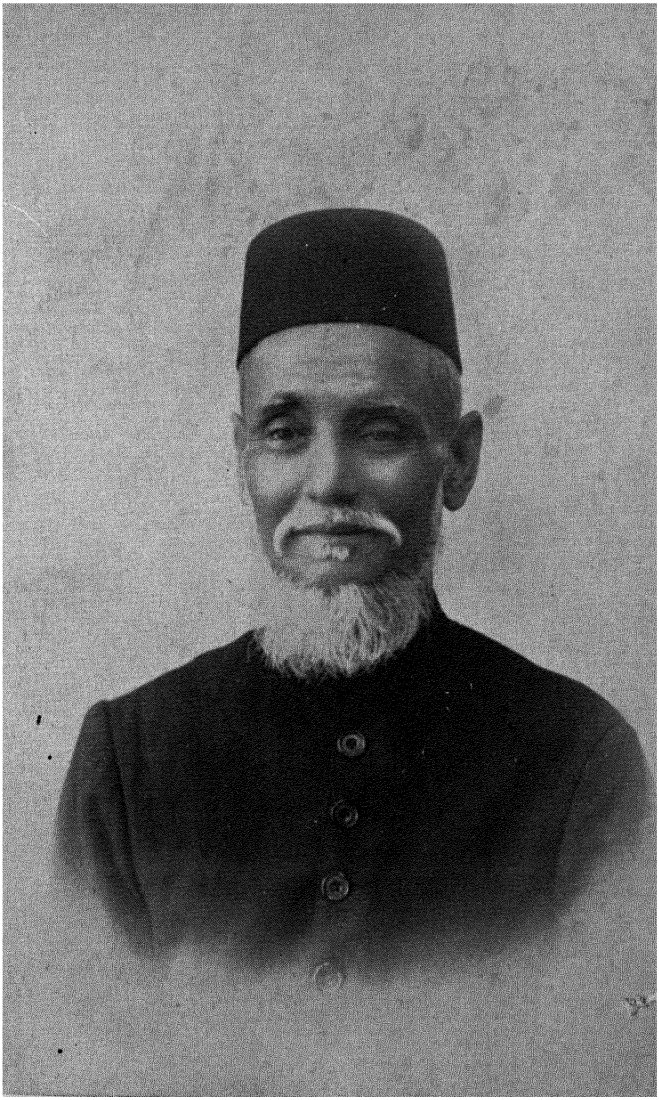
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MOULAVI ABDUL KARIM

LIFE
OF
MAULAVI ABDUL KARIM.

By
Md. ALI AZAM, B.A.
(Editor of the Mujahid).

CALCUTTA,
1939.

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PREFACE.

For about a quarter of a century, ever since Maulavi Abdul Karim made his munificent public endowment, there has been a demand for his biography. In 1919, at the annual meeting of the Sylhet Muslim Students' Association, an announcement was made that a gold medal would be awarded for the best essay on Maulavi Abdul Karim's life. Some time after that, the Muslim head master of a high English school in Sylhet, secured some materials and began to write the biography. Unfortunately he died all of a sudden, and what he had compiled, with the materials he had collected, was lost. Since then Maulavi Abdul Karim has been approached, from time to time, by different persons for materials for his life, but nothing had materialised up to this time. I need hardly say that I am very thankful to him for kindly supplying me with the required materials that are available.

Maulavi Abdul Karim's is a household name in Bengal. There is hardly any educated person in this province, and perhaps in any province in India, who does not know Maulavi Abdul Karim as a veteran educationist, a reputed author and a sound political thinker. But many people do not know all that he has done for the people of Bengal, particularly for the Muslims. I think it is desirable that his biography should be published so that the younger generation may draw inspiration from his noble life.

I cannot say how far I have succeeded in properly portraying a life that is so very useful, eventful and interesting. As far as I am aware modern Bengal has not produced another Muslim who has rendered better service to his community. By his munificent endowment of rupees fifty thousand for Islamic work and poor Muslim students, he has laid his co-religionists under a deep obligation. By his literary, journalistic and platform work on Islam and its Holy Prophet, he has rendered a signal service to the cause of his religion. By his unexampled activities as a special educational officer, as well as by his unprecedented exertions to adjust all inequalities and differences, he has done incalculable good to the community and the country.

It can hardly be realised now by the younger generation what the educational condition of the Musalmans of Bengal half a century ago was, before M. Abdul Karim was appointed a special officer, and what undreamt-of improvement he effected in a quarter of a century during which he whole-heartedly worked for the community. Before his appointment there was not, in many of the districts in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, even a single Muhammadan Deputy or Sub-Inspector of Schools or a single Muhammadan Government School teacher. As stated in Chapter VII. of this book, it was due to Maulavi Abdul Karim's strong representations to Government that so many Muhammadan inspecting officers and school masters, now found in different districts of Bengal and Bihar, were appointed and funds were provided for the appointment of Persian and Arabic teachers as well as for aiding poor Muhammadan students. There were and are other special officers for Muhammadan Education, but

we are not aware what special work, besides their routine duties, they have done for the furtherance of education in their community. In fact the great progress made by the Musalmans of Bengal in education and politics, during the last half a century, was mainly due to the steps taken by this great benefactor of the community. Would there have been such political awakening of the Muslims of Bengal but for the education they got through his never-to-be-forgotten efforts? From the numerous speeches he delivered and the "Notes" he wrote (some of which will be found in Chapter VIII. of Part II. of this book) the younger generation will learn many things worth knowing.

It is to be deeply regretted that the inestimable services and unexampled generosity of Maulavi Abdul Karim have not been adequately recognised either by the community or the Government. Had he been a member of the sister community, I am certain, his *"Jayanti"* would have been celebrated long ago. But this is perhaps too much to expect of a community that does not care to celebrate even the death anniversary of a Salimullah or an Amir Ali. I think if Maulavi Abdul Karim was born in any other province, such as the Punjab, his work would have been well-appreciated ; this might have served as an incentive to further work.

It may be said to be Bengal's misfortune that the collaboration of such a veteran educationist could not be utilised for the educational reform and reorganisation in the province under the Reform Scheme of Administration, although since his retirement from service he has all along been in public life, has taken part in all public movements for the good of the community and the

country, and was a most active and useful member of the Legislative Council for about a decade. He was sometimes heard to say that it is not altogether impossible to make primary education free and compulsory without taxation. With his vast experience and deep insight in the subject, it is more than likely that he might have had in his head some workable scheme, which others could not yet think of, for the extension and reorientation of the educational system. All the Education Ministers in Bengal have been lawyers, who had hardly anything to do with the subject of Education throughout their careers. It is no wonder, therefore, that they did not succeed in carrying out any scheme for the reorganisation of Education in Bengal. For, by the time they learnt something of their work, they had to leave their posts. They might have requisitioned the co-operation of experienced educationists. But they do not seem to have done so, perhaps for fear of bringing a slur on lawyers' "subjantaism".

When there was a talk about Maulavi Abdul Karim being included in the cabinet, a gentleman remarked "he is too old." Thereupon one of the hearers said "All depends upon the retention of mental powers ; while one is incapacitated at 56, another is not so even at 86. If Hindenburg could be President of Germany while he was 86, there seems to be no reason why Abdul Karim cannot be a cabinet member, while he is not yet 76. By his latest literary works and political activities he has already proved that he still rttains the full vigour of his mental powers."

We have heard with extreme regret that Maulavi Abdul Karim is thinking of retiring from public life within

a short time and passing the remaining days of his life in some holy place, although he is often heard to say that he prefers serving humanity in accordance with Islamic injunction, to passing his days in prayer in a retired place. There is, however, nothing strange in what we have heard. Any one disgusted, as he seems to be, with the conduct of those for whom he has done so much, is likely to come to no other decision. We hope efforts will be made to persuade him to continue his services to his neglected community as long as his health may permit. We trust that the educated young Muslims will emulate the noble example he is leaving behind and they will follow in his footsteps in serving the community and the country.

MD. ALI AZAM.

Calcutta,
March 10, 1939.

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PART I.

CHILDHOOD, EDUCATION & GOVERNMENT SERVICE

CHAPTER I.

Birth-place and Childhood.

Sylhet, the capital of the Surma Valley, formerly in Bengal and at present in Assam, is the birth-place of Abdul Karim. It has a very interesting and instructive history. It was a Hindu kingdom from very early times, and there was not a single Muslim there until about 1170 A. D., when a man named Burhanuddin went and settled there. As he had no children, he made a vow that he would sacrifice a cow for the *aqiqa* ceremony if a son was born to him. A son was born and on his birth he sacrificed a cow. When it was being cut up, a kite took away one piece of it and dropped it near the palace of Gour Gobind, the orthodox Hindu Raja of Sylhet. On coming to know of this, Gour Gobind sent for Burhanuddin, and took him severely to task for killing a cow in his Raj. He then ordered Burhanuddin to bring his child,and killed it when it was brought, and cut off Burhanuddin's hand with which he had killed the cow. In order to seek redress, Burhanuddin went to Delhi. The king despatched an army under his nephew, Sikander Shah, to punish the cruel Raja Gour Gobind for the horrible atrocity he had committed on a Muslim.[1]

At about the same time, a renowned saint, Hazrat Shah Jalal Mujarrid, was on his way towards Sylhet. He

was a native of Yemen in Arabia. On the completion of his spiritual trainning at Mecca, his *Murshed* instructed him to go to India to propagate Islam and to settle at a place the earth of which had the same taste and properties as that of Mecca. He left for India with twelve followers, one of whom could find out the quality of the earth by tasting it, and brought with him a handful of Mecca earth. After his arrival in India, while he was in search of such a place, he came in contact with the army under Sikander Shah which was returning towards Delhi, having been defeated by Raja Gour Gobind. By this time Hazrat Shah Jalal's followers had increased in number to 360. He persuaded Sikander Shah to make another attempt on Sylhet, offering to join the Delhi army with all his own followers. They returned to the attack, Gour Gobind was defeated, and Sylhet was taken over by the combined army. When Hazrat Shah Jalal entered Sylhet, its earth, on being examined by the expert, was found to be like that of Mecca. Finding that Sylhet was the place indicated by his *Murshed*, he settled there with all his followers, one of whom, Shaikh Khizr Quraishi, an Arab from Yemen, was Abdul Karim's ancestor, whose grave still exists in the old family graveyard. The descendants of Shaikh Khizr Quraishi were of good status and in affluent circumstances for a long time, and some of them held high posts under the Sylhet government. When one of them, however, died a premature death, and left his family unprovided for and his children uneducated, this section of the family fell into dire distress, and had to adopt humble

professions. It took generations for some of them to regain their ancestral position and prestige. Many of the respectable Muslims of Sylhet are descendants of Hazrat Shah Jalal's 360 followers, who settled all over the district. Some respectable Hindu families, such as the Majumdars, were afterwards converted to Islam, and their descendants are included in the gentry of Sylhet. The graveyard of the saint, Hazrat Shah Jalal, is looked upon as a holy place of pilgrimage, which is visited every day by hundreds of people, both Muslims and non-Muslims.

CHILDHOOD.

Abdul Karim was born on the 20th. of August, 1863 A. D. A serious accident took place when he was only six months old. One day at dusk the family residence caught fire. A part of it collapsed and fell upon his father, the late M. Muhammad Nader, and severely burnt half of his body. In the confusion that followed no one thought of the child sleeping inside the burning house. He, however, miraculously escaped imminent destruction. There was a Maina (talking-bird) in a cage in the burning house. Unable to bear the heat of the fire, it began to cry out *ma ma*. This reminded those who were putting out the fire of the child within the burning house, and some of them rushed into the house and rescued the child when it was on the point of being burnt. The survival from burns and wounds of the father was also miraculous.

This accident caused the abandonment of the burnt-down quarters, which were situated at a distance of

about three miles from the town of Sylhet. The family removed to Shaikhghat in the town and stayed for some years with Abdul Karim's uncle, the late M. Sanaullah, an enlightened gentleman, whose son, the late M. Muhammadul Haq, was the first Sylhet Muslim to receive English education, which enabled him to become a teacher of one of the first M. A.'s of the Calcutta University, the late Mr. Joy Gobind Shome. Thus was the child, Abdul Karim, accidentally placed in a very congenial sphere.

CHAPTER II.

Education Career.

Before the birth of Abdul Karim, his parents had lost five children, one after another,—four sons and a daughter. So it was not unnatural for them to be apprehensive about the new-born babe's life. They did not even make any particular arrangement for the education of the child, who was left entirely to himself. Intelligent and inquisitive as he was, however, he read the Quran at home, and learnt how to read and write Bengali. At the age of about seven, he expressed a desire to join a school, and was admitted into the Rash-behari M. E. School, situated to the east of Darga Mahalla, at that time the only school of its kind in Sylhet. Sometime after, he got himself transferred to the Sylhet Zillah School, at that time located on the top of the Manara hill. But unfortunately before he had completed one year in that school, he had an attack of cholera, and on the death of a cousin of his of about his own age from the same disease, a rumour spread that he himself was dead. Hearing this, the school master removed his name from the school rolls. On recovery, however, he rejoined the school. But, sometime after, a severe and prolonged attack of dysentery again kept him away from the school for over a year. On recovery, he again took admission into the school, and pursued continuous study till he got to the first class.

On account of indifferent health, Abdul Karim could not work hard. Besides, he was left entirely to himself. When in the lower classes, he generally spent his time out of school hours in catching fish and small birds and in playing Hadu-dudu and Guli-danda. Generally he learnt his daily lessons on his way to school, which was situated at a distance of about a mile-and-a-half from his house. It was only at the time of examinations that he studied at home. The result was that some of his class-fellows occupied higher places in the class and in the examinations ; but in after life none of them could rise to the position to which he rose. By his amiability and sociable nature he was very popular with his class-fellows, and was a pet of his teachers, among whom was the late Rai Saheb Durga Kumar Bose, one of the most successful Head Masters Bengal has ever produced. Among Abdul Karim's contemporaries in the school was the late renowned Sadhu, Tarakishore Chowdhury, who renounced the world when he was at the height of his legal profession and had great prospects of getting a judgship of the Calcutta High Court, and among Abdul Karim's well-wishers was the late Hamid Bakht Majumdar, at that time the leader of Sylhet Muslims.

After he had been in the first class for some months, Abdul Karim thought his deficiency in Mathematics might stand in the way of his success at the University examination. The more he brooded over this the more he felt disinclined to sit for the examination. He then stopped attending school, and gave up the idea of prosecuting his studies further. After he

had absented himself from school for some time, it struck him that he had acted very unwisely, and that it would be no disgrace if he got plucked after an earnest attempt to pass. So he again joined the school, and began to prepare for the test examination. Although he obtained very low marks in Mathematics, the Head Master, in consideration of high marks he secured in English and History, permitted him to sit for the University examination. Fortunately he was successful, and was the first to pass from Sylhet with Persian as his second language.

At this stage the question that had to be seriously considered was whether the youthful Abdul Karim should prosecute his studies further. His mother was most unwilling to part with him, deeply attached as she was to him, after having lost so many children. Her nephew, the late M. Mahmudul Haq, however, convinced her that her son's welfare required her separation from him. Besides, what some spiritualists, Fakeers and Jogis, had predicted about her son's bright future, also weighed with her in this matter. Therefore, with an indescribable wrench she parted from him, and for years passed her days shedding tears. Abdul Karim took leave with a heavy heart, and for some time there was not a morning in which the pillow on which he slept was not found wet with tears, shed in remembrance of his loving mother.

In those days there was no rail or steamer service from Calcutta to Sylhet ; only some steamers belonging to some private companies used to ply there occcsionally during the rainy season. So young Abdul Karim

left home in a country-boat, with the late Mr. Joy Gobind Shome, his cousin's pupil, who was practising in the Calcutta High Court. It took him about a fortnight to reach Goalundo, where they caught the train to Calcutta. Shortly after his arrival in Calcutta, Abdul Karim took his admission in the Presidency College, which, at that time, had on its staff such renowned Professors as Messrs Tawney, Rowe, Webb, Elliot, Percival, Pedler, and Booth. He also joined the debating club in the college and gained popularity by his speeches in the debates. There he came into close contact with the late Sir Ashutosh Mukerjee and the late Sir Syed Shamsul Huda, two years senior to him,—both of whom continued to be his fast friends until their death. Among his class fellows were the late Ramendra Sunder Trivedi and Sir Abdur Rahim.

At this stage an incident occurred which shows how in those days uneducated bigots persecuted English-educated people. At the close of the First year F. A. Class, Abdul Karim went home during the college vacation. Some of those who had heard him speak at public meetings, one of which was held to congratulate the late Sir Surendra Nath Bannerjee on his release from imprisonment for contempt of court, requested him to deliver a lecture at Sylhet. At a largely attended meeting, presided over by Dr. Sundarimohan Das, he spoke on "Ideal character." It being a Hat day, some of those who were returning home from the Hat crowded round the hall in which the lecture was being delivered. Next day a rumour was spread by some of these people that Abdul Karim had been converted to

Christianity and had preached it at the meeting, and moreover had disclaimed his parentage, This created such a bad feeling that Abdul Karim had to give up passing by the public streets. After this he did not feel inclined to go to Sylhet for some time.

His deficiency in Mathematics stood in the way of Abdul Karim's success in the F. A. examination of 1883. After his failure, when he was thinking of stopping his studies and going to Africa, the University decided to hold a re-examination of the plucked candidates on account of a radical change in the course of studies for the future F. A. and B. A. examinations. By a happy accident, Abdul Karim found that the very propositions of Geometry which he had committed to memory on the way to the examination-hall, were set and thereby pass-marks in Mathematics were assured. After the successful result of his F. A. examination was gazetted, he joined the B. A. class. Mathematics being now an optional subject for the B. A. examination, his drawback was removed, and he took up English, Philosophy and Persian. The Government of Assam continued the scholarship which had been granted to him before. In 1885, he passed the B. A. examination, with Honours in English. He was the first Muslim graduate from Sylhet, if we leave out of account a gentleman named Muhammad Daim, who was so long away from home that Sylhet people had forgotten that he was an inhabitant of Sylhet. The Assam Government offered Abdul Karim the post of a Sub-Deputy Collector, which he did not accept. Never before had so many Muslims taken the B. A. degree in one year.

Besides Abdul Karim, Abdur Rahim, Zahid Suhrawardi, Abdul Haq Abid, Ahmed, Mahmood, Zahurul Haq, Abdus Samad and Israil passed the B. A. examination in 1885.

Shortly after Abdul Karim had taken the University degree, Her Highness the Begum of Bhopal paid a visit to Calcutta. She offered a sum for medical education in Europe of a Muslim student. The Bhopal scholarship was offered to the late Dr. Daudur Rahman, father of Mr. Mowdudur Rahman, perhaps at that time the only Muslim student in the Calcutta Medical College. But he did not accept it as he was unwilling to go to Europe. Applications were then invited from Muslim students desirous of going to Europe for legal or other studies, and a committee of the Muslim Fellows of the University was appointed for selecting a candidate. Abdul Karim's marriage had just taken place, and he was doubtful if his wife would agree to his going to Europe. When she gave her consent, he approached, through his venerable father-in-law, the members of the committee, all of whom promised him their support. He then went to Sylhet to procure the permission of his parents. They not only gave him permission, but his late father expressed his willingness to contribute what might be required in addition to the Begum of Bhopal's donation, which was likely to fall short of the total amount of expenditure. When his going to Europe was thus settled, God willed otherwise, and a queer accident upset everything.

On return from Sylhet, Abdul Karim submitted his application for the scholarship, and enclosed therein

copies of some testimonials. One of these purported to be from the late Prince Farrukh Shah, with whom his maternal uncle-in-law, the late Meerza Muhammad Ali, was very intimate. On account of indisposition, Meerza Sahib could not call on the Prince for the certificate, but he asked Abdul Karim to write out one, which he would later get signed. A copy of the certificate was submitted in anticipation of getting on the original the signature of the Prince. But when Meerza Muhammad Ali called on the Prince, he told him that he being a Fellow of the University, was a member of the committee, and he would have to select the candidate. He thought it would not be proper to commit himself previously by giving a certificate, but he promised his strong support to Abdul Karim. When this came to Abdul Karim's knowledge, he got so much upset that, in a huff, without consulting his well-wishers, he withdrew his application, for fear of the certificate being declared false. If he had not done so, perhaps he would have been advised to withdraw the certificate and not the application. But man proposes and God disposes. Who knows what would have happened if he had gone to Europe. It is not unlikely that if he had accepted Executive Service, or had become a lawyer, he would not have been so unselfish as to make such an endowment for the education of his co-religionists as no other Bengal Muslim has done, and he would not have exerted himself so much as he has been doing in the later part of his life, for the furtherance of the cause of Islam. On the withdrawal of Abdul Karim's application, Abdur Rahim (now Sir Abdur Rahim), who was about to be

appointed a Deputy Magistrate, was awarded the Bhopal scholarship.

During his college career Abdul Karim was an active member of the Sylhet Union, formed in Calcutta by the students of Sylhet for furthering the cause of education in their home district and for looking after the interests of Sylhet students in Calcutta. Subsequently he was elected its Vice-President, which office he still holds. The Sylhet Union brought him into intimate contact with two distinguished personalities of Sylhet, the late Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal and Dr. Sundari Mohan Das, whose friendship he valued much. He had first met them while he was a school student at a meeting held in the Sylhet Zilla school to welcome Rama Bai, the renowned Marhatta lady on the occasion of her visit to Sylhet.

CHAPTER III.

MARRIAGE.

In 1885, after taking the B. A. degree, Abdul Karim married Musammat Ayesha Khatoon, a highly intelligent and accomplished lady, daughter of the late Maulana Hafez Muhammad Hatem Sahib, a renowned saint and savant of the time, whose birth-place was also Sylhet, but who had settled in Calcutta early in life. The relation between husband and wife was the best imaginable. In fact Abdul Karim's career was moulded by two exceptionally pious women, his mother, the late Rezwan Bibi, and his wife, Ayesha Khatoon, who, by a strange coincidence, possessed certain similar laudable characteristics. Both were ideal house-wives, congenial partners, affectionate mothers and generous neighbours. Both of them were ever ready to serve humanity. In fact they had not their equal in their passion for serving the poor and the afflicted. The spiritual attainments of Abdul Karim's mother, who spared scarcely two or three hours daily for sleep, were beyond conception. Besides, her exceptional knowledge of local herbs and drugs made her so popular that scores of people always thronged at her place for medicines, blessings, and pecuniary assistance. Musammat Ayesha Khatoon was well-known in her circle for her extraordinary generosity and kind-heartedness. She was inclined to give away her all to the deserving poor. When her hus-

band, in later life, expressed a desire to endow half of his property, worth about fifty thousand rupees, for charitable and religious purposes, she enquired of him, "And why not the whole?" As for the children she said, they had been given as good an education as that of their father and they should be able to shift for themselves as he had done.

She brought up her children in the most up-to-date method. When her three sons, Professor Abdur Rahim, M. A., Principal Abdul Hakim, M. A. and Interpreter Abdul Alim, B. A., took University degrees, perhaps there was not a single Muslim family in the whole of Bengal (including Bihar and Oriss) and Assam, which had four graduates in one and the same family. Her youngest son, Mr. Abdur Rasul, who was not permitted by his medical advisers to join a college on account of defective eye-sight, acquired by private study and by extensive travelling in Europe and America such general attainments as are not inferior to those of a graduate. She had also some part in the bringing-up of two other relations, who have made their mark in after-life. They were her only brother, Khan Bahadur Muhammad Hamid, at present a member of the Public Services Commission of Bihar, Orissa and C. P., and her nephew, Maulavi Abdul Hamid, ex-education Minister of Assam, son of her husband's only brother, M. Abdul Qader, who was remarkable for his piety and spiritual progress. Having lost her first child, a daughter, in her early life, Musaammat Ayesha Khatoon always longed for a daughter. At last God blessed her with a daughter, her last child, a very good-natured, charitably-disposed

and spiritually-minded girl, married, during her mother's life time, to an accomplished gentleman, Mr. A. S. M. Akram, an advocate of the Calcutta High Court, at present a Judge of the Small Causes Court, Calcutta.

Besides performing her domestic duties like an ideal wife, Mrs. Abdul Karim discharged her public duties to the best of her abilities. She was the first President of the Anjuman-e-khawatin-e-Islam, established by her bosom friend, Mrs. Sakhawat Hosain, the foundress of the first Muslim Girls High English School in Calcutta. She always took an active part in the Mowlood and other parties arranged by the Anjuman. On her death in 1934, at the age of 67, after enjoying a married life of about half a century, the following resolution was passed by the Anjuman-e-khawatin-e-Islam, and the following obituary notices were published in some of the newspapers.

"This meeting of the Anjuman-e-khawateen-e-Islam Bengala, places on record its deep sense of sorrow at the death of Mrs. Abdul Karim, the first President of the Anjuman and expresses its heart-felt sympathy with the breaved family."

Our heart-felt sympathy goes forth to Maulavi Abdul Karim Saheb, M. L. C., retired Inspector of Schools, in the sad bereavement he has sustained by the death of his wife, though at the old age of 67. Mrs. Abdul Karim was a public-spirited lady associated with some of the movements started to promote the moral and material welfare of Muslim women. She was the first President of the Anjuman-e-khawateen-e-Islam, which was the first organisation of educated Muslim women

in Calcutta, brought into existence by the late Mrs. R. S. Hosain. She was a pious and charitably-disposed woman, and, we understand, it was due to her domestic economy and moral co-operation that Maulavi Abdul Karim was able to make that well-known Wakf for religious and educational purposes which has benefited many in Bengal and Assam. May her soul rest in eternal peace is our fervent prayer."

THE MUSSALMAN.

"The death took place at the ripe age of 67 at Ranchi on the 14th September of Mrs. Ayesha Khatoon, wife of Abdul Karim, M. L. C., retired Inspector of Schools. Mrs. Abdul Karim was the first Lady President of the Anjuman-e-khawateen, the first Society of educated Muslim ladies in Bengal, founded at Calcutta. The deceased was a daughter of the renowned saint Hafez Hatem Saheb of Sylhet" (United Press.)

The Amrita Bazar Patrika.

The death has occurred at the age of 67 of Ayesha Khatoon, wife of Maulavi Abdul Karim Saheb, M. L. C., a retired Inspector of Schools, and former member of the Council of State.

Mrs. Abdul Karim was the first President of the Muslim Ladies' Association, founded in Calcutta.

The Statesman.

CHAPTER IV.

An Editor

After taking the B. A. degree, Maulvi Abdul Karim accepted the editorship of the "Darus-saltanat," at that time the only Urdu newspaper in Calcutta. His journalistic career, though short, was popular. The articles he wrote, on the lines of English journals, were well appreciated by the public. These created a favourable impression regarding the young journalist on some of the leading Muslims of Calcutta. The late Mr. Ameer Ali, at that time, a practising barrister, began to take particular interest in him. As an editor he joined the deputation that waited upon Lord Ripon to present an address on the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act. He had to resign the editorship when he entered Government Service. The experience he gained during this short period stood him in good stead in after-life. During this period and when he was a teacher, he attended the Law lectures. He completed the course, but he did not sit for the B. L. examination, although some of those wh o knew his parts well, were of opinion that he would make a good lawyer and urged him to join the Bar.

CHAPTER V.

A School-Master.

In 1886 Maulvi Abdul Karim was appointed a teacher in the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Madrasah. Within a short time he acquired the reputation of being an efficient teacher and a strict disciplinarian. He was exceptionally popular both with his pupils and his colleagues. The Principal of the Madrasah, the late Mr. Hoernle, had a high opinion of him. He presented him, rather early in his career, in the Viceregal Levee, and strongly recommended him for promotion. The guardians of some of his pupils used to call on him occasionally to express their appreciation and gratitude for what he did for their wards. Universal was the regret when Maulvi Abdul Karim left the Madrasah on promotion to the post of an Assistant Inspector of Schools. Some of his pet pupils, such as the late Mr. Hasan Imam,* Judge of the Calcutta High Court, the late Khan Bahadur Aminul Islam, Inspector-

---

24th Feb. 1912.

*My Dear Maulvi Saheb,

I am much obliged to you for the congratulations conveyed in such affectionate terms. Old memories are always dear to one and old associations are naturally cherished by all. Thus congratulations from you naturally take me back to my school days.

Please accept the affectionate regards of
Your old pupil

Syed Hasan Imam

(Written when appointed Judge of the Calcutta High Court.)

General of Registration, Mr. Ghazanfar Ali Khan, I. C. S., O. B. E., C. I. E., sometime ago a Divisional Commissioner in the Central Provinces, Khan Bahadur Abdul Momen, C. I. E., once a Divisional Commissioner in Bengal, and at present Commissioner of Waqfs, rose to some of the highest posts open at the time to the natives of the country.

When Maulvi Abdul Karlm left the Madrasah on promotion, some of his pupils presented him with the following address :—

"SIR,

We, the students of the 2nd class, Anglo-Persian Department, Calcutta Madrasah, beg to take the liberty of addressing you the following letter of congratulation. Since we all, the students of Madrasah were debarred from giving you a public address, whilst you were amongst us, you being a Government servant, we the students of the 2nd class take this opportunity of expressing our feelings with regard to you. Sir, your sincerity, honesty, suavity of manners and amiability endeared you not only to us, your pupils, but also to the general public. As a teacher, Sir, you had few equals ; your knowledge of English, your mode of teaching and your love for your pupils, were more than what could be desired in a teacher. The moral lessons that you often tried to impress on our young minds, will remain ever fresh in our memory and they will serve as some of the guiding principles of our life. What is more, your personal example was to us a beacon for guiding us in the true religious and moral path. Madrasah students have lost in you, Sir, one of their ablest and most affectionate

teachers. Their loss seems to be irretrievable. Our respect and esteem for you and your affection for us cannot be expressed in words. It was with great regret that we bade you good-bye, but we have this consolation that you have been called upon to occupy a far more responsible and honourable post, and that you will have occasions to do immense good to your community. We have noted with great pleasure that your appointment has given entire satisfaction to the Muhammedan community of Bengal. In conclusion we pray to the Almighty God to grant you long life, sound health and a successful career."

On the strong recommendation of the late Mr. Justice Amir Ali and the late Nawab Bahadur Abdul Latif, Maulavi Abdul Karim was appointed an Assistant Inspector of Schools for Muhammadan Education. That his appointment gave much satisfaction to the public is evident from what the Calcutta correspondent of the Patna Institute Gazette wrote in its issue of the 24th November, 1889:—

"Maulavie Abdul Karim's appointment as an Assistant Inspector of Schools has given entire satisfaction to the Muhammadan community of Calcutta, and I believe that the whole Muhammadan community of Bengal will be quite satisfied with this selection, and will, like ourselves, heartily congratulate Maulavie Abdul Karim for his success, and Sir Alfred Croft for his selection ..... As a man he is very good and amiable, as a servant he is very upright, honest and hard-working, as a teacher he was very affectionate, kind and sincere. His mode of teaching was, I believe, far

superior to many meritorious teachers and professors of many well-known schools and colleges. In him the Madrasah students will lose their best and ablest teacher, with perhaps the exception of Mr. Lorimer, the Head Master. . . . . ."

In his twenty-fifth year, during the last year of his service in the Madrasah, M. Abdul Karim lost both his parents within five months of each other. His father died in March, 1889, and his mother in July of the same year. Unfortunately he was not present on the occasion of the death of either of them. Hearing of his father's illness he went to Sylhet, and attended on him for a month. On his getting better, M. Abdul Karim left Sylhet when his leave expired. But some time after his father died. Similarly when he heard that his mother was seriously ill, he hurried home, but, to his utmost grief, she breathed her last just a day before his arrival.

He had, however, the melancholy consolation of meeting his patron, the late Hamid Bukht Mazumdar, who was very seriously ill at the time. He died during M. Abdul Karim's stay at Sylhet, and he attended his funeral ceremony. All this produced such a depressing effect on him that he did not feel inclined to visit Sylhet for about a decade, until he had to join the marriage of his neice to Maulavi (now Khan Bahadur) Abdur Rahim, whose daughter is the first woman graduate of Sylhet. After the celebration of the marriage, he delivered a lecture in Urdu on Muhammadan Education at a largely attended meeting, presided over by Raja Girish Chandra, the philanthropic Zamindar of Sylhet.

CHAPTER VI.

Assistant Inspector for Muhammadan Education

In making the proposal for the appointment of Assistant Inspectors of Schools for Muhammadan Education in accordance to the recommendations of the Education Commission, the Director of Public Instruction observed, "what seems to be required is the presence in every circle of an educated Muhammadan, able and willing to influence his co-religionists in favour of western education and to watch over the interests of Muhammadan schools and pupils" When these officers were appointed the following instructions were issued to them :— "The object with which these appointments have been sanctioned is the improvement of Muhammadan education generally in schools of every class. For this purpose the Assistant Inspector is required, in the first instance, to ascertain the special educational wants of Muhammadans in his Circle, and to report them to the Inspector for any further orders of the Department or of Government that may be necessary, and, in the next place, to endeavour to acquire influence with those in authority among his co-religionists, in order to induce them to accept such changes and reforms in the subjects of education as may be pronounced to be salutary. . . . The difficulties that beset Muhammadan education are of two kinds— one arising from their poverty and the other from their religious prejudices. Both alike operate to prevent Muhammadans from taking full

advantage of the educational facilities that exist . . In places where out of a large Muhammadan population a sufficient proportion do not attend the local English school, the cause may be that the pupils are too poor to pay the fees, or that the school is too poor to maintain a Maulavi and give them the education they desire. A beginning of relief in this direction has now been made by the appropriation of a small sum from the Mohsin fund for the purpose of paying a portion of the fees of Muhammadan pupils, or of maintaining a Maulavi in a few selected schools frequented by Muhammadans . . . The difficulties that arise from prejudice in favour of a particular mode and special subjects of instruction require different measures of treatment. In this class of cases the object will be gained, if at all, not so much by expenditure of money as by exercise of influence. The Assistant Inspector should, therefore, endeavour to gain the confidence and secure the good-will of the leading members of the Muhammadan community on the one hand, of Mianjis, Maulavis and all who are directly engaged in teaching, on the other of men of position and influence whose views on matters of education determine the attitude of the community at large on such questions."

ASSISTANT INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS FOR EASTERN CIRCLE. In January, 1890, M. Abdul Karim joined his new post at Dacca, as Assistant Inspector for Muhammadan Education, with jurisdiction over the whole of Dacca and Chittagong Divisions, consisting of eight districts. His reputation seems to have preceded him and he was warmly received wherever he had occasion to go. At

Dacca the late Nawab Sir Abdul Ghani and the late Nawab Sir Ahsanullah showed him unthought-of kindness and cordiality. He was consulted by them in all public matters and sometimes in private affairs as well, as may be testified to by the oldest surviving scion of the family, Khwaja Atiqullah. The Commissioner of Dacca, the late Mr. Lutmon Johnson, and the Inspector of Schools, the late Rai Saheb Dinanath Sen encouraged him much by their appreciation of his work. Two other gentlemen of Dacca, the late Khwaja Muhammad Asghar and the late Nawab Muhammad Yousuf, rendered him much assistance in his work. The former added to his popularity by getting him nominated as a commissioner of the Dacca Municipality, when the late Issur Chunder Das was its chairman. His friends, the late Khan Bahadur Syed Aulad Hasan, the late Shamsul-ulama Abul Khair Muhammad Siddiq and the Qazi brothers, the late Ziauddin Ahmad and Raziuddin Ahmad were of much help to him during his stay at Dacca.

In Mymensingh, the late Muhammad Ali Khan Pani, father of the late Wajed Ali Khan Pani of Korotea, received M. Abdul Karim very warmly, and handed over to him rupees five thousand for the Dufferin Hostel for Muslim students at Dacca, in commemoration of Lord Dufferin's visit. The late Chowdhury, afterwards Nawab Bahadur, Nawab Ali of Dhanbari, welcomed M. Abdul Karim to his village, and gave him information regarding the condition of the Muslims of the locality. In Barisal the late Maulvi Wajid Ali, father of Maulvi A. K. Fazlul Haq, greatly helped M. Abdul Karim in his work for the furtherance of education

among the Muslims of that district. The late Nawab Muazzam Hossain of Shaistabad and the late Maulvi Amiruddin, grand-father of Professor Humayun Kabeer, were also helpful to him. The latter was one of the last three Muslim Deputy Magistrates in Bengal who did not know English and did their work in Persian. The other two were the late Maulvi Abdul Karim of Elachipur, and the late Maulvi Ahmad, father of Khan Bahadur Abdul Karim of Comilla. The late Nawab Hussam Haidar Chawdhury of Comilla was of appreciable assistance to M. Abdul Karim in his special work for Muhammadan education in his district. He established an educational institution where a large number of Muslim students received religious as well as secular education. But for the sympathy and support of these and other public-spirited Muslims, it might not have been possible for M. Abdul Karim to achieve much success in his work as special officer for Muhammadan Education.

The orthodox Muslims of Eastern Bengal were not in favour of the secular education imparted in Vernacular and English schools. During Muslim rule in India, Persian was the language of the Court. When the East India Company took over the administration of the country, they made no change in Court language for some time. So the education imparted in Maktabs and Madrasahs adequately qualified people for Government service. Later on, when English and the provincial vernaculars were made Court languages, the Muslims were placed at a great disadvantage. They eschewed the Patshalas and schools, and continued to

persue oriental studies. The result was that they were gradually replaced in service and the bar by non-Muslims. The attention of the Government was drawn to this, but for some time no action was taken. By the time the Education Commission, appointed by Lord Ripon, made some specific recommendations for the education of Muslims, most of the Government offices were filled by non-Muslims, and the bar and the Zamindar's Kutcherries had few Muslims left. To remedy this deplorable state of affairs, one of the steps recommended by the Education Commission was the appointment of special inspecting officers for furthering secular education among the Muslims. Of the first two Assistant Inspectors of schools for Muhammadan education in Bengal, M. Abdul Karim was one.

On the assumption of his office, M. Abdul Karim addressed a letter to the leading Muslims of Bengal, inviting suggestions for the spread of useful education among the Muslims. But the response was meagre; only a few gentlemen replied and their suggestions were not very helpful. It was very difficult to remove the prevailing prejudice against secular education. M. Abdul Karim had to work very cautiously but assiduously. The following incident shows how tactfully he had to proceed, particularly when people who took pride in their orthodoxy had to be tackled. In the district of Mymensingh there is a place named Bowlai, where some very respectable Muslim families reside. There a Muslim Zamindar, well-versed in Islamic lore, had established a Madrasah, and equipped it with a large library of oriental works. When he met M. Abdul

Karim he spoke against the education imparted in Pathshalas and English schools, where no religious instruction was given. Thereupon M. Abdul Karim said it was very much to be regretted that he did not realise what incalculable injury was being done to the interests of the community by persuading Muslim youths to eschew secular education. Those responsible for this, he added, would be answerable to God. This caused much flutter among the assembled people, who looked upon the Zamindar with veneration for his oriental learning. Seeing this, M. Abdul Karim enquired how many officers the Zamindar had for the management of his zamindari and how many of them were Muslims. The answer was that out of about a score of officers, only one was a Muslim. "Is this how you follow Islam, by excluding your co-religionists from your own service ? he promptly asked. "The work of the Zamindari is carried on in Bengali, while the Muslims do not know sufficient Bengali," was the reply. "You advise them not to learn Bengali, and thereby make them ineligible for service even in your own zamindari not to speak of other service and yet you claim to be a true Muslim," was M. Abdul Karim's retort. This is how M. Abdul Karim went about arguing with orthodox Muslims and convincing them of the utility of secular education.

After he had been at Dacca for five years, a proposal was made for M. Abdul Karim's transfer to the Presidency Division. Before the transfer took place, he met with a serious accident. While out on tour in Mymensingh the green budgerow in which he was travelling suddenly got upset in the Brahmaputra, and

floated downstream with M. Abdul Karim sitting on its hull, only a little of which was above water. As he did not know how to swim, his narrow escape from imminent drowning was miraculous. When the boat approached a *char* in the middle of the river, he jumped on it and saved himself. The boat after floating down several miles struck another char, and was sunk. Seeing this the cultivators in the neighbourhood kept a watch, and the next day with great difficulty refloated it. They sent people in search of M. Abdul Karim, and finding him at the *char* removed him to their house, wherefrom he came by a dinghy to Mymensingh town, and caught there the train to Dacca. Never in his life had Abdul Karim taken such coarse rice and unsavoury curry as was provided by the cultivators, and never had he enjoyed the break-fast so well. Misfortune never comes single. Before he had left for the above-mentioned tour, he had very narrowly escaped being crushed under a bamboo when the cook-shed in the house was being repaired. Besides, his late wife also met with an accident at that very time. She was invited to a marriage-party in the Nawab of Dacca's family. When she boarded the palanquin that was brought to take her, its bottom gave way and she dropped down to the ground below. Although most unwilling to attend the party, another palanquin was brought, and she was taken to the Ahsan Manzil. Misfortune followed her. While stepping out of the palanquin, her ankle was severely sprained, and the pain continued for months. All this made the transfer welcome. The Muslims of Dacca

gave M. Abdul Karim a grand evening party on the eve of his departure.

On Maulavi Abdul Karim's transfer from Dacca an East Bengal Muhammadan correspondent published the following letter, dated the 5th. April 1895, in the Moslem Chronicle;—

"The transfer of the Assistant Inspector of schools for Muhammadan education, is a very great loss to East Bengal. By his amiable character and suavity of manners, Maulvi Abdul Karim made himself very popular in East Bengal. He was not only liked but also respected by those who had occasion to come in contact with him. As long as he was at Dacca, there was scarcely a public movement affecting Muhammadan interests in which he did not take an active part. His advice was sought after by all classes of his co-religionists. By his private charity he had so endeared himself to the poor of Dacca, that some of them actually burst into tears when they heard of his transfer.

A detailed account of what Maulvi Abdul Karim has done for furtherance of Muhammadan Education in East Bengal would require a volume. I shall very briefly state what I have been able to ascertain. He made a strong representation regarding the necessity of special primary schools for the Muhammadans. The ordinary patshalas, giving as they do only secular educatien, are not suited to the repuirements of the Muhammadans. They desire that religious and secular education of their children should go hand-in-hand. The existing scheme of instruction was framed with too exclusive a reference to the requirements of the Hindu

students, and the Muhammadan students have been placed at a great disadvantage. Injustice is done to the Muhammadans by spending the funds which are levied impartially from all classes for state education on a system adapted to one class. The policy of gradually moulding the Maktabs into Patshalas has proved a failure. The best solution lies in a combination of religious and secular education— the education given in the Maktabs and the education given in the Patshalas. Such are the arguments which Maulvi Abdul Karim advanced, and thereby convinced Sir Alfred Croft of the necessity of encouraging and aiding the Maktabs, which teach Bengali in addition to the Koran and Muhammadan literature. Sir Alfred issued an excellent circular on the subject, and thus hundreds of Maktabs in East Bengal are now receiving aid.

With regard to Secondary education, Maulvi Abdul Karim urged with such force the necessity of including Urdu in the curriculum of the Middle English and Middle Vernacular Scholarship Examination, and of appointing Urdu teachers in middle schools, that the Director of Public Instruction admitted the claim of the Muhammadans to instruction in the language which is a necessary part of their education,— necessary for holding a respectable position in life, and for the performance of religious duties.

The absence of Muhammadan teachers and inspecting officers is very keenly felt. Muhammadan teachers attract Muhammadan boys to schools. Anxious as Muhammadans are to have their children trained up as true Moslems, they are very desirous of placing them under Muham-

madan teachers, who, without giving any direct religious instruction, may, by way of reference and illustration, instil into their young minds the principles of their religion and usage. Muhammadan inspecting officers are more in touch with the Mianjis and Moulvis, and they are able to give them the instruction they are in need of. You are aware, Mr. Editor, of the Government Circular on the subject, issued on Maulvi Abdul Karim's representation. You will be glad to hear that some Muhammadan teachers have already been appointed, and the only vacancies in sub-inspectorship of schools, one in Tipperah and two in Mymensingh, have been filled up by Muhammadan candidates. I doubt whether in the last fifty years even one Muhammadan Sub-Inspector of schools was appointed in those districts.

Poverty is one of the great obstacles which stand in the way of education of the Muhammadans. Moulvi Abdul Karim urged the necessity of allowing a certain number of Muhammadans to read free and a certain number on reduced fees. Dr. Martin, while officiating Director of Public Instruction, issued a circular sanctioning a certain number of free studentships and half-free studentships for Muhammadan boys in high and middle schools. Thus several Muhammadan boys are now prosecuting their studies, who, but for these concessions, would never have been in any school.

When Persian was the court language, a large number of officials and profesaional men were Muhammadans, who used to give free board and lodging to a large number of Muhammadan students. Now on account

of the paucity of Muhammadan officers and professional men, Muhammadan students are put to great difficulty in finding board and lodging. Want of boarding-houses for Muhammadan students is, therefore, very keenly felt. On Maulvi Abdul Karim's representation the Director of Public Instruction issued a circular to the effect that Government would contribute towards the cost of building boarding-houses for Muhammadan pupils, and the boarders would be granted capitation fees. Some boarding-houses, such as those at Chittagong and Feny have already been established. Others, such as those at Barisal and Mymensingh, are likely to be built shortly.

I believe you are aware, Mr. Editor, of Moulvi Abdul Karim's proposals for the revision of the Madrasah course of studies with a view to make these institutions more useful than they are at present, and for conferring certain privileges upon the Madrasha students. These are still under consideration. In the meantime, the Madrasah passed students have been granted the privilege of appearing at the Mukhtearship Examination.

The Mohsin Fund is intended for the aid of poor Muhammadan students. But now not an inconsiderable portion of the Mohsin allotment for Zilla schools is spent in paying wholly or partly the Maulvies in those institutions. Moulvi Abdul Karim pointed out the impropriety of paying the Moulvies from this source when the Pundits are paid out of the general revenues of the schools. It is hoped that before long Government would see its way to pay the Zillah school Moulvies

from the school fund, and thus set free the whole of the Mohsin allotment for the aid of poor Muhammadan students.

These are, as far as we know, some of the important steps taken by Moulvi Abdul Karim for the improvement of Muhammadan education. I have heard that he has made several other representations regarding other subjects, such as award of scholarships, selection of text-books &c., but I have not been able to ascertain with what result. This letter has already run a great length, otherwise I would have given several instances of what he has done for individual schools, individual pupils, and individual candidates for appointment.

Thus you will see, Mr. Editor, that Moulvi Abdul Karim has hardly left undealt any important subject connected with Muhammadan education. He has discharged his duties to the entire satisfaction of his community, whose best thanks are due to him. It is now feared that Muhammadan education in East Bengal would very greatly suffer by his transfer. East Bengal has the largest Muhammadan population in Bengal, and it may well claim the services of a special Muhammadan inspecting officer. It is very desirable that Muhammadans of East Bengal should memorialise Government for posting permanently in East Bengal a Muhammadan Assistant Inspector."

ASSISTANT INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS, FOR MUHAMMADAN EDUCATION, WESTERN CIRCLE.

Maulvi Abdul Karim's transfer to Calcutta greatly enlarged the field of his activities. On Sir Alfred Croft's

recommendation, he was appointed a Fellow of the Calcutta University, and as such he came in contact with some of the most enlightened educationists of Bengal, such as the late Sir Gurudas Banerji, the late Mr. A. M. Bose, the late Mr. P. K. Roy, the late Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose, the late Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, the late Sir Deva Prasad Sarbadhikary, the late Mr. Bhupendra Nath Bose, the late Dr. Choonilal Bose, the late Mr. Umesh Chandra Dutt, the late Mr. Herambo Chandra Moitro, and he profited much by association with them. At that time there were only a few Muslim Fellows, and M. Abdul Karim was one of the most active and useful among them. Until the new University Act was passed, in Lord Curzon's time, he continued a Senator, and then he became an Honorary Fellow for life.

Some time after his transfer from Dacca, M. Abdul Karim was elected a member of the Asiatic Society, and a member of the Bangiya Sahitya Parishad, in the proceedings of both of which he took an active part. When the Chaitanya Library announced a gold medal in honour of its patron, Sir John Woodburn, the then Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, for the best essay on Akbar, the great Moghal Emperor, the committee appointed to examine the essays pronounced M. Abdul Karim's essay to be the best, and he was awarded the Woodburn gold medal.* This brought

*CHAITANYA LIBRARY GOLD MEDAL :—Some time ago it was announced in the papers that the Chaitanya Library would offer a gold medal to be called after Sir

him to the notice of Sir John Woodburn, who began to take interest in him. After going through his Urdu history of India, he expressed a good opinion and gave him permission to dedicate to him his "Students History of India" in English, which was prescribed by the Calcutta University as a text book for the Matriculation Examination. Sir John Woodburn's untimely death proved most detri- mental to the prospects of M. Abdul Karim.

During his five years' stay in Calcutta M. Abdul Karim had jurisdiction over three Divisions, namely, the Presidency Division, the Chota Nagpur Division and the Orissa Division. In those days there was no railway either to Chota Nagpur or to Orissa. The journey on "push-push" from Purulia to Giridih, *via* Ranchi and Hazaribagh, though tedious and sometimes dangerous (once the push-push in which M. Abdul Karim was travelling was chased by tigers) was very interesting. Some exceedingly beautiful sceneries, such as the hills of Chotupalu and the waterfall of Hoodrughat (perhaps the highest though not the largest waterfall in the world) might be seen on the way. The trip to Orissa *via* Chandbali, though

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John Woodburn for the best essay on the "Life and Time of Akbar"-- a subject that was selected by His Honour himself. Of the many essays that were written on the subject, that of Moulvi Abdul Karim, B. A., Assistant Inspector of Schools, has been pronounced to be the best, and the Woodburn Gold Medal will be awarded to him.

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somewhat risky, was refreshing. The last trip that he took to Chota Nagpur and Orissa was partly done by railway, which was then being laid to both of these places.

In his official work in Calcutta M. Abdul Karim got much support from the late Dr. Martin, who acted as Director of Public Instruction for sometime. He took much interest in Muhammadan education and some important Government orders for its furtherance were passed on his strong recommendations. On Dr. Martin's retirement, the Muslims raised funds for his commemoration and had a memorial marble slab put up in the Senate House, and created some stipends for Muslim students. The late Sir Alfred Croft had a good opinion of M. Abdul Karim, and he always favourably considered his proposals. The late Rai Bahadur Radhika Prosanna Mukherji, and the late Mr. Radha Nath Roy, Inspectors of Schools, were very helpful to M. Abdul Karim. Outside the Department he received help from Mr. (afterwards Sir Denison) Ross, Principal, Calcutta Madrasah, and Mr. Slacke, Secretary to the Government of Bengal. Among the public who helped M. Abdul Karim in his work were the late Mr. Justice Syed Ameer Ali, the late Nawab Syed Ameer Hossain, the late Nawab Abdur Rahman, the late Nawab Sir Shamsul Huda, the late Maulavi Muhammad Yousuf, the late Mr. Dilawar Hossain Ahmad, the late Shamsul-Ulama Ataur Rahman, and the late Mr. Abul Hasan, founder of the Calcutta Muslim Orphanage. In Murshidabad M. Abdul Karim was very kindly and courteously

received by the late Nawab Bahadur, whose kind hospitality he gratefully remembers. His Dewan, the late Khan Bahadur Fazle Rabbi, was very helpful to him At Cuttack M. Abdul Karim found good friends in M. Muhammad Ghulam Ghaus and the late Mr. Hariballav Bose, leader of the Cattack Bar and the late Mr. Janoki Nath Bose, father of Messrs. Sarat Chandra Bose and Subash Chandra Bose. At Balasore the late Mr. B. Dey, the then District Magistrate, and the late Mr. Abdus Sobhan Bhuiyan were particularly helpful to him.

At the close of M. Abdul Karim's term in Calcutta the All-India Muhammadan Educational conference held its annual session in Calcutta, under the presidency of the late Mr. Justice Ameer Ali. As an educational officer, M. Abdul Karim naturally took a prominent part in its proceedings. His speeches made a good impression on the audience. At this conference he became well-acquainted with some of the master-minds of the time among the Muslims of India, such as the late Nawab Mohsin-ul-mulk, the late poet Altaf Hossain Hali, the late literateurs, Moulvi Nazeer Ahmad and Maulana Shibli Nomani, with some of whom he used to correspond as long as they were alive. It was at this conference that some of those Muslims, such as the late Sir Ali Imam, the late Sir Muhammad Shafi, Dr. Sir Ziauddin Ahmad and Sir Abdul Kader, who afterwards came into much prominence, first made their mark. M. Abdul Karim became well-acquainted with all of them.

"Muhammadan Education in Bengal"

In connection with the Calcutta session of the Muhammadan Educational Conference Maulavi Abdul Karim published a brochure, "Muhammadan Education in Bengal." The president of the conference, the late Mr. Amir Ali, spoke well of it, and those who had occasion to read it appreciated it. Sir Alfred Croft, the retired Director of Public Instruction, wrote from England, "Your letter of the 6th June reached me by the mail before last, and the following mail brought me your promised pamphlet. This I have read with great interest. The account that you give of progress already made and your proposals for future improvement strike me as eminently fair and reasonable. You make all needful allowance, and you do not expect impossibilities. I am especially glad to find that so many Muhammadans have been made Deputy Inspectors. I hardly know whether I ought to take it as a reproach to myself that in my time but few of your co-religionists were appointed to these offices, but I remember it was a standing difficulty with me. I am willing to hope that Muhammadan Sub-Inspectors were getting to be qualified for the higher appointment only about the time I left India.

But it is evident that the community owes much to your persistent, and at the same time temperate advocacy."

Sir Alfred Croft would have been still more surprised if he had known how many more Muhammadan Deputy Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors and school-masters

were subsequently appointed during the following decade.

Dr. Martin, another retired Director of Public Instruction, under whom M. Abdul Karim had served, wrote "Very many thanks for the copy of your book on Muhammadan education which is very full and complete and will prove most useful if it stirs up your fellow-countrymen of the Moslem religion to endeavour to obtain excellence in literary pursuits.

I am glad to hear that your time for promotion is drawing nigh. You are eminently deserving of the same if you have continued to work, since I left India, with the intelligence and assiduity which you exhibited while I served as Director of Public Instruction."

No one knows better than Sir Alfred Croft and Dr. Martin how M. Abdul Karim discharged his duties and what great service he rendered to the cause of Muhammadan Education in Bengal.

The following extracts from the brochure may be interesting :—

."With the fall of the Muslim empire in India in 1757 A. D. the seats of learning which supplied government officials, disappeared. It was necessary, therefore, to establish an institution to qualify Muslims in Bengal for public service. In 1782 Warren Hastings laid the foundation of the Calcutta Madrasah. The object in view was to "promote the study of the Arabic and Persian languages and of Muhammadan Law, with a view more especially to the production of qualified officers for the Courts of Justice." For about half a century the successful students of the Madrasah mono-

polised almost all the judicial and executive posts under the Government, and they predominated at the Bar.

When Lord William Bentick was Governor-General it was decided that English should be the medium of education for the people of India. Lord Macaulay, a member of the Governor-General's Council, wrote his celebrated minute and Bentick passed in 1835, the memorable resolution in favour of English education . . . . . When it was proposed to appropriate the whole of Government Educational grant to English education, a petition was submitted against it, signed by about 8000 Muslims of Calcutta, who believed the introduction of English was a step towards conversion to Christianity. Although there was no real cause for this suspicion, as the Government had declared, in 1808, the policy of religious neutrality, the Muslims boycotted English education. It is a pity that room could not have been found for both English and oriental education. Had oriental learning found a place in the curriculum of English schools and colleges, as at present, most probably there would not have been all this misapprehension. The advocates of English education seem to have overshot their mark when Lord Macaulay, as their mouthpiece, declared, with his characteristic facility for exaggeration, that "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." The exclusive study of a foreign language confirmed the suspicion and the result, was, as will be shown later on, most detrimental to the interests of my co-religionists.

Our utilitarian countrymen, the Hindus, who during Muslim rule had readily learnt Persian, and some of whom had even become teachers of that language, quick to perceive the immense advantage that a knowledge of English literature and science would give them, early devoted themselves to western studies. Their advanced section, under the guidance of the celebrated patriot and linguist, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the philanthropic watch-maker, David Hare, established an institution called 'Vidyalaya" for the education of Hindu children in English language and literature. In the course of a few years a taste for English was widely disseminated among Hindus, and several schools, conducted by young men, educated in the "Vidyalaya," sprang up in different places. The tide thus set in strongly in favour of English education.

The first fruits of exclusive English education in a foreign language, not well-grounded in their ancestral theology and traditions, were infected with scepticism, and the Hindu society of the time presented the appearance of chaos. Some of the most intelligent of the English educated Hindus of the time, whose belief in their ancestral religion had been affected, did not hesitate to embrace Christianity. All these unfortunate circumstances could not but alarm a religious people like the Muslims, most of whom, for a long time, kept aloof from English education and greatly suffered consequently in their worldly prospects. As the Government never adopted any proselytising policy and English education was purely secular, the Muslims had less cause to fear conversion through English education than any other

community in India, Islam being founded on principles too strong to be easily shaken. In fact it has been less affected by western education and civilisation than any other system. Muslims should have percieved the advantage of the change and should have adapted themselves to the exigencies of the time. But as an ancient conquering race cannot easily divest itself of the traditions of its nobler days and as they were confident of the superiority of their system of education, the Muslims continued to pursue their old studies with the lamentable result that before long they were practically excluded from that share of office and emolument in Government service to which their position entitled them and which they had once monopolised.

The respectable Musalmans of Bengal have to learn more or less five languages, viz. Arabic and Persian, the language of their Scriptures and Literature, Urdu, the language of their society and Bengali and English the languages of the courts. It is this that stands, to some extent, in the way of fair competition with other classes of people, who have to learn two or three languages only. Though Urdu is not the vernacular of the Muslims of Bengal, it is regarded as their national language, their *Lingua Franca* by which they communicate with their co-religionists all over India. Besides, many of the religious books of the Muslims have been translated from Arabic into Urdu. Those who cannot afford to teach their children Arabic, content themselves with teaching them Urdu, through which they may learn the fundamental principles of their religion and traditions.

The deplorable state of things mentioned above remained almost unnoticed till recent years. At last it attracted the attention of British statesmen who studied the subject. Mr. E. C. Bayley writes, "Is it any subject for wonder that they held aloof from a system which, however good in itself, made no concession to their prejudices, made in fact no provision for what they esteemed their necessities and which was in its nature unavoidably antagonistic to their interests and at variance with their social traditions." Sir William Hunter writes more strongly, "The language of our Government schools in Lower Bengal is Hindu and the masters are Hindus. The Musalmans with one consent spurned the instructions of idolators through the medium of idolatry... The astute Hindu has covered the country with schools adapted to the wants of his own community but wholly unsuited to the Muhammadans.... Our rural schools seldom enable a Muhammadan to learn the tongue necessary for his holding a respectable position in life and for the performance of his religious duties." These and similar remarks attracted the notice of Government and the Earl of Mayo dealt with it in an exhaustive Resolution in 1881. His Excellency directed that further and more systematic encouragement and recognition should be given to the classical and vernacular languages of the Muhammadans in all Government schools and colleges ; that in avowedly English schools, established in Muhammadan districts, the appointment of qualified Muhammadan English teachers should be encouraged; that assistance should be given by grants-in-aid to enable them to open schools of their own, and that greater encourage-

ment should be given to the creation of a vernacular literature for Muhammadans."

On receipt of reports from Local Governments and Administrations, Lord Northbrook came to the conclusion "That wherever the ordinary vernacular of the country was read and written in the Hindustani or the Urdu character there Muhammadans occupied their proper position in the primary and secondary schools.... and the Muhammadans were not so much averse to the subjects which the Government had decided to teach as to the modes or machinary through which instruction was offered." In concluding the Resolution His Excellency expressed the hope "that in all provinces where Muhammadans were few and often exposed to all the disadvantages which affect a religions minority without wealth or influence, it would be the special care of Government to satisfy themselves that these endeavours to encourage the education of Muhammadans would be persistently maintained." This resolution was considered by the Local Governments and steps were taken in the desired direction by some of them.

The Government of Madras, notwithstanding the contrary opinions expressed by the Director of Public Instruction and the Syndicate of the Madras University, was convinced "that the existing scheme of instruction was framed with too exclusive reference to the requirements of the Hindu students, and that Muhammadans were placed at so great a disadvantage that the wonder was not that the Muhammadan element in the schools was so small but that it existed at all." Some

important steps were accordingly taken for the spread and encouragement of Muhammadan education in the Madras presidency.

The Director of public Instruction, Bengal, remarked in his report for 1871–72, "The Musalmans have fallen behind the time, and require still the inducements held out forty years ago to the whole community, but of which only Hindus availed themselves. . . . Unless the strong inducements in general use forty years ago are held out to Muhammadans now I have little hope of seeing them drawn to our schools." The Government of Bengal, however, decided that it was not necessary to establish special schools for Muhammadans. But one important step was taken ; a portion of the Mohsin endowment was set free for the encouragement and extension of education among the Muhammadans of Bengal. Madras as were established at Dacca and Chittagong, scholarships were created for Muhammadan students and allotments were made from the Mohsin fund to the zilla schools for paying two-thirds of the fees of poor Muhammadan students and for appointment of Persian teachers.

The Education Commission of 1882 made an exhaustive inquiry into the subject, consulting all available reports and resolutions and examining veteran Muhammadan educationists as witnesses. After thoroughly threshing out the subject they formulated recommendations for the further encouragement of Muhammadan Education of which the following are important :—

(1) That the special encouragement of Muhammadan

education be regarded as a legitimate charge on Local Municipal and on Provincial Funds ;

(2) That indigenous Muhammadan schools be liberally encouraged to add purely secular subjects to their course of instruction ;

(3) That the official vernacular, in places where it is not Hindustani, be added as a voluntary subject to the curriculum of primary and middle schools for Muhammadans maintained from public funds, and that arithmetic and accounts be taught through the medium of the vernacular ;

(4) That in localities where Muhammadans form a fair proportion of the population provision be made in middle and high schools, maintained from public funds, for imparting instruction in the Hindustani and Persian languages ;

(5) The higher English education for Muhammadans being the kind of education in which that community needs special help, be liberally encouraged ;

(6) That where necessary a graduated system of special scholarships for Muhammadans be established, to be awarded (a) in primary schools, and tenable in middle schools, (b) in middle schools, and tenable in high schools (c) on the result of the Matriculation and First Arts Examinations, and tenable in colleges ;

(7) That in all classes of schools, maintained from public funds, a certain proportion of free studentshjps be expressly reserved for Muhammadan students ;

(8) That Muhammadan inspecting officers be employed more largely than hitherto for the inspection of primary schools for Muhammadans ;

In proposing these measures the Commission reviewed the general situation thus.—

"Apart from the social and historical conditions of the Muhammadan community in India, there are causes of a strictly educational character which heavily weigh it in the race of life. The teaching of the mosque must precede the lessons of the school. The one object of a young Hindu is to fit him for an official or professional career. But before the young Muhammadan is allowed to turn his thoughts to secular instruction he must commonly pass some years in going through a course of sacred learning. The Muhammadan boy, therefore, enters school later than the Hindu. In the second place, he very often leaves the school at an earlier age. The Muhammadan parent belonging to the better classes is usually poorer than the Hindu parent in a corresponding social position. He cannot afford to give his son so complete an education. In the third place, irrespective of his worldly means, the Muhammadan parent often chooses for his son while at school an education which will secure for him an honoured place among the learned of his community, rather than one which will command success in the modern professions or in official life. The above are the principal causes of an educational character which retard the prosperity of the Musalmans."

On the completion of five years at Calcutta, Maulavi Abdul Karim was transferred, in 1900, to Patna, with jurisdiction over the Patna and Bhagalpur Divisions. His friend, the late Khan Bahadur Dr. Asdar Ali Khan, who also came from Sylhet, helped him in getting com-

fortably settled and made him acquainted with the leading inhabitants of the place. In the late Khan Bahadur Khoda Buksh Khan, the founder of the renowned Oriental Library at Patna and in the late Nawab Syed Imdad Imam, father of the late Syed Ali Imam and the late Syad Hasan Imam, he found helping friends. Unfortunately his stay in the new circle was short; within a year of his transfer there, his health broke down and he had to proceed on long leave.

Out of evil sometimes cometh good; illness seems to have given a new turn to his mind; he became more particular about religious observances and was on the look-out for a spritual guide. His friends. the late Maulvi Abdul Jawad and the late Shamsul-ulama Moulvi Ahmad, spoke highly of the spiritual attainments of the late Maulana Ghulam Salmani Sahib. Thereupon he got himself introduced to him and began to attend his spiritual sittings. He was then initiated in the TARIQAT of Hazrat Mujaddid e-Alafi e-Sani. In about four years during which he sat at the feet of his spiritual guide, he made fair progress. But unfortunately he fell seriously ill, and lost much of what he had learnt. Before his recovery his Murshed suddenly died to his utmost grief.

Before Maulavi Abdul Karim returned from medical leave, the posts of Assistant Inspectors of Schools for Muhammadan Education, were abolished and he and his colleague, the late Maulavi Muhammad Ibrahim, were absorbed into the general cadre of Inspectors of Schools.



MAULAVI ABDUL KARIM

Assistant Inspector of Schools, Muhammadan Education, 1890 to 1900.

CHAPTER VII.

Work as a Special officer for Muhammadan Education.

Of the several steps that Maulvi Abdul Karim took for the furtherance of education among the Muslims, the most important were (1) Appointment of Muslims in the Education Department, (2) Allotment of funds for the assistance of poor Muslim students, (3) Relaxation of Age Limit. (4) Establishment of Boarding-houses, (5) Reform of the system of Madrasah and Maktab Education. As will be seen from the statement below, in some of the districts and even in the whole of some of the Divisions there was not a single Muslim officer in the higher grades of either the teaching or the inspecting line of the Educational Service. This must have been most detrimental to the spread of education among the Muslims. As regards facilities for the education of poor Muslim students, there were no special free studentships for them and a large amount of the Mohsin Fund was utilised in paying the salaries of Persian and Arabic teachers in Government Schools. The course of studies for Madrasahs and Maktabs did not qualify the taught for service, nor did it make them thorough Arabic scholars. As will be seen from the statement below the progress made in education by the Muslims of Bengal during the last quarter century is

mainly due to the steps that were taken on Maulvi Abdul Karim's proposals.

In Bengal, which included Bihar and Orissa, there were, in 1893, 46 Deputy Inspectors of schools, 190 Sub-Inspectors of Schools and 290 school masters in Government schools, of whom only 2, 9 and 11 respectively were Muslims. This disparity was most glaring in Bengal proper as shown below.

1. In the Presidency Division all the 6 Deputy Inspectors of schools, all the 32 Sub-Inspectors of schools and all the 36 school-masters were non-Muslims.

In the Dacca Division all the 4 Deputy Inspectors, all the 21 Sub-Inspectors and all the 18 school-masters were non-Muslims.

In the Chittagong Division all the 3 Deputy Inspectors were non-Muslims and out of 12 Sub-Inspectors, 2 and out of 22 school-masters 2 were Muslims.

In the Burdwan Division all the 7 Deputy Inspectors and all the 17 school-masters were non-Muslims and out of 28 Sub-Inspectors only one was a Muslim.

In the Rajshahi Division all the 7 Deputy Inspectors were non-Muslims and out of 28 Sub-Inspectors only one and out of 51 school masters only 2 were Muslims.

M. Abdul Karim made a strong representation to the Director of Public Instruction, pointing out how such paucity and disproportion of Muslim officers had a most injurious effect on the progress of education among the Muslims and proposing the appointment of

Muslims on the occurrence of vacancies, provided candidates with the requisite qualifications were available, till such time as the Muslim element in the educational service would be increased somewhat in proportion to the Muslim population in the province. The Government agreed with him and on the whole accepted his proposals as the following circulars will show :—

CIRCULAR No. 79.

From the Director of Public Instruction, Bengal.
To all Inspectors of Schools (except the Inspector of of European Schools, Bengal).

Dated, Darjeeling, the 25th June, 1894.

SIR,

I have the honour to state that in a letter No. 597. dated the 23rd June, 1893, to the address of Government (copy enclosed), Dr. C. A. Martin called attention to the fact that far less than their fair share of appointments in the Education Department, viz., Sub-Inspectorships, Deputy Inspectorships, and teacherships in Government schools, were given to Muhammadans, and that this disproportion could not but have an injurious effect on the progress of Muhammadan education. The Government, acquiescing in these views, has expressed a desire that Muhammadans should in future be appointed to those offices to a larger extent; and you are accordingly requested to take opportunities, as occasion may arise, of recommending to District Boards the

appointment of qualified Muhammadans as Sub-Inspectors of Schools, especially when the population of the district is largely Muhammadan. As vacancies in Deputy Inspectorships are generally filled up by promotion from Sub-Inspectors, it will not be possible to appoint Muhammadans to these posts to any great extent so long as the bulk of the Sub-Inspectors are Hindus, though Muhammadan graduates may be occasionally appointed as Deputy Inspectors without having served as Sub-Inspectors, just as Hindu graduates have been so appointed.

Darjeeling, the 5th September 1897.

FROM

M. FINUCANE ESQ.,

Secretary of the Government of Bengal,

To

THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE BURDWAN, PRESIDENCY RAJSHAHI, DACCA, CHITTAGONG AND BHAGALPUR DIVISIONS.

SIR,

The attention of the Lieutenant-Governor has been drawn to the paucity of Muhammadans employed as Sub-Inspectors of Schools, compared with the numbers of the population who are Muhammadans. The annexed table shows (1) the proportion of Muhammadans to Hindus in the total population, (2) the number of Sub-Inspectors employed by District Boards, and (3) the

number which should be held by Muhammadans in proportion to the population ;—

Districts.	Rough proportion of Muhammadans to Hindus in population. M.	H.	Number of Sub-Inspectors employed by the District Board.	Number which should be held by Muhammadans in proportion to population according to column 2.	Proposed number of Sub-Inspectorships as to which preference should be given to qualified Muhammadans.	Remarks.
Rajshahi	4	1	3	2·4	2	
Dinajpur	10	9	6	3	3	
Jalpaiguri	1	2	3	1	1	
Rangpur	15	9	8	5	5	
Bogra	30	7	2	1·6	1	
Pabna	3	1	4	3	3	
Dacca	3	2	6	3·6	3	
Mymensingh	7	3	7	4·9	4	
Faridpur	8	3	4	2·5	2	
Bakarganj	15	7	5	3·4	3	
Tippera	9	4	5	3·5	3	
Noakhali	3	1	4	3	3	
Chittagong	3	1	4	3	3	
Purnea	5	7	4	1·7	2	
Malda	19	20	2	1	1	

2. Though appointments cannot be reserved absolutely for Muhammadans to the exclusion of candidates of other religious persuasions, yet His Honour thinks that where qualified Muhammadans are available they should get preference in filling up a fair proportion of these appointments up to the number in column 5 of the table given above, even though men of equal or even higher attainments of other religious persuasions may

be forthcoming and willing to take such appointments.

If there are two candidates for one appointment, each of them possessing the requisite qualifications, the Lieutenant-Governor considers that preference should be given to the Muhammadan candidate until the number of appointments included in column 5 of that statement given above are held by persons of that religion...

Darjeeling, the 24th June 1901.

FROM F. A. SLACKE, ESQ. I. C. S.
Secretary to the Govt. of Bengal.

To

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, Bengal.

SIR,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. T-614, dated the 30th May, 1901, with which you forward a report regarding the employment of Muhammadans in Zilla schools during the year 1900.

2. The comparative statement annexed to your letter shows that, notwithstanding the distinct orders of Government on the subject, only 26 out of the 382 teachers in Government service were Muhammadans. This is attributed to the paucity of suitable Muhammadan candidates who are willing to accept service on the same pay as Hindus ; but with reference to this I am to enquire if Inspectors of Schools strictly adhere to the degree laid down as the qualification for the vacant post, and do not give preferenee to a Hindu applicant over a Muhammadan owing to the fact that the former possesses a higher degree, though such

degree is not an essential qualification for the vacancy.

3. With a view to increase the number of Muhammadan teachers in Government service, the Lieutenant-Governor directs that in future, on the occurrence of a vacancy in a Zilla school, if there is no suitable local Muhammadan candidate, application should be made by the Inspector to the nearest Muhammadan Madrassa at Calcutta or Dacca. Furthermore, His Honour desires that the Principals of all colleges should be required to ascertain from all Muhammadan candidates for the F. A. Examination and the B. A. Degree their addresses, and whether they wish to obtain appointments in Zilla schools, and, if so, the lowest initial pay they are willing to take ; and to furnish you half yearly with a list giving these particulars. You should then have a complete list prepared, omitting the name of any candidates who had not passed the examinations. The list should contain the names of all the candidates for the current and the three preceding years, and copies of it should be sent to all Inspectors with orders that when suitable vacancies occurred they should be offered to those in the list who had expressed their willingness to accept such appointments.

4. You are further requested to issue orders to the Inspectors that when a Muhammadan candidate refuses a post offered to him, his reason for doing so should, if possible, be ascertained, and reported in the half-yearly statement which they would have to submit to you to enable you to prepare your annual statement."

Effect was gradually given to the above-mentioned circulars. The appreciable number of Muslim educa-

tional officers now in different districts of Bengal owed their appointment to the steps taken on M. Abdul Karim's representation. In the beginning of his service as an inspecting officer when he went to inspect any school, he was looked upon as a rarity, and students and people of the locality who came to have a look at him used to remark "does a Muslim also become an Inspector ?" What a great change took plaee at the end of his service may be judged from what happened on a particular occasion. Once when as an Inspector of Schools he was going to visit the Barisal Zilla School, perhaps for the last time, he found all the officers, the Assistant Inspector, the Deputy Inspector, the Sub-inspector and even the inspecting Pandit, accompanying him to the school, were Muslims. This was an exceptional case, but, as a rule, in the districts having preponderating Muslim population the majority of the officers were Muslims. By this time, it seems the Muslims have got the full prescribed number.

ALLOTMENT OF FUNDS FOR POOR STUDENTS—As regards the education of poor Muslim students. the Mohsin Fund was the only source out of which they might get help. But unfortunately a large amount of it was utilised in paying the Maulavis in Government schools. How this amount could be freed for poor students engaged M. Abdul Karim's attention. As the amount required for Maulavis' salaries would have to be paid out of Provincial Revenues, it was doubtful if the Director of Public Instruction would agree to make such a proposal during the regime of Sir Charles Elliot, who was unwilling to add to the expenditure from Provincial Revenues

if this could be avoided. M. Abdul Karim was on the look out for an opportunity to approach, if possible, the Lieutenant-Governor himself. Fortunately such an opportunity was not long in coming. On the occasion of Sir Charles Elliot's visit to Dacca, the late Nawab Sir Khwaja Ahsan-ullah entrusted M. Abdul Karim with the drawing up of an address that was to be presented to the Governor on behalf of the Muslims of Dacca. The address drawn up by M. Abdul Karim was approved by all concerned and he was given a prominent position at the Darbar at which it was presented. When the Governor visited the collegiate school, Mr. Luttmon Johnson, the Divisional Commissioner, introduced him in high terms, of which the late Sir Henry Cotton, the Chief Secretary, seemed to have taken note. The Muslims of Mymensingh requested M. Abdul Karim to draw up an address that was to be presented by them to Sir Charles Elliot and he complied with their request. At Mymensingh also he succeeded in favourably impressing the Governor. He then followed the Governor to Noakhali, where he found the opportunity he was on the look-out for. While conducting the Governor to the classes in the Zilla school he drew his attention to the grievance of the Muslims. But the Governor said it was not unreasonable that the Maulavis, who taught Muslim students their classical languages, were paid out of the Mohsin Fund. Thereupon M. Abdul Karim said that while the Pandits, who taught Hindu students their classical language, were paid out of provincial revenues there was no reason why the Maulvis should not be paid out of that revenues. This produced the

desired effect ; the Governor told M. Abdul Karim that he might make a representation on the subject through the proper channel. When the Director was approached and was informed what the Governor had told M. Abdul Karim, he moved the Government ; and since then the Maulavis in all Government schools have been paid out of Provincial Revenues. Thus a large amount of the Mohsin Fund was set free for the assistance of poor Muslim students. Besides, on M. Abdul Karim's proposal a number of free and half-free studentships for Muslim students were created out of Provincial Revenues.

RELAXATION OF AGE LIMIT.—On his appointment as Assistant Inspector for Muhammadan Education, M. Abdul Karim found that some Muhammadan students were debarred from entering High English schools by a Departmental Circular which laid down "that no boy who has attained the age of fourteen years should be admitted to any class of a Government high school below the fourth." He pointed out to the Director of Public Instruction that Muhammadan boys generally join schools later than Hindu boys, as they have to go through a prior course of religious instruction at home before joining any school. The rule was accordingly relaxed in case of Muhammadan boys.

BOARDING-HOUSES.—— One of the steps required to be taken for Muhammadan students of High English schools was the establishment of boarding-houses. Most of the English schools were situated at district and subdivisional head-quarters where there were few Muhammadan officers and members of the bar with whom Muhammadan boys might put up. On Maulavi Abdul

Karim's representation a circular was issued by the Director of Public Instruction in which it was stated "If it is desired to build a cheap boarding-house Government may be expected to contribute towards the cost, but the chief share would have to be borne by local subscribers. One of the Muhammadan teachers of the school would probably be the most suitable person to be put in charge of the hostel, and he would be entitled to the ordinary capitation fee of 8 annas a head monthly." Effect was gradually given to this circular. Backergange was one of the first districts to avail of the concession. When the major portion of the required amount was collected, Government gave a grant of Rs. 5000.

Madrasahs.— The following is an extract from a long letter which M. Abdul Karim addressed to Government regarding the Madrasahs in Bengal:— The Madrasahs are the only institutions for higher education of Musalmans in their classical languages. In Bengal there are four principal Madrasahs, one maintained by Government and three from the Mohsin Trust. There are still a few private Madrasahs, the relics of those noble institutions which in bygone times were scattered throughout the length and breadth of the country. Their teachers are eminent Maulavies who charge no fees and devote their lives to advancing Islamic learning. When Persian was the Court language, these Madrasahs were the most useful and largely-attended educational institutions in Bengal. They no longer serve that purpose, but they are the only institutions of Musalmans in which, in this utilitarian age when most people

think of nothing but the bread and butter problem, the true love of learning survives. Their pupils pursue learning for its own sake in order to devote their lives to the cause of their religion, law and literature. If these institutions cease to exist and those who attend them plunge themselves in to the materialism, scepticism and godlessness raging all around, the day will not be long in coming when Islam in India will cease to have a hold on her followers. It is desirable, therefore, that there should be a number of such institutions. It should be seen, however, that they give the best of the education they profess to impart and their successful students find adequate scope for their attainments and energies. As at present taught, the Madrasah students are hardly well-qualified for any career in life. For want of a sufficient knowledge of Court languages they cannot, as a rule, enter the public service or the learned professions; for want of a requisite knowledge of the vernacular of the Province they cannot find employment in the service of Zamindars, traders and others; for want of technical knowledge and capital they cannot take to trade; for want of a thorough knowledge of Hadis and Tafsir and of the vernacular of the Province they cannot be successful preachers; and for want of a thorough knowledge of Arabic and Persian they cannot be even very efficient teachers of these languages. Thus unqualified for any useful career, many of the Madrasah students, after finishing their education, become a burden on their community and some of them are driven to such straits that they are forced to have recourse to questionable means of gaining their

livelihood. Such being the state of Madrasah students, it is most desirable that such steps should be taken as will give them an education that will create fields for the employment of their attainments and will enable them to chalk out a useful career in life."

With the letter M. Abdul Karim submitted a well-thought-out comprehensive scheme for the improvement of the Madrasahs. The course of studies prescribed for Middle Madrasahs and for the Title classes of high Madrasahs are based on that scheme. If all his suggestions regarding remodelling of Madrasahs had been adopted their utility would have been much increa sed.

CHAPTER VIII.

An Inspector of Schools

On return from leave Maulvi Abdul Karim was appointed to act as Inspector of Schools, Dacca Division, when the permanent Inspector of Schools, Mr. Muthuranath Chatterjee, went on leave. He was warmly welcomed by all his friends, both Muslims and non-Muslims. His work as acting Inspector of Schools, marked by praise-worthy activity and impartiality, was well-appreciated both by the Department and the public. Hearing of his appointment Sir Alfred Croft wrote from England, "I am glad to know that you are discharging the responsible duties of an Inspector—satisfactorily I hope; honestly and energetically I am sure. I trust in good time you will be confirmed in this position and grade. Dr. Martin wrote, "I am glad to hear you have been acting as Inspector of Schools, Dacca. It is in many ways a troublesome post to fill. I trust that this acting appointment may subsequently lead to your getting such a post permanently." Mr. P. Mukherjee, Inspector of Schools, Presidency Division, wrote, "It is a pleasure in these times of dearth of capacity to see a few capable men like yourself still left. People hanker after promotion but they must first deserve it."

Just on the expiration of the term of acting Inspectorship of M. Abdul Karim, the then Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Woodburn, paid his last visit to Dacca. When officials and non-officials were waitting at the Buckland

Bund to welcome him on his arrival, M. Abdul Karim suddenly had a fainting fit. He was removed to a tent pitched on the Bund. When after a short while he regained consciousness, he saw two gentlemen attending on him, one was the late Shamsul-ulama Maulvi Abdul Mumin, the Superintendent of the Dacca Madrasah, who owed his appointment to him, and the other was a Hindu gentleman with whom he was not acquainted. Expressing his gratitude for kindly attending on him while, like others, he should have been present for introduction to the Governor, he asked his name. "My name" said he "is Harinath De. I could not have passed the University Entrance Examination in History if you had not published your epitome of Hunter's History of India. My sense of gratitude has brought me here."

On the Governor's arrival, the assembled gentlemen were introduced to him. When Mr. Rankin, the then District Magistrate of Dacca, introduced Mr. Chatterjee, who had just taken charge of inspectorship, His Honour enquired "is not Maulvi Abdul Karim the Inspector of Schools here?" In answer Mr. Rankin informed him of the expiration of his term of inspectorship and of the accident. Next day when he met his Honour at the Dacca Madrasah, he asked him "had you fever like me", and made kind enquiries about his health. Shortly after his return from Decca, Sir John Woodburn died. Indescribable was the sorrow felt by all those who, like M. Abdul Karim, knew what a kind heart he had.

In those days educational officers had to draw the pay

of their grade something left out either by retirement or death. For over a decade M. Abdul Karim had to draw the same salary as no vacancy occurred in the higher grade during this period. This stood in the way of his promotion to the post of an Inspector, the salary of which was higher than what he was drawing. When he saw Sir John Woodburn at the Ahsan Manzil, where he was staying, he represented this to him. He was asked to put down on paper what he had to say. The Chief Secretary, Mr. Buckland, who was with the Governor, was instructed to send M. Abdul Karim's representation to the Education Secretary, Mr. Macpherson, for doing what might be possible for his early promotion to the post of an Inspector of Schools. Some time after he was appointed Inspector of Chittagong Division, with an allowance to be drawn until his promotion to the next higher grade.

EVIDENCE BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY COMMISSION OF 1902.— Before his appointment as permanent Inspector of Schools M. Abdul Karim acted as Assistant Inspector of Schools, Dacca Division. During this period he had to give evidence before the University Commission, appointed by Lord Curzon, presided over by Sir Walter Releigh. He was the only inspecting officer in the whole of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, who was selected by Sir Alexander Pedler to give evidence before the Commission. The following are extracts from the "Note" he placed before the Commission ;—

"I am a Graduate of the Calcutta University and an Assistant Inspector of Schools of more than twelve years standing. I have been directly connected with

the University as one of its Fellows for about seven years. As an inspecting officer I had occasion to visit some of the colleges, most of the High English Schools and many of the Middle and Primary Schools in thirty districts of Bengal, Behar and Orissa. I propose to speak mainly about the state of High English Schools, of which I have seen a good deal. My views on some points connected with these institutions are likely to differ from the views of those whose observations are confined to particular localities and particular institutions. . . .

INCREASE OF HIGH ENGLISH SCHOOLS. —— The number of high English schools has considerably increased of late. Where a few years ago there was not even a school of this class, there have sprung up many in the course of a few years. In some places the number is much larger than necessary to meet real requirements. These schools owe their origin to four causes. When the standard of proficiency in general attainments required for admission into the Medical and Survey schools and for candidates for the Mukhtearship Examination was raised, a large number of Middle Schools were converted into English Schools. Only a few of these met a real demand for high education. The majority were started either as mere money-making concerns to satisfy individual vanity or party feelings. Some people of moderate means and education, when they fail in other walks of life, think of trading in schools and scholars. Again, when a Mr. Ghosh establishes a school, a Mr. Bose of that locality thinks it necessary for maintaing his prestige to open a rival

school of the kind. Thus there have sprung up a number of schools, unhealthy rivalry among which far from furthering the cause of sound education greatly retards it. The unseemly struggle among these schools to secure boys, has made the students masters of the situation. There has been in consequence a perceptible deterioration both in efficiency and discipline of our schools.

The University, I regret to have to say, is to blame, to some extent, for calling into existence schools of the kind mentioned above. If the University had refused to grant them the privilege of sending up candidates to its examinations, they would have died, before long, a natural death. In some cases in spite of strong adverse opinions expressed by Departmental officers, the University authorities thought it fit to recognise schools. It is most desirable that before recognising a school every care should be taken to ascertain whether it supplies a real demand, whether the cause of sound education would be furthered by it and how far the existing educational institutions in the neighbourhood would be affected by it. . . . „

DETERIORATION IN DISCIPLINE.—In some schools boys are masters of the situation. These schools have to struggle for their very existence and depend entirely upon the income derived from fees and fines. They cannot afford to lose boys whose deficiencies and delinquencies have to be overlooked. Boys migrate from one school to another if punished for misbehaviour or not promoted for unsatisfactory progress. The Transfer Rules are meant to check this regrettable state of things.

But although we have repeatedly been pointing out to the school authorities that nothing tells so seriously upon the efficiency of a school as does indiscriminate promotion, we have not succeeded in checking it. In many schools an overwhelming majority of boys are totally unfit for the classes in which they are . . ."

TEACHING STAFF.—The teaching staff in many schools is far from sufficient and efficient. The pay is too low to attract qualified men or to induce them to stick long to the posts when they accept them. They have to work without interruption for full five hours and have sometimes to teach at a time more classes than one. The result is that the teachers do not care either to work with their heart or to stick to the posts. School-mastering has thus come to be looked upon by some of our graduates and undergraduates as a stepping-stone to better posts or, more generally, as a halting-place for preparation for the Bar. They have not their heart in the work and as soon as they find anything better they throw up their appointment in the school. Thus there is frequent change in the teaching staff and this tells seriously upon both the discipline and efficiency of the schools.

Method of Teaching.—The method of teaching in our schools is far from what it ought to be. An average boy does not acquire a good knowledge of the subjects taught. The defect in teaching seems to be chiefly due to four causes, viz. (1) Want of qualified and dutiful teachers; (2) Large classes making individual attention impossible; (3) Multiplicity of subjects and text-books; and (4) Examination questions encouraging cram.

I have already told you that most of the teachers are not well-grounded in the art of teaching and many of them have not their heart in the work, and some of the classes are so large that it is not possible for teachers to attend to every student. Unless the appointment of trained teachers and payment of sufficient salaries to them are insisted upon, and the classes are composed of a limited number of boys, the quality of teaching is not likely to improve. At present the one object of both the teachers and the pupils being any how to pass the examination as easily and as soon as possible, only that which is likely to be useful for that purpose is taught and learnt. Thus cramming takes the place of intelligent study and the memory is cultivated to the neglect of reason and judgment. . . . . Besides, multiplicity of subjects and text-books also stands in the way of acquirement of a thorough knowledge. So many subjects have to be learnt and so many text-books have to be read that in some cases there is no alternative but to cram. . . .

Age Limit.— I am in favour of fixing a limit of age for candidates for the Entrance Examination. In my opinion it is not desirable to allow a boy to go up to the Entrance Examination before he is fifteen, if not sixteen. I have found even very smart boys, who stand high in their class examinations, have to depend much more upon their memory than on understanding. Unless there is a sufficient development of intellect, it is not possible to understand thoroughly some of the subjects. Besides, the effect of rushing up a boy in his studies is disastrous to his health. The other day I

had a talk with the Head-master of a very largely attended school in my Division. He mentioned to me three instances of boys having passed the Entrance Examination from his school at the early age of thirteen. These boys aquitted themselvs creditably at the University Examinations and gained scholarships. But the ultimate result has been disastrous in all the cases. One of the boys died shortly after he left the University, one is in a lunatic asylum and the other, though a member of the Bar, is in a miserable state of health. Several cases like this came to my notice.,,

Sir Alexander Pedler was well-pleased with M. Abdul Karim's evidence. With regard to this Sir Alfred Croft wrote, "I am very glad to receive the copy of the Evidence you gave before the Commision, which I read with much interest. The views that you express seem to me to be generally sound and sagacious and they have the advantage of being based upon a pretty wide experience of schools and their managers, as well as of the University."

When M. Abdul Karim took charge of the Chittagong Division he found that the steps he had taken, a decade before, as Assistant Inspector of Schools for Muhammadan Education, had appreciably improved the educational condition of the Muslims of that Division. Some schools were established for secular education of Muslims, the number of Muslim students had increased and more Muslims were appointed teachers and inspecting officers. He now gave his co-religionists to understand that he was no longer a special officer and it would not

be proper for them to expect that he would devote all his attention to them, his duty now being to look after the interests of all communities—Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and Christians.

Some time after assuming charge of the Chittagong Division M. Abdul Karim held a conference of school masters and inspecting officers. It was opened by the Divisional Commissioner and was attended by the head masters and some other teachers of almost all the high schools in the Division and also by the inspecting officers. It was a very successful conference as was testified to by those who took part in it. Some of them were heard to say that they had learnt more in these few days than what they could learn in six months of their training. The summary given below of the presidential speech of M. Abdul Karim will show what was the object of the conference and what subjects were discussed.

"Gentlemen, the importance and utility of such a conference can hardly be over-estimated. It is very desirable that those who are engaged in the most responsible work of educating the youth, should occasionally meet together in order to compare notes as to what has already been done in different places by different persons and to discuss and decide, in the light of past experience, what further steps should be taken so as to extend the field of education and to improve the quality of instruction. Such mutual interchange of thoughts and ideas, tending as it does to broaden our views and raise our ideals, cannot but be highly beneficial to the cause of education. The mature experience and

commendable devotion to duty of those who have spent the best part of their lives in the noble work of training the faculties and forming the character of young men, cannot fail to produce their effect on those who have lately entered the arena, nor can the youthful enthusiasm and activity in the new workers in the field of education go unappreciated by those who will not continue long in their useful career.

I have experience of no less than thirty districts in the Province. I do not think I shall be justified in saying that the state of education is what is ought to be; there is ample room for improvement in many respects. The progress of true education has been greatly retarded by ill-managed, ill-officered and ill-equipped schools, by unhealthy competition between rival institutions, by irresponsible teachers who do not realise the gravity of their position, by unenlightened and unreasonable parents, who take little care for the proper education of their children... In some places there have sprung up, owing either to party faction or speculative object, more schools than are necessary to meet real requirements. The unhealthy rivalry between such institutions, which have to depend mainly upon the income derived from fees and cannot, therefore, afford to lose pupils, has made the boys masters of the situation. Schools such as these can never further the cause of sound education.

The number of untrained and unwilling teachers in our schools is by no means small. Some of them, utterly ignorant of the art of teaching, have come direct from the college to the teachers' chair, as if every graduate, and undergraduate is fit to teach and no training is

necessary for the purpose. There are others who look upon the teacher's post as a stepping-stone to something better or as a halting-place for preparation for the Bar. Such a teacher can have no heart in his work. After serving for some time when he learns something of the art and begins to be useful, the hireling hastens to pursuits more congenial to his taste. I need hardly say that we want for our schools a body of gifted men who by their natural aptitude, professional training, unimpeachable character and devotion to duty, are worthy of being entrusted with the education of those upon whom all our future hopes depend. It is true that in these days when so many paths of wealth and emoluments are open, the best minds in the country cannot be won to an office so responsible and laborious as that of teaching without sufficient inducements. We propose to discuss at this conference how to raise the profession of teaching in public estimation and to better the prospects of teachers. The good of our children, the well-being of society, the physical, mental and spiritual progress of mankind, require that our educational institutions should be under the care of the best and wisest in the country.

The inattention and indifference of parents to the proper training of their children cannot but strike those who think of the advancement of learning in this country. It is very much to be deplored that parents are inclined to be economical in a matter of such vital importance to their children. Those who squander thousands on dress, furniture and amusements, hesitate to spend comparatively small sums for the education of

their children. They seem to care more for accumulating wealth for their children than for giving them sound education. Thus to starve the intellect of a child inorder to leave him a fortune, is a folly that cannot be condemned in too strong a language. I need hardly say that parents should reduce every other item of expenditure in order to give their children such an education as will make them fit to bear a manly, useful and honourable part in the world. They should always remember Herbert Spencer's description of education as a means of forming the parent, the worker, the thinker, the subject and the citizen.

Some parents are inclined to underestimate the teachers' office. They seem to think that the most moderate ability is competent to discharge the duties of this responsible post. It is not altogether uncommon to find parents putting their children under the daily control of one with whom they do not care to associate. Unless a true estimate is formed of the teaching profession, unless the teacher's responsible work is well understood and his valuable services are properly appreciated, unless parents secure the services of such instructors as might become guardians and guides to their children and heartily co-operate with them, true education cannot make much progress in the land.

As you are aware, I have taken, since assuming charge of this Division, some steps calculated to improve the efficiency of teaching, to raise the status of teachers and to reform the character of the taught. I find that some of these measures, probably owing to misapprehension regarding their usefulness and adaptability

which could not be clearly explained in brief official circulars, have not been so popular as desirable. Before taking other steps of the kind I have thought it desirable to consult you about them. I have no doubt that I shall have some very valuable suggestions from you, specially from those who have devoted a considerable portion of their lives to fostering education in the land.

We propose to discuss, as far as the time at our disposal permits, various subjects connected with the management of schools, organisation of classes, method of teaching, qualifications of teachers, intellectual, moral and physical culture of boys and such other matters.

Gentlemen, in our discussions we might have to set before you ideals which might seem to be unattainable or we might have to express opinions and enunciate principles which might appear to be detrimental to the interests of particular individuals or particular institutions. In such a case it is hoped you will remember that you are engaged in a work which requires a high aim and great self-denial and self-sacrifice. When any ideal appears to you too high, remember that the first condition of its being attainable is that you shall believe it to be worthy of attainment.

You teachers should always bear in mind that yours is the noblest and most responsible work—the work of fashioning the intellect, the conscience and the character of future generations of your countrymen. It has been very truly said that "mothers and school-masters plant the seeds of nearly all the good and evil in the world." No great intellectual or moral change in the community can take place unless it is effected by you. To my

mind you hold in your hands the leading strings of the nation and you can make or mar its future prospects. If you do not occupy a high position, like judges and magistrates, you should remember that you are the makers of judges and magistrates. No profession affords greater opportunities of usefulness and no labour is fraught with more momentous results. Under such circumstances is it too much to expect that you will be animated by a high sense of responsibility, actuated by a solemn sense of duty, so that you may succeed in performing the important task entrusted to you to the best of your abilities and in fulfilling the noble mission undertaken by you to the satisfaction of your conscience? Although your thankless and ill-paid but most important services are yet but little appreciated, although uncongenial and discouraging your duties may sometimes appear, although pecuniary success and public approbation may not always be yours, although ungenerous criticism and false standards of estimation may often be applied to your work, you should not despair. I have reason to hope the time is drawing nigh when your most valuable services will be well-understood, well-appreciated and well-paid. You should never forget your responsibility. You should never court popularity by tampering with principles or pandering to prejudices. You should never truckle to public opinion when you are convinced it is misdirected. Honesty and consistency cannot but command respect in the long run. If you discharge your duties in the manner indicated by me, you are sure to rise in public estimation, you are sure to be well-treated

by the authorities, you are sure to be gratefully remembered by your pupils, some of whom might dedicate to you lines similar to those dedicated by the Marquis of Wellesley to Eton.

"On loftiest deeds to fix the aspiring gaze,
To seek the purer lights of ancient days.
To love the simple paths of manly truth,
These were thy lessons to my opening youth,
If on later life some glory shine,
Some honours grace my name, the meed is thine."

On the last day of the Conference M. Abdul Karim gave an evening party to which the leading Muslims and non-Muslims of Chittagong as well as those who had taken part in the Conference were invited.

After the Conference M. Abdul Karim offered to award two medals for the best essays on "What makes a Model Teacher" and 'How to raise the Teaching profession in public estimation."

A telegram from Chittagong to the newspapers ran as follows:—

"The Conference of Teachers closed yesterday. Maulavi Abdul Karim delivered an impressive speech. A vote of thanks on behalf of the teachers was carried with acclamation. Babu Jatra Mohon Sen thanked the learned Maulavi on behalf of the public and said that he had infused a new life into the teachers and the taught. The whole party was photographed."

The "East" of Dacca wrote:— "That Maulvie Abdul Karim, as Inspector of Schools, Chittagong Division, has been working in right earnest for the improvement

of education in his Circle, is indeed noteworthy. He lately held a Conference of Teachers and in his opening Presidential address, he called attention to various subjects connected with the management of schools, organization of classes, method of teaching and qualifications of teachers, intellectual, moral and physical culture of young men and other matters. We should commend his sound advice to the guardians of the boys sent to schools for education....."

The "Weekly Chronical" wrote :- "Mr. Abdul Karim, Inspector of Schools, Chittagong Division, is an educationist of repute in Bengal and has already made his mark in the service to which he belongs As a native of our district we are proud of him, and his ways and work have always possessed special interest for us. A man of versatile talents and the very reverse of what Lord Curzon would call an "admirable automaton," Mr. Abdul Karim does not walk in the stereotyped path, but is ever busy to discover new lines for the spread and improvement of education in his Circle. In fact since his advent to the Chittagong Division he has done a great deal to infuse life and vigour into those who are engaged in the responsible work of educating the youth and has also taken some steps calculated to improve the efficiency of teaching, to raise the status of teachers and to reform the character of the taught..... We congratulate Mr. Abdul Karim on his laudable efforts for promoting the cause of education and desire also to add that t e consummate ability which he has brought to bear on the discharge of his responsible work stamps him not only as a highly

useful servant of Government, but also as a patriot of no mean order."

The climate of Chittagong had deteriorated by the time M. Abdul Karim took charge of it. He hoped to get before long a transfer to some other Division. But he had to give up this hope. Lord Curzon, deciding to partition Bengal, paid a visit to Chittagong and held a Darbar there in order to prepare the people for what was coming. Shortly after his visit, the Dacca and Chittagong Divisions were separated from Bengal, and with Assam a new Province was formed. Sir Bamfylde Fuller was appointed its first Lieutenant-Governor and he began his administration with unprecedented activity. He, however, took some hasty steps to put down the vigorous agitation that was started to get the partition of Bengal annulled. The Viceroy, Lord Minto, who had succeeded Lord Curzon, disapproved of his action and thereupon he tendered his resignation. This proved very detrimental to the interests of M. Abdul Karim, who within a short time had gained Sir Bamfylde Fuller's approbation for his efficient administration. During his visits to some of the schools he spoke well of M. Abdul Karim and asked the pupils to read from his history.* All this raised the Maulavi in public

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
SHILLONG, 27TH SEPTEMBER, 1905.

*Dear Sir,

I am much obliged for the books you have sent me. But I have read already your History of India

estimation and he had reason to feel keenly the loss of such a friendly Governor.

In April 1906 M. Abdul Karim attended the Provincial Muhammadan Educational Conference held at Dacca under the presidency of Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur. He had to take a prominent part in its proceedings and this was much appreciated by all present. The following are extracts from one of his speeches at the Conferene, published by Maulvi Syed Abdul Jabbar, Zamindar of Comilla:—

"Gentlemen, I have been asked to say a few words in response to the hearty welcome accorded by Khajah Muhammad Asghar Sahib, President of the Reception Committee, to the gentlemen who have come here from different parts of the Province. I need hardly say that our best thanks are due to the promoters of the Conference for giving us such an excellent opportunity of meeting together. It is indeed a happy sign of the times that a gentleman of the Nawab Bahadur's high position has condescended to take so prominent a part in such a movement. The importance and utility of a conference like this can hardly be over-estimated . . . Such mutual interchange of thoughts and ideas, tending as it does to broaden our views and to raise our ideals, cannot but be highly beneficial to the cause of education. . . While of late the Mnhammadans have been progressing other communities have not been standing

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and your name is familiar to me as that of an earnest educationalist.

Yours very truly,
J. B. FULLER.

still. Unless, therefore, very vigorous efforts are made it is not possible to regain the lost ground for a long time to come. From the fact that Muhammadans have fallen far short of the standard of success which they should have achieved and the higher the standard of education the more marked the backwardness of Muhammadans, an impression seems to have gained ground in some quarters that Muhammadans are not equal in intellectual capacities to the members of other communities. My experience as an educational officer of about twenty years' standing is otherwise. I have had better opportunities than many others of judging the parts of pupils belonging to different communities, and I believe if the same advantages and same opportunities be given them, Musalmans are well able to hold their own with any other class of His Majesty's subjects in Bengal. Our best efforts, therefore, should be to remove the difficulties that stand in the way of the educational advancement of the Musalmans and to secure for them the special facilities they require for the purpose. . . .

Before resuming my seat I beg to tender, on behalf of my co-religionists assembled here, our heartfelt thanks to the official and non-official European and Hindu gentlemen, who have been so good as to grace this meeting and countenance its proceedings by their presence. Need I add that we are very thankful to Nawab Mohsinul-Mulk Sahib, the grand old man of Aligarh, who has devoted his life and consecrated his energies even at this advanced age to the service of his co-religionists, and who is intimate-

ly connected with the renowned College at Aligarh, which has become an intellectual centre of the Musalmans not only of India but of the whole of Asia, and which is a standing monument of the great efforts made for the intellectual elevation of his community by the late lamented Sir Syed Ahmad, the greatest Indian Musalman of the nineteenth century, (cheers).

Some time before he left the Chittagong Division M. Abdul Karim had to perform a very unpleasant duty which made him unpopular among those who did not realise the enormity of the crimes committed by some of the school students in Comilla, Chittagong and some other place. On sifting enquiry he found that some grown up wicked students and some outsiders were polluting fair-looking young students and committing horrible attrocities on some of them. Determined to put down all this and to clear the school atmosphere, M. Abdul Karim took various steps. He called conferences of guardians and consulted them as to what steps they might suggest. He decided to give a chance to most of the students concerned by at first inflicting light punishment on them and to rusticate only a few who were unpardonably active in the matter. Unfortunately Mr. Luson, the Commissioner, coming to know what was going on, sent for all the papers and without consulting M. Abdul Karim, submitted direct to the Government a strong report proposing rustication of all the students concerned. His proposal was accepted and most of the students concerned were rusticated. This created a sensation and M. Abdul Karim became unpopular, as the public did not know how far

he was responsible for what had happend. Naturally his relation with the Commissioner became strained. Besides, he had differences over some appoitments and other matters with the Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Sharp, who had all along been so very kind and courteous to M. Abdul Karim as to cause envy among officials in the Deprrtment. When the Director decided to promote some officers who had somehow happened to have impressed him, M. Abdul Karim objected to this as some other officers, whom the Director had no occasion to know, had preferential claim to promotion. All this greatly disgusted M. Abdul Karim who was at that time in a shattered state of health on account of climatic effect. He decided to proceed on long leave. Coming to know of this, the Director offered him the Inspectorship of the Rajshahi Division, but he did not accept it. He proceeded on leave and went to Waltair to recoup his health. During his three months stay there he met some of the high officials of the Education Department of Madras and attended a conference held by them at Vizagapatam. At Waltair he became acquainted with the late Raja Bunbehari Kapur, C. S. I., the father of the Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan, and was very much impressed by his sociability.

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CHAPTER IX.

Inspection of Schools.

Maulavi Abdul Karim's inspection of schools had a specialty of its own. While other inspecting officers generally did not spend more than a day in inspecting a school, he devoted two and sometimes three days to the inspection of a high English School. After a thorough examination of the classes and the records, he used to hold a conference of teachers in order to let them know where he found them wanting and how they could make up their deficiencies. Occasionally he also held a conference of guardians and teachers to discuss the requirements of the school. Besides, he granted interviews to the best students and freely talked with them. Sometimes he spoke to particular guardians about their wards. All this produced a salutary effect in the locality where the school was situated. Babu Kunjabehari Bose, Personal Assistant to the Director of Public Instruction, who was interested in the Barasat High English school, used to say that when M. Abdul Karim visited that school even the women folk in the locality discussed among themselves what their children reported to them. When M. Abdul Karim's tour programme was published a sensation prevailed in the locality which he intended to visit.

Referring to a conference of guardians held on the occasion of the inspection of the Noakhali Zilla school

a correspondent of the "Bengalee" wrote in its issue of 22nd August, 1903,

"Altogether the conference was a very interesting, needful and profitable function. The conference was a new one of its kind, and the learned Inspector deserved the thanks of the public for starting such an original idea. We have known Inspectors who only care for halting allowances and whose so-called inspection consists in making a state progress through the school classes attended by the retinue of teachers. The learned Moulvie evinced the deepest interest in the welfare of the boys, and for once teachers and students and guardians were impressed with the importance and usefulness of an Inspector of Schools."

THE "PEOPLE AND PRATIBASHI" WROTE— We are used to mechanical officials. Very few are in the habit of making any departure from the system of routine work to which they succeed. But Moulvie Abdul Karim, the Inspector of Schools for Chittagong, is, we understand, quite a new sort of man. He seems to be a man inspired with a higher sense of duty than what is to be found in the ordinary run. He does the mechanical work, which of course must be done, but he does something more, he investigates the causes of arrested progress and inspires others with his own ideal of work. . . . This is a singular method of work. We don't know what result it will yield. Most probably it will not be appreciated in this country where ideals of duties are hopelessly low, but it is a great satisfaction to us that there are in the Education Department men with such conception of duties."

The following is a summary of an inspection "Note" of Maulavi Abdul Karim, recorded in the Visitors' Book of a school. The full "Note" was printed in the form of a circular and sent to all High schools in his jurisdiction, so that teachers and managers of schools might know what was required of them:—

I visited the School yesterday and to-day.

NUMERICAL STRENGTH.—I am glad to find the numerical strength of the school is steadily increasing. There has been appreciable increase of pupils since my last visit about a year ago. There would have been a larger number of boys on the rolls by this time if some new-comers had not been refused admission. The last two classes have been fast overgrowing their normal size and unless they are divided into sections more boys cannot be taken into them; the fixed, maximum having been already reached. Additional accommodation and extra teachers are required for this purpose. I think it is undesirable to refuse admission into the only High English School in the subdivision at a time when the people seem to be just awaking to the necessity of English education. . . . The paucity of Muhammadan pupils in the school is to be regretted. Steps should be taken to attract to the school a large number of Muhammadan boys of the neighbourhood. Some free studentships may be held out for their attraction.

SCHOOL RECORDS.—On the whole the records may be said to have been well kept. But the irregularities in the Admission Register are to be regretted. The Headmaster should have a thorough knowledge of all the records; he should not depend much upon the clerk. The accounts should be regularly audited and signed by the Secretary. The present practice of check-

ing the accounts when grant-in-aid bills are submitted, cannot be approved. The attendance Register of teachers showed that some of them are not very punctual in attendance. This is to be regretted. Boys should learn the important lesson of punctuality early in life, and it should be taught more by personal example than by precept. Punctual attendance both in the case of teachers and pupils should be strictly insisted upon.

ACCOMMODATION—Insufficiency of accommodation is still the most keenly-felt want of the school. A suitable site has at last been acquired and steps are being taken for constructing the required building. It is hoped the school will have a decent habitation of its own before long. The expansion of the school in future should be kept in view in building the house and the rooms should have accommodation for the maximum number of boys fixed for different classes by the new Regulations of the Calcutta University.

FINANCIAL CONDITION—The school is in a solvent condition ; the income covers the expenditure. The apparent deficit is due to the fact that grant-in-aid has not been drawn for some months ; when the arrear grant will be drawn there will be a monthly surplus. The reserve fund amounts to about one thousand rupees. This is not sufficient too meet the requirements of the school. Efforts should be made to raise more funds. The surplus balance should be placed in the Savings Bank.

TEACHING STAFF.— It is much to be regretted that there were so many changes in the teaching staff during the last session ; so many as six of the teachers were appointed in 1910. I need hardly say that such changes are very much detrimental to the interests of the school.

Whenever a new appointment is made a proper guarantee of the selected candidate's sticking to the post for at least two complete sessions should be invariably taken. Only those who adopt teaching as a profession and are likely to work with heart, should be appointed. Those who look upon a teacher's post as a stepping-stone to something better or as a halting-place for preparation for the Bar, should not be appointed. It is most undesirable that men who know little of teaching should be taken in, and when they learn something of it, and begin to be really useful should be allowed to leave the school.

The Moulvi possesses the requisite attainments in Arabic & Persian, but his progress in English has not been sufficient. Unless he exerts his best and picks up the requisite knowledge of English before long, I am afraid he will have to be replaced by a better qualified man.

The Head Master's work may be judged by four criteria, viz.,

(1) Maintenance of proper discipline in the school;

(2) Progress made by the class or classes directly in his charge;

(3) Progress made by the classes in charge of the Assistant Masters;

(4) Results of the University Examination.

Judged by the first criterion the Head Master may be said to have proved fairly successful; he seems to be gradually getting a tighter hold over his pupils, whose behaviour at the time of my inspection was all that was desirable. From what I saw of the correction of the exercises and performance of the boys at my examination, I cannot say his work in connection with the classes directly in his charge

has been quite up to expectation. As for his work of supervision, it has been far from satisfactory. He should always bear in mind that he is responsible not only for the progress and management of the classes directly in his charge but also for the progress and management of all the classes in the school. If he lacks teaching capacity, only his classes suffer, but if he be wanting in administrative capacity the whole school suffers. The Head Master must carefully supervise the work of all his assistants. He should now and then call for the exercise books of a class and look through a certain percentage in order to see how the work is done. He should issue instructions to his assistants, whenever necessary, regarding the method of teaching, class management and other matters, and see that these are faithfully carried out. These instructions should be preserved for inspection. Conferences of teachers should be held, at least once a fortnight, in order to discuss difficulties and devise means for their removal. The proceedings of these conferences should be kept. Judged by the results of the University Examinations the Head Master's work may be said to have been satisfactory. Since he has taken charge, the results have been satisfactory both in quantity and quality. A fair number of the taught and a large number of the candidates have always been successful.

CORRECTION OF EXERCISE.—It is to be regretted that adequate attention has not been paid to my instructions regarding the correction of exercises. As I pointed out a "mistake uncorrected is a mistake confirmed." No mistake should be left uncorrected. Besides, mistakes should not be merely counted but also weighed, and attention should be given to them in proportion to their gravity. The time at the dis-

posal of the boys should be taken note of, and only as much exercise should be set as may be thoroughly done by them; hurried work must be discouraged.

HEAD MASTER'S DIARY.—I showed the Head Master a copy of the diary kept by the Head Master of the Pirojpore school. A similar diary should be kept by him. His criticisms of the work of his assistants and the instructions given by him should be regularly written. A separate book should be kept for every quarter, at the end of which it may be called for by me for inspection. It will show how the Assistant Masters do their work, whether the Head Master properly supervises it, what instructions he gives and how far these are carried out.

PREPARATION OF TEACHERS.—The teachers as a body do not know much of the Art of Teaching. Unless they make a systematic study of the subject, they cannot make themselves much useful. The important works on the Art of Teaching should be purchased and these should be carefully studied by the teachers. , . The teachers must carefully prepare at home the lessons they have to give at school. No lesson, however simple, should be given without adequate preparation. The teacher's knowledge of the subject must not be confined to text-books, it should be far ahead of the class programme. Notes for class use should be carefully written, keeping the capacity of the class in view, and these should be clearly written and preserved for inspection.

CO-OPERATION BETWEEN TEACHERS AND TEACHERS, AND BETWEEN TEACHERS AND GUARDIANS.—It is essentially necessary that there should be unanimity and cordiality among all the teachers. They should teach boys ESPIRIT DE CORPS more by personal examples than by pre-

cepts. The good of the whole school and not merely of the class in his charge, should be in the heart of every teacher. They should heartily co-operate with one another and contribute to the success of the school as much and as best as each of them can. The relation between the Head Master and his assistants should be like that of an elder brother and his younger brothers. The former should be kind and considerate, but watchful and unsparing in making the latter do their duties, while the latter should be respectful and submissive, and they should promptly and willingly carry out instructions. If there be difference in any matter, it should be settled in a friendly talk in which things may be easily explained and not by strict enforcement on the one hand or active opposition on the other.

The co-operation of the guardians must be sought and secured. It should be remembered that boys are at school, under the teacher, only for 5 hours, while they are at home, with their guardians, for 19 hours. Unless both the teachers and the guardians co-operate much good cannot be expected. The class master should know the guardians of his pupils, should meet them as frequently as possible, should speak and write to them about the progress and behaviour of their wards.

Class Promotion.— Class promotion has not been judicious. Some boys have been promoted to classes for which they are not fit. This is to be regretted. It should be borne in mind that indiscriminate promotion of boys seriously tells upon the efficiency and discipline of a school. Hardly any good is done to unfit boys who are promoted to higher classes. But the good boys suffer; the presence of unfit boys in a class hampers its progress. I find in

some cases boys have been promoted simply because they have been in a class for two sessions, as if length of stay in a class is a sufficient reason for promotion. I think when a boy fails to qualify himself for promotion on two occasions, he proves his unfitness not once but twice and he must not be promoted to a higher class.

PHYSICAL EXERCISE.—I saw some boys at drill. They acquitted themselves fairly. The Drill Master seems to know his business well. He should bear in mind the object of school drill. Boys should learn prompt obedience to command, activity and agilitv in doing things, combination and co-oporation in simultaneous performances. They must not be permitted to do any exercise carelessly and slovenly. It should be seen that they concentrate their attention on the muscle or part of the body, the development of which is intended by a particular exercise. It should be remembered that it is for the sake of a sound mind that a sound body is required. The object of physical exercise is not to add to brute force, but to preserve the body in a healthy condition so that the mind may perform its function properly. Those boys who are exceptionally studious should invariably take part in physical exercise. The constitution of the boys should be taken into consideration in selecting exercises and games for them. As a very hard game or exercise may do harm to a weak constitution, all boys should not be required to undergo all kinds of exercises or to play all sorts of games.

RESULT OF CLASS EXAMINATION.—The result of my examination of the classes was not what it should have been. This seems to be chiefly due to want of good method of teaching and lack of proper supervision of the work of the teachers. . . English and other subjects have not

been taught according to conversational method, as instructed, and little use seems to be made of the Black-board in class-teaching. . .

I talked to the teachers at some length on the method of teaching different subjects. The difference between a scholar and a teacher should be always borne in mind. Mere academical attainments do not make a successful teacher. A schoolmaster may possess a sound knowledge of a subject, but he cannot be successful as a teacher unless he has the capacity and acquires the skill of communicating that knowledge to others. At home the teachers should thoroughly prepare the lessons and at school they should work like men and not like machines. They should take note of the temperament and capacity of the boys and suit their teaching to these. The exceptionally smart boys and the dullards should not be taught in the same manner. The conversational method should be invariably adopted; no lesson should be formally given until the subject-matter is well-talked over in the class. A subject should be intelligently taught with a view to develop the intelleciual faculties and not merely to cultivate the memory and to feed the mind wih a mass of ill-digested facts. A language is learnt more by speaking it and hearing it spoken than by the study of its vocabulary and grammar. Speaking in English by the boys among themselves and with the teachers should be issisted upon from Class VI. upwards, if not fro n a lower class. The direct method of teaching a foreign language should be tried in some of the classes.

It should be noted that we do not come every time to talk. Serious notice will be taken if the instructions given are disregarded. Teachers of some standing seem to be too wed-

ed to their old ways to take sufficient note of what they are told about modern methods. This cannot be tolerated. If a teacher be unwilling or unable to carry out instructions given him by his superiors, he must make room for a better man. It is hoped that in a matter of such vital importance--the proper education of their own children and their neighbour's children -- the managers will rise above all personal feelings, and the interests of the school, involving the interests of hundreds of boys, will not be sacrificed for the interests of particular individuals.

The following is the summary of a letter which M. Abdul Karim wrote to one of the officials under him who asked for his permission to inspect high schools in his circle :--

Camp Patuakhali,
12-2-11.

" . . . A better system of examination meant to be a searching test of knowledge has been introduced and it is intended that the old mechanical method of teaching which feeds the mind with facts that cannot be easily digested and cultivates the memory to an extent that is far from desirable, should give place to an intelligent method calculated to develop the intellectual faculties. But these changes cannot avail much unless our teachers and inspectors (teachers of teachers) also change. . . . You are perhaps aware that I have made the subject my special study, but so much light is being thrown on it by modern researches and so many new things are being pressed on our attention everyday that with all my efforts I find myself unable to keep abreast of the times.

So you see how studious and observant one must be to be up to date. My "Hints on School Management and Met hod of Teaching' was written about three years ago. Although it has been approved and is in use in different parts of India, I wish I had not written it then with my limited knowledge of the subject. I have learnt so many things after its publication that several parts of the book have to be rewritten in order to be really useful. Its first edition has been exhausted, and I am revising it for its second edition. Thus if an officer be not a constant and careful reader of the ever-increasing literature on the subject and if he has not his eyes and ears wide open, he cannot be very useful. Nothing is so fatal to the usefulness of an educational officer as self-sufficiency. If he thinks he knows all that is worth knowing, he will never learn many things which he should know. Unless I am satisfied that an officer under me realises the gravity of the situation and he is really alive to his responsibility, I feel much hesitation in entrusting him with the inspection of schools in my charge. . . . I think every officer engaged in the noble work of education should be animated by a high sense of duty and actuated by a solemn sense of responsiblity, and th e approbation of his conscience in having performed his duties to the best of his abilities should be his highest reward. . . . They should bear in mind that they hold in their hands the leading-strings of the nation and they can make or mar its future prospects. For, they have to mould the intellect, the conscience and the character of the future generations of their countrymen and country women. In fact no great intellectual

or moral change in the country can take place unless it is brought about by them. There is no other profession that affords greater opportunities of usefulness and there is no labour that is fraught with more momentuous results.... , The students of today will be the citizens of tomorrow, and the students all over the country taken together will from the nation. Thus the most responsible work of nation-building is in the hands of educational officers. The inspection of a school in order to be really useful must be thorough. I do not think a high school can be thoroughly inspected unless at least two or three days are devoted to it. A glance at the school records and a walk through the classes, putting a question here and a question there, is certainly not inspection. I am not at all in favour of such hurried inspection, which unnecessarily dislocates class work and leaves an undesirable impression on the minds of the teachers that defects may escape the notice of inspecting officers.''

It was but natural that examination such as that held by M. Abdul Karim on the occasion of his inspection of schools should so deeply impress the students examined that they remembered it throughout their life. On certain occasions some of those examined by him in schools were heard to refer, thirty or even forty years after, to the effect produced on them. Some time ago in a gathering to meet Pandit Madan Mohan Malavya at Birla park, M. Abdul Karim coming to know that the renowned Mr. Rajendra Prasad of Patna was present there, asked a gentleman to introduce him to Rajendra Babu. When he was approached, Rajendra Babu

stood up with folded hands and said "I remember Huzur examined me in the Chapra Zilla school." Khan Bahadur Azizul Huq, present Vice-chancellor of he Calcutta University, was heard to say, on more occasions than one, that he was not certain if he would have been given high education if M. Abdul Karim, after examining him in the Santipur Middle Madrasah, had not told his guardian how well he had acquitted himself at his examination and how desirable it was that he should be admitted into a high English school.

In December, 1938, M. Abdul Karim accidentally met at Madhupur Captain Dr. D. C. Majumdar. He told him that he would never forget how he was examined by him in the fifth class of the Netrokana high English school in 1902. But for that impressive examination, he said, neither he nor his brother, Mr. Surendra Chandra Majumdar, Professor of History, Presidency College, nor several others among whom was Mr. Sachindrakumar Roy, advocate High Court, could have learnt so well the subjects, particularly English, in which they were examined by him. In fact he said, the whole atmosphere of the school was changed by that one inspection and both teachers and students had learnt many things which they did not know before and would not have known after. The then Secretary to the school, Rai Nikhilnath Roy Bahadur, retired District Magistrate, held a meeting of the teachers and discussed with them the instructions given by the Inspector and insisted upon their following those instructions carefully. The good result attained by the school for some time at the university examination

was ascribed by Dr. Majumdar to this inspection of the school. He concluded what he had to say with the words "Sir, your name is still gratefully remembered throughout the Sub-division." Numerous are such statements made by those examined in schools by M. Abdul Karim and now occupying good positions in life.

On the occasion of his visits addresses were presented to M. Abdul Karim by some of the schools. The following is the summary of two addresses presented to him, one by a school in his jurisdiction and the other by a school at Kailashahar, out of his jurisdiction.

"Sir,

We, the members of the Managing Committee of the Baburhat H. E. School, beg to offer you our hearty and respectful welcome on the auspicious occasion of your first visit to our school.

As a veteran educationist, a worthy member of the Senate of the Calcutta University, a most active and energetic Inspector of Schools and an erudite scholar, your name has become a byword with those who are any way connected with the Education Department.... Every circular, that emanated from you, bears the mark of your reforming hand for which we have a profound respect. Your organisations of the conferences of of Deputy Inspectors, guardians and teachers have been the success they were sure to be, and these have had much salutary effects as will make your name endure.

Your solicitude for the welfare of the student community is evinced by the lively interest you always

take for the amelioration of their moral status. It is to be highly regretted that a considerable deterioration in the morals of the school population has been perceptible almost everywhere in this benighted Division. But the rare activity and strict vigilance, which you have been showing in your attemps to eradicate the evil, has excited the unstinted admiration of the intelligent public and it is hoped that ere long moral depravity among students will be a thing of the past. We hope and trust that your tenure of office will be a long and epoch-making one in the Division. . .

28th July, 1904.

The Members of the Managing Committee of "Radha-Kishore Institution," Kailashahar, Tripura, stated in their address "though situated in the hills, so far off from your jurisdiction, yet we none the less appreciate the value of the strict discipline and method introduced by you in the schools under your supervision, and the rare activity and vigilance shown by you to promote the existing moral condition of the student community and to help them to be honest and useful citizens."

Many correspondents of newspapers wrote from time to time in the strain of the following letter written to the Moslem Chronicle by a correspondent from Chuadanga :---

Maulvi Abdul Karim, B.A., has quite justified his appointment as Assistant Inspector of Muhammadan Education, Presidency and Orissa Divisions, by creating an interest among the Muhammadans of the place in the spread of English Education among them. In his late visit to this part of the District, his unique method

of examination has given satisfaction to the teachers as well as to the boys with whom his name has become a term of endearment. There is no difference of opinion as to his merits and ability with which he inspected several schools of the locality. The Muhammadan community is proud of having such an able officer in the Education Department, who spares no pains to pave the way for the improvement of Muhammadans in different branches of studies. It admits of no doubt that such a meritorious officer will prove an efficient hand in raising the status of the Muhammadans in the eyes of the Hindus. . . The Muhammadan community of this place through the medium of your esteemed journal conveys a vote of thanks to the Assistant Inspector for the lovely interest he takes in infusing a regenerating spirit into the society itself."

That Maulavi Abdul Karim's views regarding the prevailing system of education were appreciated by well-known educationists will be seen from the following remarks made by Sir P. C. Roy in an article on "The Bread problem and the unemployment of young Muslims" published in the twenty-first anniversary number of the "Mussalman." :—

"I cannot better conclude this article than in the words of Moulvi Abdul Karim, who has bestowed much thought and attention upon the subject and who very pertinently observed in his recent address at Narayanganj that "the present system of education, although in operation for a long time, has not made the cultivators better cultivators nor the artisans more efficient artisans than they were before. On the contrary, it has made

their condition worse by creating in them a distaste for manual labour and for their hereditary callings and mode of living and, what is more to be regretted, by fostering an artifical taste for fashions and fineries. Thus they accelerate rather than retard the decadence of indigenous industries and thus help to aggravate the economic difficulty of the country."

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CHAPTER X.

LAST PERIOD OF SERVICE—On the expiry of his leave, M. Abdul Karim, unwilling to go back to Chittagong, went to Dacca as Second Inspector of Schools and stayed there till his retirement in 1912. The last period of his service was rather uneventful and also unpleasant. Much of his time was taken up by enquiries regarding recognition of schools by the University and correspondence with the higher officers owing to differences with them. He had the misfortune of losing from time to time some of those who were very friendly to him. The premature death of Nawab Sir Ahsan Ullah and Sir John Woodburn and the rasignation of Sir Bamfylde Fuller proved detrimental to his interests. On his last posting to Dacca, he found a very friendly Director of Public Instruction in Mr Browning. But shortly after, Mr. Browning suddenly died and M. Abdul Karim had to come in contact with unsympathetic officers with whom he could not pull on well. In fact during the whole period of his service he was never in such a predicament. There was, however, one relieving thing, friendship with the late Nawab Sir Salimullah, who had great regard for him, and always addressed him as "Huzur" and never smoked in his presence. He used to see him when he had differences with his father and on succeeding to the Zamindary and the little on his father's death, he always consulted M. Abdul Karim not only in public affairs but also

in some of his private concerns. When he learnt of M. Abdul Karim's intention to retire early on account of differences with his superior officers, he gave him to understand that he would do all he could for him if he entered public life. When he heard of M. Abdul Karim's intention to make an endowment, he urged him to do the needful as soon as possible, so that it might not remain unfulfilled as in the case of a Zamindar of Barisal, who after making such an announcement did not give effect to it. All this was known to Khwaja Muhammad Azam, one of the senior surviving members of the Nawab family, who himself holds M. Addul Karim in highest esteem.

The only important public affair in which M. Abdul Karim took part during the last period of his service was the annual session of the All-India Mahomedan Educational Conference held at Dacca, in which his friend, Nawab Sir Salimullah, took a very prominent part in consultation with him. There he met not only some of those whose acquaintance he had made in 1900 at the Calcutta session of the Conference, but many other distinguished Muslims who came from different parts of India to lay the foundation of the Muslim League. As usual with him on such occasions he took an active part in the proceedings of the Conference.

In July 1912 all on a sudden M. Abdul Karim got seriously ill. One day for about fifteen hours he was speechless and not even a drop of water could be poured down his throat during that time. When he was in this state of coma, a rumour spread widely that he was dead and many people came to attend the funeral. The late Maulvi Matlub Ahmad told people that afte-

seeing the patient in that serious condition while he was going down, he met on the stairs the late Qazi Alauddin Ahmad, father-in-law of Nawabzada Latifur Rahman, who enquired of him when the funeral procession would start and was told that life was not yet extinct. Eighteen years after, when M. Abdul Karim was on a visit to Dacca, where he was invited by Mr. Abul Muzaffar Ahmad, retired District Judge, to preside over the annual meeting of the Islamia Education Trust and the prize-giving ceremony of the Islamia Education Trust High English school at Naraingunge, he took part in the funeral ceremony of the late Qazi Alauddin Ahmad. Before M. Abdul Karim was out of sick-bed, a Chittagorg gentleman insisted upon seeing him. When called to the bed-side he related that he was coming from Chittagong and when he reached Chandpur, he saw in an open space, near the station, a large gathering of Muslims in a praying posture. Curiosity took him there and he learnt that M. Abdul Karim was dead and they had assembled there to pray for him. He also took part in the prayer. On reaching Dacca, however, he learnt that M. Abdul Karim was alive and could not resist the desire of seeing him. Reports came from Goila and some other places that the schools there were closed in honour of M. Abdul Karim's death. All this shows how very popular he was.

Maulvi Abdul Karim's early retirement from Government Service was referred to in eulogistic terms by several newspapers. The following is a quotation from the "Mussalman."

"The retirement of Moulvi Abdul Karim, Assistant Inspector of Schools, Dacca Division, has removed a notable figure from the ranks of educational officers, belonging to the Provincial Service. He was first appointed, in July 1886, as an assistant Master in the Anglo-Persian Department of the Calcutta Madrassah whence he was transferred to Dacca as an Assistant Inspector of Schools for Mohamedan Education, in the year 1890. The last appointment he held is well-known to the reader. Throughout his career Moulvi Abdul Karim discharged his duties to the complete satisfaction of the Government and the public. Able, independent and pains-taking, Moulvi Abdul Karim won the golden opinion of the community to which he belongs. His services to the cause of education, and specially of Mohamedan education, have been immense. His recommendations to Government, regarding reforms in education and the special needs and requirements of the Mohamedans, were generally accepted, and most of his official superiors had a high opinion of him. Now that he has retired from official life, we hope he will devote the rest of his days to the service of the community, and his mature experience will, we trust, contribute to the educational progress and advancement of t Mussalmans. Though retired from Government service Moulvi Abdul Karim is not so old as to be unfit for work and we fervently hope he will lend his services to the community with readiness and alacrity. The Mussalman—Sept. 11, 1914.

Even while M. Abdul Karim was in that critical state all hope of his survival was not given up as two

eminent spiritualists had given assurance that he would not die. The late Ahsan Ali Shah Sahib of Musarikhola seeing him in that condition said that there was no fear of death. M. Abdul Karim's MURSHED, the late Maulana Ghulam Salmani Sahib, sent word from Calcutta that the crisis was over. As he himself suddenly died within a few days, M. Abdul Karim has all along been under an impression that, as he loved him dearly, he might have performed Salb,* and this might have brought about fatality. For about two months M. Abdul Karim could not stir out of the sick-bed. He was reduced to a mere skeleton, and he had to crawl for some time before he was in a position to stand. The late Nawab Sir Salimullah was in much anxiety for M. Abdul Karim. When he heard that M. Abdul Karim was out of danger, he thought that he might have to proceed on long leave. So he expressed a desire to hold a conference regarding Muhammadan Education before M. Abdul Karim left Dacca. A conference was held in his sick-room, when he was not in a position to stir out of it. Besides, Nawab Sir Salimullah, the late Nawab Nawab Ali Chaudhury Mr (now Nawab Bahadur) Abdul Karim Ghuznavi and other leading Muslims present at the time at Dacca, attended the meeting, at which several

*Salb is a spiritual exercise by which one may draw upon oneself the ailment of another, as was done by Babar when Humayun was seriously ill. If performed with due care and caution, there is no risk, but any slight mistake may endanger the life of the performer.

matters connected with Muhammadan Education were discussed in M. Abdul Karim's presence.

On recovery Maulavi Abdul Karim proceeded on furlough and went to Ranchi, where he had purchased a large plot of land. During his stay there he built a fine house, which was christened "Peace Cottage," where he thought of enjoying peace after a strenuous life of action. As will be seen from what followed, he was not destined to enjoy a peaceful life. On the expiry of his furlough he retired on pension. Thus ended Maulvi Abdul Karim's official career at the age of 49 years. Finding the climate of Ranchi agreeable, he thought of passing there the remaining days of his life. But destined, as he was, to play an active part in the social and political life of Bengal, he could not stay there long. His retired life at Ranchi was enlivened by association with some friends, such as the late Mr. Jyotirindranath Tagore, brother of Poet Tagore, the late Mr P. N. Bose, father-in-law of Sir B. L. Mittra, the late Babu Kantibhushan Sen, the late Babu Kalipada Ghosh, the late Babu Jagadish Chandra Roy, the late Dr. J. N. Bose, the late Sir Fakhruddin, the late Khan Bahadur Muhiuddin Ahmad and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who had to reside at Ranchi for some time.

As will be seen from Part II. of his biography, Maulavi Abdul Karim was busy during his short stay at Ranchi in forming plans for social and political work to which he subsequently devoted himself for about a quarter of a century.

PART II.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SERVICE.

CHAPTER I.

ENDOWMENT OF RUPEES FIFTY THOUSAND.

After his retirement from government service the first thing to which Maulavi Abdul Karim devoted his attention was the endowment he was thinking for some time to make. As for about three years he could not leave Ranchi on account of ill-health and being engaged in building a residential garden house at Morhabadi, the best place in the northern suburb of Ranchi, it was in March, 1916, that he came to Calcutta and had the *Wakf Namah* drawn up by the late Mr. A. Rasul, Bar-at-Law, and the late Prince Sultan-i-Alam, Attorney-at-Law. Two properties, 13/1, Wellesley Square and 11/5, Karaya Bazar Road (at present North Range) worth about Rupees Fifty thousand and yielding an annual income of about Rs. 2,500/- were endowed. After payment of Government revenue, Municipal taxes and collection charges and necessary repairs, the income was to be spent as follows :— "One-half of income is to be devoted to the promotion of Muhammadan education and the other half to Islamic work. One-half of the former, that is one-fourth of the

total income, is to be expended for the benefit of *bona fide* Muhammadan students of Sylhet. Out of the amount to be devoted to the promotion of Muhammadan education a number of scholarships shall be awarded to deserving Muhammadan students, who after receiving sufficient Arabic education and after passing the Matriculation examination are desirous of prosecuting further education in a College, provided that if at any time for lack of deserving candidates the whole of this amount cannot be spent then stipends shall be awarded to candidates for teachership or students reading for technical or engineering or medical examinations or preparing for the M. A. examination. Provided also that, if funds permit, assistance may also be given occasionally to School, College and Madrasah students for the purchase of books or for payment of examination fees. In administering the said fund the Mutawalli or the Committee shall satisfy himself or themselves that the persons to whom assistance is given are really in poor circumstances and are of good character and that they from time to time make satisfactory progress in their studies and the recipients of such stipends shall be given to understand that such stipends will be in the nature of *Qarz-i-Hasna,* and that they shall be required to contribute to the fund of the said Wakf property or to similar funds when they shall be in a position to do so, and the other half of the income of the said Wakf property shall be spent for the promotion and furtherance of Islamic work, *viz.,* for training religious teachers and preachers, for composition and translation of religious books and tracts, for aiding Qoran and other religious schools, and generally for Islamic Mission work . . . and should not spend any amount out of the said fund on

anything that may be contrary to the doctrines of the Hanafii sect."

The following letter was issued for holding a meeting to thank Maulvi Abdul Karim for his munificent endowment :—

Calcutta, the 9th April, 1916.

DEAR SIR,

A public meeting of the Mussulmans of Calcutta will take place on Wednesday, the 12th April at 6-30 P.M. at the Overtoun Hall, 86, College Street, under the presidency of the Honourable Nawab Syed Nawab Ally Chowdhury to thank Moulvi Abdul Karim for his munificent Endowment of Rs. 50,000 for Mahomedan Education and Islamic Work.

Your faithfully,

SERAJUL ISLAM
A. K. FAZLUL HUQ
A. RASUL
NAJMUDDIN AHMAD

A largely-attended meeting, in the organisation of which Nawabzada A. F. M. Abdul Ali took an active part, was held in the Overtoun Hall and speeches were delivered by some of the gentlemen present thanking Maulvi Abdul Karim for his munificent endowment. One of the speakers, the late Hakim Muhammad Shabbir, is said to have remarked that the Maulvi Sahib deserves more credit than even the late Haji Muhammad Mohsin because the former has several children while the latter had none.

The following are some of the remarks made by newspapers regarding the Wakf :

"Maulavi Abdul Karim's contemplated endowment of Rs. 50,000 has now become an accomplished fact and as might

be expected, the cause of Mahomedan education in Sylhet, the land of his birth, receives a legitimate place in its dispensation. Maulvi Abdul Karim was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth and does not surely rank with the possessors of long purses and broad acres as they go in the country. On the contrary, he perhaps parts with his hard-earned limited resources depriving his successors of a considerable portion of the heritage to which they naturally aspired. For this reason if for no other this princely gift has a significance all its own and invests its donor with a character for piety and philanthropy so rare in Bengal and Assam. Sylhet is proud to claim in Maulavi Abdul Karim a distinguished son and a great benefactor of his fellowmen." *The Eastern Chronicle,* 14-3-16.

"Retired Inspectors of Schools are not ordinarily endowed with a superfluity of the good things of the world. Their pay never rises beyond the modest limit, so that usually they cannot save much during their service. To the credit of Bengal, however, it must be acknowledged that one retired Hindu Inspector of Schools had left nearly the whole of his savings, amounting to over one lakh of rupees, for the encouragement of Sanskrit education and the Bishwanath Chatuspathi will certainly perpetuate the memory of its Brahmin founder, the late illustrious Bhudeb Mookerji. And now, Moulvi Abdul Karim, another retired Inspector of Schools, has followed Bhudev's example by making an endowment of half a lakh of Rupees for the promotion of Mahomedan education and for carrying on Islamic religious work. The Mahomedan community of Bengal has produced many Nawabs, but we venture to think that this retired Inspector of Schools has proved a greater benefactor to his co-religionists than dozens of Nawabs and other Mahomedan titled personages put together." *The Hindoo Patriot,* 11-3-16.

In his presidential address delivered at the Annual Conference of the Sylhet Moslem Students' Association, held at Sunamganj in May, 1917, the Hon'ble Maulavi (now Sir) Syed Mumammad Saadullah, Ex-premier of

Assam, made the following remarks regarding Maulavi Abdul Karim's endowment :—

"I think, with your Association, a new dawn is coming over Moslem Sylhet, and another hopeful sign of the times is the princely donation of Maulvi Abdul Karim, one of your greatest sons, a name that any country and society may be proud of, for the cause of Moslem education. A few more Anjumans like yours, and a few more examples of the magnanimity shown by Maulvi Abdul Karim and the dark night for Sylhet will be over. I wish many of our aristocracy and middle class gentry will follow with alacrity the good use of money made by the learned Maulvi. Gentlemen, in the name of the Moslem community of the province, let me offer our heartfelt thanks to him for the magnificent gift to Sylhet, and in return let me say *Jazak-Allah fiddarain khaira* "May he be recompensed by the Lord in both the worlds." The seed which the noble soul has sown has already germinated, nay fructified, and another Moslem gentleman from my valley, Maulvi Abdul Majid of Gauhati, has endowed a comparatively considerable property for the upkeep of a Maktab, wherein hundreds of youngsters are getting free religious primary education."—*The Light.*

Maulavi Muhammad Yaqub Khan, Editor of the "Light" of Lahore, writes in the "Light" of March 8, 1935 :—

"*A Grand Old Man.* A very inspiring personality from whom I received great encouragement, sympathy and help was the well-known Maulvi Abdul Karim, M.L.C. Those who know anything of Bengal will appreciate that I have fitly described this venerable old gentleman, whose silvery Islamic beard and general Islamic fervour are reminiscent of that great school of Sir Syed Ahmad, Hali and Shibli, as the Grand Old Man of Calcutta. There is hardly any public activity in Bengal in which you do not find Maulvi Abdul Karim figure. If you go to Calcutta and come back without meeting this elderly patriarchal personality you may take it that you have missed half the public life of Calcutta. Having retired as an Inspector of Schools, Maulvi

Sahib has devoted not only his old worn-out limbs to the service of his people but also the hoarding of a life-time. He has made *waqf* of Rs. 50,000, the proceeds of which are spent on the education of the poor, on the relief of the orphans and the widows and on Ishaat-i-Islam. Here is an old man who should serve as a model and inspiration for many a youth of Islam."

The following notice was published in newspapers when the Wakf deed was about to be prepared :—

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR ARABIC SCHOLARS.

Ten scholarships of Rs. 10 each will be awarded to poor students who after receiving Arabic education passed the Matriculation Examination and have joined or intend to join a College with a view to prepare themselves for the I.A. Examination. The scholarships, for the present, will be tenable for two years on the usual conditions of satisfactory progress and good behaviour. Half of these scholarships will be reserved for the inhabitants of the district of Sylhet.

Applications should be submitted to the undersigned on or before the 15th December, 1915.

Calcutta,
The 10th Nov., 1915.

ABDUL KARIM,
26, South Road, Entally,
Calcutta.

At first there was not the required number of Maulavi candidates and some of the scholarships were awarded to Arts and Science course B.A. and M.A. students. Seeing that some of the Maulavies availing themselves of Maulavi Abdul Karim's scholarships took University degrees and are now holding responsible posts in Government Service, the number of Maulavi candidates for the scholarships has increased to such an extent that the value of the scholarships had to be reduced and even then all the candidates cannot be awarded scholarships. So, as a rule, stipends are not awarded to other students.

Some of them are, however, given donations for purchase of books and for payment of university examination fees.

More than rupees twenty-thousand has already been given to poor Muslim students only to prosecute their studies. If even half of this amount had been refunded in accordance with the stipulation of *Qarzi-Hasna,* a large number of poor students could have been aided. It is to be regretted that although some of those who received assistance from the Wakf Fund are now in good position and drawing good pay, they have not contributed anything to the Wakf Fund, in spite of repeated reminders. The students of Bengal are more to blame in this respect than the students of Sylhet; while about twenty-five per cent of the latter have refunded what they drew from the Wakf Fund, not even two per cent of the former have done so.

Proposal to offer a title.—Shortly after the Endowment was made the Hon'ble Mr. P. C. Lyon, then one of the members of the Executive Council, Bengal, who had a good opinion of Maulavi Abdul Karim, as will be seen from his letters in the following Chapter III, spoke highly of M. Abdul Karim and his endowment when presiding over the prize distribution of the Calcutta Madrasah. He then told his colleague, the late Nawab Sir Shamsul Huda, that it was desirable to confer some title on Maulavi Abdul Karim. A few days after this, Nawab Shamsul Huda met Maulavi Abdul Karim at an evening party and took him to his place. There he enquired of him if he would like to have some title. "Which title", enquired Maulavi Abdul Karim. The reply was "Khan Bahadur." Maulavi Abdul Karim said "no", and the Nawab said, "I thought so," In course of

the conversation that followed Maulavi Abdul Karim told the Nawab that as the title of Khan Bahadur was conferred long before on some of those who were at one time his subordinates and also on some who were his pupils, conference of this title at his age would be no honour to him. Mr. Lyon is said to have then told Nawab Shamsul Huda that a higher title, that of "Nawab," might be conferred, but he did not do anything further in the matter.

Building of Mosques.—While in service M. Abdul Karim built, at his own cost, a mosque at Pathantola, in Sylhet, the village where his family had settled after the destruction by fire of the ancestral residential quarters and after their removal from Shaikhghat. M. Abdul Karim resided there until he passed the University Entrance Examination.

He had another mosque built, by raising subscriptions, at Bariatu, the village next to Morhabadi, at Ranchi, where he stayed for some years after his retirement.

Another mosque, built by subscriptions raised by him, is at Karaya Bazar, in Calcutta, in the neighbourhood of one of his endowed properties, where he resided for some time.

In order to commemorate his late father-in-law, Maulana Hafiz Muhammad Hatim Sahib, M. Abdul Karim had the name of the Gaburteki Primary School changed into "Hatimia Maktab" and provided it with a decent building. On the death of his wife the people of Gaburteki, the birth-place of her father, established there the "Ayesha Memorial Madrasah" in commemoration of what she had done for them.

CHAPTER II.

EVIDENCE BEFORE ROYAL COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SERVICES IN INDIA.

During his stay at Ranchi, Maulavi Abdul Karim utilised his time in giving expression to his views regarding certain important educational, social and political subjects. One of the first subjects he had to deal with was the Educational Service, regarding which he gave evidence before the Royal Commission on Public Services in India, presided over by Lord Islington. He was asked to submit a memorandum first. When it was printed the Government of Bengal, if our information is correct, thought it objectionable and asked the Commission to omit M. Abdul Karim's name from the list of those who were selected to give evidence. The late Mr. Gokhale and Sir Theodore Morrison, two of the members of the Commission, who had read the Memorandum, raised objection to this, and M. Abdul Karim was called on behalf of the Commission. Coming to know of all this, several gentlemen, such as the late Dr. J. N. Bose, Mr. (now Khan Bahadur) Azizul Huq, went to hear M. Abdul Karim's evidence. Searching questions were put to him by Lord Islington, the late Mr. Macdonald (afterwards Premier of the British Empire), the late Mr. Gokhale and other members of the Commission. Those who heard him were of opinion that he had acquitted himself

creditably. The following is a summary of M. Abdul Karim's Memorandum :—

Memorandum

Method of Recruitment.

It is not known whether efforts are made, to the desired extent, to get the best graduates of the English and other European Universities for the Imperial branch of the Educational Service. If there is any service that requires the most judicious selection of officers it is the Educational Service on account of the far-reaching consequences of the important and responsible work that has to be done by its members. It is a matter for enquiry whether the manner in which officers are at present selected for the Imperial branch has any way affected the efficiency of that service. People seem to think that there has been a perceptible deterioration in respect of the various qualifications that go to make successful educationists. It may be ascertained by proper enquiry how many officers, at present in the service, are of the stamp of Messrs. Woodrow, Sutcliff, Tawney, Croft, Clarke, Gough and others, and how far they possess the high academic attainments, enthusiasm for the profession, zeal for the work, devotion to duty, ready accessibility and sympathy with those placed in their charge, which characterised the officers named above.

It may be noted that natives of Bengal have now made much progress in education, and some of them have greatly distinguished themselves in some of the important branches of learning. A Bose or a Ray or a Seal is well able to hold his own with the alumni of any European university in the particular branch of learning which he has made the subject of his special study and research. Such being the case it is desirable that only such reputed European scholars should be appointed to the Imperial branch of the Educational Service as, by their attainments and devotion to duty, may be in a position to command the respect and regard of the Indian officers with whom they may have to work. Unless their superiority in all these respects is established

an impression may naturally gain ground that it is by virtue of their colour that they occupy their responsible posts to the exclusion of the natives of the soil. One of the reasons for appointing European scholars to the Educational Service in India, even if qualified natives of the country are available, seems to be that they are intended to serve as models of a high standard of efficiency, worthy of imitation and emulation. Unless this purpose is served there can be hardly any justification for their appointment if there be, in the field, qualified candidates who are natives of India.....

System of Training and Probation.

I am not aware whether the members of the Imperial branch of the Educational Service get any training before they enter it. From what is seen of their work in the beginning of their service it seems that like the members of the other branches of the service they do not receive any training worth the name. Unlike the members of other services, who are not entrusted with any important work until they get well-trained, the officers of the Education Department come to their work, which is perhaps the most responsible, without any training for it. The teaching profession is supposed, it seems, not to need earnest study and painstaking practice to learn it, and a good scholar is presumed to be necessarily a good teacher. University degrees are consequently considered the only requisite qualification for a teacher. Thus one who is a student to-day is found to be a teacher to-morrow; he goes direct from the college bench to the teacher's chair, and subsequently learns what little he can of the art of teaching at the cost of his pupils..... Measures recently taken for the provision of buildings and furniture and for the appointment of a larger number of inspecting officers before supplying an adequate number of trained teachers, seem to have given rise to some misapprehension. Some people have taken an uncharitable view of the intention of Government, supposing that the increase in expenditure for education is meant more for show than for really furthering the cause of sound education. Adoption of necessary measures for the supply of an adequate

number of good teachers and for improving their prospects will remove any such misapprehension. No teacher or Inspector should go to his work unless and until he receives the requisite training.

A number of teachers should be specially selected and trained for the work of headmasters. Their training should be somewhat different from that of other teachers. The headmaster besides being an efficient teacher, must be a capable administrator and a strict disciplinarian. All teachers cannot be expected to possess all these qualifications. But at present the presumption seems to be that almost every teacher is fit to be a headmaster. Seniority regulates promotion and, as a rule, the senior assistant master, if there is nothing serious against him, is appointed headmaster, without inquiry as to whether he possesses the special qualifications required for the post. The result has been that the headmasters of our schools (barring honourable exceptions) do not possess the requisite qualifications. Have we any headmaster like the headmasters of Rugby and Harrow? If not, why? Cannot the natives of India make as good headmasters as those veteran educationists, even if they get the necessary training and suitable opportunities? These are questions that should engage the serious attention of the authorities as well as of the people.....

The inspecting officers, who have to deal with a much larger number of people than headmasters and principals, should be selected with very great care and given a thorough training. No officer should be entrusted with the responsible work of inspection until he learns how to do it properly and unless he possesses exceptional power of discrimination, capacity to command and control, and unless he is tactful, considerate, sympathetic and easily accessible. An Inspector's work may be the heaviest or lightest possible just as he chooses to make it; he may be so very absorbed in his legitimate work that he may have no time to think much of anything else, or he may take it so lightly as to have ample time for many things more—for shooting, picnicing, hunting coins and inscriptions, searching for zoological curiosities, etc. If an Inspector is to properly inspect schools, carefully scrutinising the records, thoroughly examining the classes, giving

useful instructions to teachers, if he is to hear, after his inspection, what the teachers and the boys may have to say, to hold conferences of teachers and guardians at suitable opportunities, to check the work of his subordinates and to teach them how they are to inspect schools, where is the time to think of anything else? If, on the other hand, he glances through the records merely with a view to get some figures, walks through the classes putting a question here and a question there, and noting whether the rooms are kept clean and the furniture are in order, dashes off a few lines of remarks embodying statistics rather than criticisms and instructions, declines to meet teachers and refuses to grant interviews to guardians and others, why should he not find time for anything for which he may take a fancy? I need hardly say that an inspecting officer should devote all his time, attention, and energies to the performance of his legitimate duties..... . .Formerly no one was appointed an Inspector of Schools until he had been in the country for a sufficient length of time, got acquainted with the ways and manners of the people, proved an efficient teacher and strong administrator. Such were Messrs. Woodrow, Croft, Bellet, Martin, Garret, Pope and others who had long been in the country and had made their mark in the service before they were appointed Inspectors.

Female education has made very little progress in this country. Although the present educational system has been in operation for about half a century only a very small percentage of female population of school-going age are under instruction and the majority of those who are at school, belong to the primary stage. If progress is to be made at this regrettably slow rate it will take ,I am afraid, centuries to get the females of this country educated to the desired extent..... .....The appointment of a number of ladies possessing high academic attainments as Inspectresses and Assistant Inspectresses of schools does not seem to be necessary for the present. There are not many girls' schools that require inspection by higher inspecting officers.... ..... Inspecting officers rarely succeed in getting new schools established, though they can easily kill old ones. It is Indian

officers who have ready access to the people, can talk freely with them and can convince them of the necessity of educational institutions, who sometimes succeed in inducing people to open new schools. The appointment of educated Indian ladies, who know the real requirements of their countrywomen, and not that of European ladies, is therefore likely to further the cause of female education in this country.

Female education should be such as to meet the requirements of a nation. Higher education is perhaps not the ideal education for Indian girls, who should be thoroughly well-grounded in such subjects as may be essentially necessary for them after they leave schools. A thorough knowledge of the three R's, of hygiene, sewing, cooking and care of infants, is far more useful to them than a university degree which, in some cases, proves to be a mere academic accomplishment. The education of our girls should develop their womanly nature and aptitude so as to make them good wives and good mothers.

At a critical time like this when some of the students seem to be getting out of hand and when measures are likely to be misjudged and motives misconstrued, exceptional tact and caution have to be exercised by the educational officers. Any ill-advised measure or hasty action on their part may create a situation which it may be difficult to save. The teachers can do much to improve the present state of things, as no great moral or intellectual change in the country can take place unless it is brought about by them. It is essentially necessary, therefore, that all possible steps should be taken to staff the educational institutions with the most efficient, tactful and sympathetic teachers.

The success of the proposed Residential Universities chiefly depends upon the appointment of an efficient staff of Professors. The educational institutions in this country have all along been of the residential type, the close association of pupils and professors being considered essential both for progress in learning and formation of character. The distinguished professors of old were not only reputed scholars but also exceptionally pious men who, by their character and conduct, could influence the rising generation. If the proposal for the establishment of Residential

Universities has not met with an enthusiastic reception in India it is because the people have misgiving as to the kind of professors by whom they will be staffed. Naturally parents desire that the education of their children should not interfere with their traditions and usage, manners and customs. It is thought there may be risk in the close association of Indian boys and European Professors. From what I heard of the late Mr. Beck and saw of Mr. Arnold at Aligarh I have reason to think that European Professors may accommodate themselves to local circumstances and meet the requirements, if they so desire. Popularity of the missionary colleges, in spite of the teaching of Christian religion, is due largely to the great interest taken by their professors in the welfare of their pupils and to the careful deference shown by them to the manners and customs of the country. The existing relation of the college staff with their pupils perhaps leaves much to be desired. To ensure the popularity of the proposed Universities it will have to be improved to an appreciable extent.

Conditions of Service and Salary.

The good of our boys, the well-being of society, the interests of Government and the mental and moral progress of the country require that our educational institutions should be under the guidance of the best and the wisest scholars. But when so many paths of wealth and emoluments are open the best minds cannot be won to an office so responsible and laborious as that of teaching without sufficient inducements. The cost of living is gradually rising and the spirit of self-sacrifice, which characterised the teachers of old, whose motto was "plain living and high thinking", is now-a-days scarcely met with. Instances such as that of a Gokhale, with all the advantages of a towering genius, serving his college on a very moderate salary for eighteen long years, are very rare.

It would be superfluous to say that the educational officers are not adequately paid like the members of other services. Consequently those who can manage to enter other services do not care to come to the Educational Service, and even some of those

who failing to get anything better, accept appointments in our schools and colleges, look upon the teacher's post as a stepping-stone to something better. After serving for some time when they learn something of the Art of Teaching and begin to be really useful, they betake themselves to other posts or professions that offer better pay and prospects. It is a matter for enquiry how many officers left the Educational Service after having joined it, and why. I need hardly say that it is most desirable that the pay of the educational officers should be raised and their prospects bettered.

Such Limitations as Exist in the Employment of Non-Europeans and the Working of the Existing System of Division of Services into Imperial and Provincial.

In most of the other important services qualified natives of India are being gradually appointed to high posts to which they were never admitted before. Not to speak of other appointments, qualified Indians are being appointed members of even His Majesty's Privy Council and of the Secretary of States Council in England and Executive Councils in India. But by a strange irony of fate, Indian members of the Educational Service in India are not only not getting any fresh concessions but are being gradually deprived of what they all along enjoyed since the creation of the Department of Education. At first there was only one superior service to which qualified natives of India, such as Babus Prasanna Kumar Sarbadhikary, Bhudeb Mukherjee and others, were freely admitted. When a larger number of Indians began to qualify themselves for the superior service, it was ruled that the pay of the Indian members of that service would be two-thirds of the full pay drawn by its European members. Some deserving Indians, whose qualifications were even superior to those of some of their colleagues, thus suffered by the introduction of this rule. Some time after a Provincial Service was organised and Indians educated in Europe were included in this service. Distinguished Indian graduates of European Universities were thus practically debarred from getting into the Indian Service.

The Education Commission after much investigation had come to the conclusion that a fair proportion of the Inspectorates and Principalships should be held by Indians of approved merit and it was in pursuance of this policy that 4 out of 7 posts of Inspector and 5 out of 8 posts of Principal were held by distinguished Indians. It is not known why all on a sudden it was decided that no member of the Provincial Service, however high his attainments and satisfactory the record of his services might be, was to be appointed any longer to the post of Divisional Inspector of schools—a post which was held from time to time by several Indian officers with much credit. To the utter surprise of all concerned a retrospective effect was given to this rule, and members of the Provincial Service, who had been already Inspectors of Schools, were replaced by members of the Indian Service. This perhaps is unprecedented in the history of Services. When a rule like this comes into force it applies only to future appointments and not to appointments made in the past. If it is ruled that natives of India are no longer to be appointed High Court Judges will those who are already on the Bench be replaced? This was actually done in the case of Indian Inspectors.

Had not the post of the Principal of the Calcutta Madrasah been reserved for Europeans, qualified natives of India might have held it like the Principalship of the Sanskrit College. Distinguished Arabic scholars like Messrs Springer, Lees and Blochman held, from time to time, the post of Principal of the Madrasah. When such men became rare the post might have been thrown open to qualified natives of India as was done in the case of the Sanskrit College. But this has not yet been done, and the result has been that some of those who recently held the post did not possess the requisite qualifications. Dr. Hœrnle was a reputed Sanskrit scholar and he might have well adorned the chair of Principal of a Sanskrit College, but he long held the post of Principal of an Arabic College although he did not possess any knowledge of Arabic. Others, such as Messrs Hill, Rowe, James and Chapman, who held the post from time to time, had perhaps no pretension to a knowledge of any oriental language. Lately after a good deal of search for a competent man

a Hebrew scholar has been appointed Principal of the Madrasah, who for want of a knowledge of Arabic, Urdoo and Persian, has to talk with his pupils and professors, if my information is correct, through the medium of an interpreter.

On repeated representations from the Muhammadan community the post of an Assistant Director of Public Instruction for Muhammadan Education has been created. This also has been reserved for members of the Indian Service. If my information is correct, the post had to go abegging for some time; failing to get the services of an oriental scholar, the post was offered to some members of the Indian Service, who did not see their way to accept it. At last an officer has been appointed to the post, the principal duty of which, I understand, is to inspect Maktabs and Madrasahs and to take steps for the furtherance of Muhammadan Education. As far as I am aware this officer has been in the country for a short time during which he had nothing to do with the Muhammadans and the complicated problem of their education. Perhaps he is not even acquainted with the alphabets of Urdu, Persian and Arabic languages through the medium of which instruction is imparted in Maktabs and Madrasahs which it will be his duty to reorganise. It is unnecessary to multiply instances and it is most unpleasant to comment on them. Suffice it to say that the members of the Provincial Service have a long tale of grievances to tell. The sooner these grievances are removed the better. What can be more discouraging and disappointing to the members of a service than what has been stated above? Is it possible, with such grievances as these always in their mind, to work with heart?

If I have expressed myself rather strongly regarding certain matters it is because I feel very keenly about them. Besides, perhaps it would not have been proper to refrain from stating fully and frankly all facts which, I think, it is the object of the Commission to elicit.

Ranchi,
The 17th October, 1913. } ABDUL KARIM.

The reorganization of the Educational Service by which the prospects of Indian officers of the Department were appreciably bettered, seems to have been based on the above mentioned memorandum.

CHAPTER III.

QUESTION OF KHILAFAT.

Finding that a good deal of misapprehension was prevailing regarding the relation of the Indian Muslims to their Khalifa, the Sultan of Turkey, M. Abdul Karim wrote some letters, of which the following are summaries :—

Ranchi, the 10th November, 1914.

To

THE HON'BLE MR. P. C. LOYN, C.S.I.

SIR,

I hope you will kindly excuse the liberty I am taking in writing to you certain things regarding the attitude of my co-religionists at this critical time. I have read with much regret some of the letters and speeches published in the newspapers..... Turkey's ill-advised decision to break her neutrality has placed the helpless Muhammadans of India in an extremely delicate, nay, critical position. Whatever may be the fate of Turkey it is certain that my ill-fated co-religionists will have to suffer seriously unless they succeed in saving the situation by their conduct. That the Muhammadans of India, as a body, have all along been sincerely loyal to the British Crown, is an admitted fact. As their loyalty has not been called in question it were well if it had not been so prominently paraded at this time in the press and on the platform. I cannot persuade myself to believe that English educated people, as a body, can afford to do anything that is likely to embarrass the authorities. It is the masses about whom there need be some misgiving. It cannot be said for certain that in this crisis the feelings of some of the bigoted Mussalmans, such as those who caused the Shambazar riot or created the Cawnpore

disturbance, will not get the better of their discretion. These people are of such an excitable nature that they lose their head whenever their religious susceptibilities are hurt in the least, and getting out of control commit undreamt-of excesses without premeditation, quite unmindful of the consequence.....Although it has been a master-stroke of statesmanship to announce that our holy places will be immune from molestation by Christian armies, some credulous people seem to be thinking that the Christian armies, in order to stagger Turkey and force her to submit, are going to occupy the holy places, and that certain unscrupulous persons have been engaged to prepare the mind of the Muhammadans for such a catastrophe by previously talking to them on the subject. I think, it is time to stop over-zealous people from creating mischief by talking wildly, otherwise there might be trouble.

There are certain facts which should not be overlooked :—

(1) The Muhammadans of India have for centuries regarded the Turkish Empire as their own and looked with veneration upon its sovereign as their Khalifa and the protector of their holy places. Perhaps it is not generally known that every Friday in every mosque in India and elsewhere mention is made of the Sultan of Turkey in the *Khuthba* or Sermon and prayers are offered for the safety and prosperity of his empire.

(2) The Turks are fighting perhaps because they cannot help it, having been "hypnotised" by German influence. Whether waged by the young or old Turks, whether it is secular or holy, it is a war between Christians and Musalmans.

(3) The Turks are fighting their old inveterate enemies, the Russians, and it is a most unfortunate coincidence that the English, who so long helped them against their enemies, should now be in alliance with them.

I am afraid these things could not be withheld from the masses who are perhaps already in possession of them in a much exaggerated form. Such being the case, naturally they sympathise with their co-religionists in the trouble they have brought upon themselves. To try to compel them not to do this is likely to be as futile as Canute's command to the tidal waves. What some

common people are thinking of the despatch of Indian troops to the front and of the realisation of money for the war relief fund, may be taken as an instance of how things are misunderstood by these fools. It is being said, I have been told, that because all the British troops have been annihilated by the Germans, Indian troops have been sent for, and as all the money in the British Treasury has been exhausted, money is being raised from the people of India; so miserable is the plight of the British people that anything in cash or kind paid by the poorest of the poor, is being accepted.

It would have been well if instead of being over-zealous in making declaration of loyalty and in talking of the viciousness of the Turks, the feeling of patriotism, the sense of self-interest and the instinct of self-preservation, which are far more potent factors than anything else in swaying human action, were appealed to. It is in fact a question of life and death, of national existence and national annihilation. If at this critical time the Indian Musalmans do not conduct themselves as they should, they are sure to lose what they are now enjoying under the fostering care and protection of the benign Government—civic rights, educational facilities, official emoluments and perhaps even religious liberty. Deprived of these what will be their position? Perhaps that of hewers of wood and drawers of water. These are the things that should be quietly but clearly explained and forcibly impressed on those regarding whose conduct there might be misgiving. It is not the Nawabs, the Khan Bahadoors, the England-returned people (who have but little influence with the bigoted Musalmans) who can do this, but the pious Maulanas, Maulavis, Mianjis and Imams, who command the confidence and esteem of these people. They should be requisitioned at this time and requested to go about quietly among these people and speak seriously and earnestly to them. The Friday assemblies at mosques may also be availed of, where advisable, for the purpose. As the most vital interests of the Muhammadan community are at stake, I humbly hope there will be no misconception on account of doubtful representations, but all necessary steps will be taken to detect and nip in the bud anything that is likely to cause trouble to the community

as well as to Government. Anything that is likely to wound or even to irritate the religious susceptibilities of the people should be scrupulously avoided unless essentially required by the exigencies of any particular case. I have written, Sir, this letter under a solemn sense of responsibility and duty to my community as well as to Government, and I hope it will be taken in the spirit in which it has been written.

Yours obediently,
ABDUL KARIM.

3, Middleton Row, Calcutta,
The 12th November, 1914.

MY DEAR MAULAVI SAHEB,

This is a brief note to acknowledge the receipt of your valuable and interesting letter of November 10th from Ranchi. I may have a further opportunity of referring to it later on. In the meantime I would say that I appreciate very fully the dangers and the difficulties you describe; some of them were already present to me before your letter arrived. I think that you should recognise more clearly that this war is one of politics and not of religion, and has been forced upon Turkey by the ambitions of Germany, a Christian State. You include in your statement of facts which are overlooked one to the effect that this is a war between Christians and Muhammadans. Surely this is not a fact It is a statement that I think you should use all your loyalty and all your energy to controvert. The declarations of Muhammadans throughout the British Empire shew that they are willingly fighting for us against Turkey's new Christian ally, Germany, our enemy, who is for ever asserting its claim to be considered a champion of Christendom. We have evidence within the British Empire, that orthodox Muhammadans object to the war, and Great Britain, the greatest Muhammadan power in the world, has guaranteed the inviolability of the holy places. I hope that you will use all the influence you possess to convince your co-religionists that their faith is not involved in this contest and point out that it is a non-Muhammadan power that has forced the hand

of Turkey for his own purposes. Your letter will receive further and very careful consideration at my hands.

Yours sincerely,
P. C. LYON.

Ranchi,
The 16th November, 1914.

SIR,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your kind letter of the 12th instant. I am happy to learn that my last letter will receive careful consideration at your hands and that my motive in writing it has not been misunderstood. I am, however, exceedingly sorry to find that one statement in the letter should have been so worded as not to convey clearly what was meant and that it should have given you the trouble of writing so much about it. As far as my information goes there is no misconception up to this time regarding the cause of war with Turkey. It is, I think, clearly understood that this war is one of politics and not of religion—that it is being waged for territorial conquest and not for the propagation of Christianity and the suppression of Islam. It is not, therefore, a war between Christians and Musalmans in the sense in which it seems to have been understood. What I meant is that the Turks, who are Musalmans and co-religionists of the Muhammadans of India, are fighting (though not for the sake of religion) against some Christians at the instigation of other Christians, and it is not quite unnatural (I am afraid it cannot be properly realised by non-Musalmans how strong is the tie that binds one Musalman to another) that they (the Indian Musalmans) should be sorry to see their co-religionists in trouble, although they are to thank themselves for foolishly and recklessly drawing it upon themselves solely for the benefit of some unscrupulous Christians.....

2. As for your desire that I should use my loyalty and energy to controvert any misstatement and remove any misapprehension, I need hardly assure you that I shall not fail to do all that lies in the power of a retired recluse like myself for the

sake of the Government as well as for the interests of my unfortunate co-religionists, who have fallen upon evil times and are now in great distress for no fault of theirs.

3. My object in writing my last letter was to point out (1) the impropriety of saying things that might give rise to misapprehension and lead to trouble; (2) the advisability of appealing to such feelings as might produce a more telling effect in rallying the Indian Musalmans to the side of Government that has been so very solicitous of their welfare, than to others that might be less effective in this respect and give rise to misapprehension. As regards the first point, I wrote at some length in my previous letter. I shall add only an incident which has come to my knowledge. An English educated gentleman on reading one of the remarks made by an over-enthusiastic person at a meeting, is reported to have said "he should have been shot," while another gentleman equally well-educated referring to a similar remark observed, "Had it been made at a meeting of the orthodox Musalmans he could not have come away with his head on his shoulders". If this is the feeling of English educated people, you may imagine what the uneducated people are likely to think of these things. . . . . .

4. For fear of being misunderstood I did not write to you in my last letter about contributions to the War Relief Fund by the Indian Mussalmans, after Turkey's suicidal decision to participate in the war. But now that a declaration on the subject has been made with regard to the Mussalmans of Egypt, may I humbly suggest that the same principle may be followed in the case of the Mussalmans of India? Like the Egyptians, the Indian Mussalmans hold the Sultan of Turkey in the highest esteem. It is not altogether unlikely that if the Indian Mussalmans continue contributing to the general War Relief Fund, some fanatical Mullah will some day secretly circulate a *Fatwa* to the effect that as the money thus realised may be utilised in crushing their co-religionists, though they may not be their countrymen, the contributors have ceased to be true Mussalmans. This, I am afraid, will cause much mischief. It, therefore, seems desirable that the principle followed in the case of the Egyptians should be adopted in that of Indian Mussalmans also.

5. It would be most presumptuous on my part to say anything with regard to a powerful and effective speech delivered by the Prime Minister of the Empire. It must have been deliberately made after consideration of all the circumstances and I think it has produced the desired effect on those for whom it was intended. I wish, however, that portion of the speech which refers to the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire had not been published in India. The state of the feelings of Indian Mussalmans may be judged from the fact that a highly educated Muhammadan of whose loyalty to the British Government I have not the slightest doubt, as its discomfiture may involve his ruin, burst into tears when he read this portion of the speech, although he has not perhaps much doubt as to the ultimate result of the suicidal policy that is being followed by the Turks. God knows what the masses will think when they will come to know all this. It would have been well if the translation of this portion of the speech into the vernacular newspapers could have been prevented. The less the news of Turkish defeats and the occupation of Turkish territory by the Allies is published in India, the better perhaps for all concerned.

6. At such a time of great agitation, when feelings run high and many unfounded things are talked of, credulous people readily believe whatever they are told. I have heard that it is being talked that as the European Powers were thinking of dividing the Turkish Empire among themselves, England taking Egypt, France Syria, Germany Mesopotamia and Italy Tripoli, the Turks have decided to die fighting rather than relinquish their empire without resistance, and hence they have joined the war.

7. According to a prophecy of our holy Prophet (I am not in a position to vouch for its accuracy) the Mahdi is to appear in 1361 A.H. and after his reign of forty years the world is to come to an end. As this is 1331 A.H. there are only about thirty years for the Mahdi's appearance and 70 years for the destruction of the world. Within these thirty years many momentous events are to take place. One of these is a great war in which most of the powers in the world are to participate, the

Turks are to be driven away from Turkey to Syria and thence to Arabia, where only the Islamic Empire is to survive; at the end of this war only one Christian Emperor is to rule for sometime over the whole world. So the Turks it is being said have inevitably been drawn to the war to suffer what has been predestined.

I have referred to these things, some of which are perhaps too irrelevant to be worth mentioning, in order to show the trend of people's feelings which may take a quite unexpected turn at any moment. The authorities, I think, should know all that is being thought and said so that they may be prepared for any emergency.

Yours obediently,
ABDUL KARIM.

Calcutta, the 24th November, 1914.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for another very interesting letter, dated the 16th November. Your views and the suggestions you make will receive careful consideration.

Yours sincerely,
P. C. LYON.

Bankipore, the 11th December, 1914.

DEAR SIR,

I must apologise for the delay in answering your letter of the 18th ultimo. I have been exceedingly busy for some time past. The enclosures to your letter, being the copies of two which you have written to the Hon'ble Mr. Lyon, are exceedingly interesting and afford matter for much thought, and I have read them very carefully and used them in advising Government on such of the matters which they deal with as came up for orders. I have, therefore, to thank you for sending them to me.

Yours faithfully,
H. LE MESURIER,
(Chief Secretary to the Government of Bihar and Orissa).

After the European war when peace was concluded and peace celebrations were being held, Maulavi Abdul-Karim dealt at some length with the subject in his presidential speech at the annual session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League held at Jessore. The following is a summary of what he said:—

The question that has of late most intensely exercised the minds of the Musalmans, not only in India but all over the Islamic world, is the question of the Khilafat and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. So far back as November, 1914, finding that some designing time-servers were misleading the Government as to the real feelings of the Indian Musalmans regarding the Turkish empire and its sovereign, I addressed to one of the highest officials in the Presidency two letters drawing his attention to the immense mischief which was being done by the over-zealous opportunists by abusing the Turks and disowning the Khalifa in order to propitiate the authorities. I pointed out how the Musalmans of India have, for centuries, regarded the Turkish Empire as their own and looked with veneration upon its sovereign as their Khalifa and the guardian and protector of their holy places, and why the tie which binds a person in the Gangetic valley to an individual on the Bosphorus may seem incomprehensible or even absurd to one who is not a Musalman. The letters produced the desired effect; they were typed and circulated.

Since those letters were written the world has passed through the most calamitous cataclysm and humanity has been staggered by the most revolting butchery and brutality ever recorded in modern history. The map of

Europe has been recast in such a manner as was never dreamt of before ; some of the fairest provinces in the continent have been laid waste, some of the most mighty empires have crumbled to pieces, some of the most autocratic despots have had to come to a most tragic end or to make a most ignominious exit from their kingdoms. All this has been brought about by the champions of liberty and justice. But might still seems to be right and lust for power and territory the ruling passion in Europe. Unfortunately the rumour referred to in my second letter about the division of the Turkish Empire among the Christian nations of Europe has turned out to be true, the only discrepancy being that England is taking the place of Germany in Mesopotamia. It is but natural that the Musalmans of India, who look upon the Turkish empire as their own, should be so much alarmed and excited by the persistent rumours about its possible dismemberment.

. . . . To my mind no amount of sophistry can explain away the pledge given by the Prime Minister of England, regarding the integrity of the Turkish empire at the time when the war was in its most critical stage. It was a solemn declaration seriously made from his place in the Parliament. That it was a mere offer and not a pledge is, I think, nothing but an after-thought of the Prime Minister's apologists. I cannot persuade myself to believe that a gentleman of Mr. Lloyd George's responsible position could have so far forgotten himself as to be guilty of such deliberate duplicity and dishonesty as to have solemnly given a pledge meaning all the time to break it at the first convenient opportunity. My idea is that when great difficulties stared him in the face and despair well-

nigh overwhelmed him and when the fate of the empire in his charge was hanging in the balance, he honestly made the promise intending to keep it. But when the danger was over, when the stability of the empire was assured and he found himself master of the situation, the lust of territorial aggrandisement and the religious bigotry of a descendant of the mediæval crusaders got the better of his sense of honour and justice, and he is now trying to back out of his commitments. Abdul, as the British Tommy would call the Turkish soldier, was a "clean fighter" as long as he fought, but as soon as he ceased to fight he became an unclean fighter, guilty of all sorts of barbarities and atrocities. The Musalmans have made it sufficiently clear that they cannot acquiesce in any settlement in which that solemn pledge is not adhered to and the integrity of the Ottoman empire is not maintained. It was these and similar assurances which induced the heroic Musalman soldiers to fight with all the valour of their race and the ardour of their religion in defence of the British Empire. Would they have shed a drop of Islamic blood if they could have realised that they were digging the grave, as Mr. Lloyd George's predecessor in office had the hardihood to say, of the greatest Islamic empire in the world? Would they have moved one step forward if they could have known that they were being led to a crusade, as the Prime Minister has been pleased to call it, for the annihilation of their co-religionists? Would they have lifted one finger if they could have foreseen that they were helping in gaining a victory which would let loose blood-thirsty bands of Greeks to slaughter in cold blood thousands of defenceless Musalmans in Smyrna and its neighbourhood? Is there a Musalman with a drop of

Islamic blood in his veins whose heart has not bled by the recent report of the horrible atrocities committed upon their innocent co-religionists, whose villages have been wiped out, whose farms have been destroyed and whose enormous numbers, computed between 100,000 to 200,000, are homeless and in the depths of misery? What would have happened if the Musalman soldiers had not sacrificed their lives to gain victory for the allied cause? The Peace Conference would not have perhaps sat in peace at Paris to decide the fate of Christian empires in accordance with the principle of self-determination and to divide the Islamic empire among the Christian nations. These, gentlemen, are facts which the Musalmans can never forget. As to the position of the Khalifa, it should be most strongly impressed upon those with whom the final decision lies that the Khalifatul-Islam, unlike the Roman Catholic Pope, must be the monarch of a powerful empire, able to protect the interests of his co-religionists and having sovereign jurisdiction over the *Jaziratul Arab,* where the holy cities of Islam, of which he is the guardian and protector, are situated. . . . It is a matter of some satisfaction that Mr. Lloyd George has at last thought it prudent to disown his apologists and to admit that his declaration was a pledge and not an offer. The carrying into effect of the *whole* pledge should now be strongly insisted upon, and it should be most distinctly made known that its partial fulfilment cannot satisfy the Musalmans. . . . . The fidelity of the Musalmans to their faith is a wonder to the world. There is no sacrifice which they do not undergo for its sake. For five years Muslim loyalty has stood almost superhuman test. It would be most unwise to put it to a further strain.

. . . . . I would like to express on behalf of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League our grateful thanks to the little band of noble-minded Englishmen, among whom is my friend, Sir Theodore Morrison, and to His Highness the Agha Khan, the Right Honourable Mr. Ameer Ali and Mr. Abdulla Yusuf Ali, all of whom, by a curious coincidence, belong to a faith, which does not recognise the spiritual suzerainty of the Sultan of Turkey, for all that they have done and are still doing to uphold the power and prestige of the Khalifa by preventing the dismemberment of his empire. Our thanks are also due to the Right Honourable Mr. Montagu for fully representing to the Peace conference the feelings and sentiments of the Musalmans of India and for forcibly advocating the cause of moderation and justice in dealing with the question of the Khilafat. Nor should I omit to mention how grateful we are to our fellow countrymen of the Hindu community for their kind sympathy and support in our trouble.

As long as the fate of the Musalmans of the Turkish empire is not satisfactorily settled their co-religionists in India can never know peace of mind. It was only natural, therefore, that they should not be in a mood to take part in the festivities in connection with what was called the Peace Celebrations. When some sycophants organised a public gathering to offer up prayers for the triumph of British arms, a Muhammadan gentleman was asked by a high official whether he would join the prayers. He replied that as it would be practically praying for the defeat of his co-religionists, he could not persuade himself to join such prayers, but he would pray for the early termination of the war and conclusion of peace. We may well ask the promoters of the Peace Celebrations whether

there is any real peace anywhere in the old world—in Asia, in Africa, or even in Europe? The conflagration into which humanity was thrust by the disastrous war is still burning. Besides, the patch of cloud, perhaps at present no bigger than a man's hand, which has made its appearance in the Central Asian horizon, is giving cause for considerable anxiety. In such circumstances were not the Peace Celebrations which cost so much money a little bit premature? . . . .

Reform and Reorganisation of Muslims.

During his stay at Ranchi, after his retirement from Government service and before entering politics, Maulavi Abdul Karim was swayed by one thought—how to bring about the reform and reorganization of the Musalmans of Bengal. With this object in view he formed a scheme and issued a manifesto, in the drawing up of which he received appreciable help from his friend, the late Khan Bahadur Sir Fakhruddin, then Education Minister, Bihar, and his two sons, Professors Abdur Rahim and Abdul Hakim. The following is a copy of the manifesto:—

Anjuman-i-Islahul Musilimeen Bangala.

(Muslim Reform Movement in Bengal).

Alike from national and communal points of view the appalling disintegration and demoralisation of the Muslim community of India, and particularly of Bengal, is a crying shame and an insisting challenge to our powers of reorganisation and reform. The Muslim population in Bengal, particularly in Eastern Bengal, is much larger than that of any other country in the world. An equally dense mass of Muslim population over a similar area does not exist either in Turkey or in Arabia or in

Egypt. Instead, however, of being a powerful factor in national and communal regeneration, the Bengal Muslims are in a pitiable state of moral, political and economic degeneration. The bulk of the Bengal Muslims have the most rudimentary and inadequate idea of their religious faith and traditions and are conspicuously un-Islamic in their deeds and thoughts. Steeped in ignorance and superstition and divided among themselves, they are woefully under the economic servitude of non-Muslim Zamindars, traders and money-lenders and politically under the unhealthy influence of designing parties and persons who do not scruple to lead them astray for selfish purposes.

All this, I need scarcely say, is due to their not imbibing the true spirit of Islam. The reports that pour in from different quarters of the country of dacoities, murders, rapes and other unspeakable crimes indicate the depth of depravity to which our people have sunk. Can it be doubted that much of this criminality would disappear if religious and moral principles are properly impressed upon the masses? Does it not indicate that the structure and outlook of Muslim society in Bengal is frightfully debased when feuds over such trifling matters as the recitation of *Daalin* and *Zaalin* and raising and lowering of hands in prayers, are matters of almost everyday occurrence? What more violent travesty of Islamic democracy can be imagined than the aversion and refusal of Muslims of high rank and culture to permit their humbler co-religionists to join them even in prayers? If the annual, weekly and daily congregation of Muslims in mosques has any significance and purpose, it surely is the fostering of a spirit of equality, fraternity and solidarity among them.

Our ignorance of Islamic ideals and principles and our anti-Islamic conduct has not only retarded our progress, but has also supplied a direct incentive to non-Muslim organisations to mislead, dominate and exploit us grievously. It is pathetic to confess that the conversion of the *Garos* and other backward tribes has been largely hampered by the un-Islamic conduct displayed by the so-called Muslims, who practically treat their converted and destitute brethren as social outcastes. To the same source must be traced the transitory success of the Suddhi move-

ment and the Christian missionaries in converting some ignorant Muslims in Nadia and elsewhere.

For the salvation of the Muslim community from this universal disorganisation and for their emancipation from economic thraldom there is one and only one prescription. On the one hand we must make our masses and classes thoroughly well-grounded in Islamic ideals and habits and on the other organise their resources and secure for them some measure of economic stability and independence. It has to be borne in mind that all power, social and political, must gravitate to where economic powers reside and that no power can be long sustained unless it is fortified by moral uplift and social solidarity. To the Muslim, just as much as to any other masses, the messages of social, educational or political reform must sound as a cruel mockery if nothing is done to save them from starvation and economic uncertainty. Unless economic rebuilding proceeds hand in hand with spiritual and educational reform, it is idle to expect any greater or permanent results from movements of their uplift and reorganisation.

If the Muslims of Bengal are to take the position to which their numerical strength and communal importance entitle them, they must be true Muslims in every sense. As such they cannot quarrel among themselves or with their neighbours and they cannot be led astray by designing individuals and organisations. As true Muslims, they will learn to stand on their own legs, they will realise the necessity for exercising self-control, self-denial and self-sacrifice. Besides, they will inevitably be led to combine and co-operate for the protection of their interests and assertion of their rights.

Would it be too much to expect that all interested in the progress of Islam would bestir themselves in time and join our movement? As a religious organisation it may be joined by all classes of Muslims, non-officials as well as officials. In a letter published some time ago in the "Mussalman" I proposed the formation of an organisation for propagating in Bengal the noble principles and high ideals of Islam. A provisional Committee is being formed to draw up a scheme and to frame rules. It is hoped men and money required for the work would be forthcoming

before long. I hope to be able to contribute, for five years, rupees two thousand annually out of the income of my endowed estate. Maulvi Wajid Ali Khan Pani, Zamindar of Karotya, has consented to accept the Presidentship of the Committee and I have been asked to be its Secretary. Moulana Shah Sufi Abu Bakar Sahib, Siddiq Jamal Sahib and several other gentlemen of light and learning, have already signified their willingness to serve on the Committee The names of the office-bearers and members of the Committee will be announced later. The aims and object of the organisation, as tentatively framed, are given below. Helpful suggestions and constructive criticism are earnestly invited.

13/1, Wellesley Square,
Calcutta,
The 1st October, 1925

ABDUL KARIM,
(Retired Inspector of Schools and Ex-Member of the Council of State).

Aims and Objects.

1. To propagate true Islamic ideals and principles and to expound the basic tenets and injunctions of Islam without entering into sectarian differences.

2. To establish Islamic brotherhood by promoting unity, solidarity and equality amongst Muslims of different classes, views and ranks.

3. To put a stop to un-Islamic customs and practices and to develop among the masses and classes a spirit of self-help, self-control, self-sacrifice, manliness and honesty.

4. To organise social service among the destitute Muslims and relief work during the prevalence of famine, flood and pestilence.

To make organised efforts to minimise litigation and party faction by introducing arbitration and promoting mutual confidence and trust.

6. To ameliorate the condition of the Muslims by encouraging business enterprise, industry, and technical and commercial pursuits.

7. To establish a fund and an organisation in each centre on co-operative basis for mutual help and relief in the purchase

of seeds, manure, implements and husbandry and raw materials for cottage industries.

8. To reorganise the mosques as units of religious, educational and economic reconstruction.

9. To establish Islamic Maktabs and Madrassahs for boys and girls and technical and night schools, wherever possible, and to take steps for their establishment by Government and Local bodies.

10. To establish an institution for training preachers, missionaries and instructors on Islamic lines, and to utilise their services for furthering the objects of the Anjuman.

11. To found bureaus in different centres for collecting accurate information regarding religious, social, hygienic, economic and agricultural conditions and needs of the Muslims.

12. To carry on a propaganda for Islamic reconstruction and reform by starting an organ of this movement and by publishing and circulating leaflets and literature regarding Islamic principles and traditions and the schemes and programmes of the Anjuman.

13. To organise regular and systematic collection of funds on the basis of Baitul-mal, periodical subscriptions and occasional donations for any or all of the above purposes.

ABDUL KARIM.

Urdu and Bengali translations of the above manifesto were published.

Maulavi Abdul Karim's plan was to get different classes of Musalmans interested in the scheme. First of all he thought of approaching the large Muslim clerical staff in the Bengal Secretariat,from whom a large amount might come for carrying out the scheme. His calculation was that over Rs. 500/- a month could be obtained from them if they could be persuaded to contribute one per cent of their incomes. As there was nothing objectionable in the manifesto, a copy of it was sent to the

Government, so that no exception might be taken to Government servants' contributing to the scheme advocated in it. This seems to have been a mistake. When an enquiry was made about one or two statement in it, a rumour was spread by designing persons that Government had objection to its servants supporting the scheme, although no such objection was raised. Without enquiring if there was any truth in the rumour, the Muslims in the Secretariat decided not to support the scheme. Besides, M. Abdul Karim could not give undivided attention to this matter, as he had to enter into a canvassing campaign for election to the Bengal Legislative Council. So hardly anything was done to give effect to such an excellent scheme. It is hoped that it will be now taken up by some young enthusiastic Muslims. I think the reorganisation of the Musalmans of Bengal is more essential now than it was when the scheme was drawn up.

CHAPTER IV.

EVIDENCE BEFORE THE CALCUTTA UNIVERSITY COMMISSION.

Maulavi Abdul Karim was requested to give evidence before the Calcutta University Commission of 1918, presided over by Dr. M. E. Sadler. The following are summaries of his answers to some of the questions in the questionnaire issued by the Commission :—

1. The existing system of University examination does not afford to young Indians of ability full opportunity of obtaining the highest training. The reason is not far to seek. There is not sufficient scope for specialisation in particular subjects for which a student has special aptitude. Up to the B.A. standard a student has to study a number of subjects, even if he has no special aptitude or predilection for all of them. Thus the multiplicity of subjects stands in the way of concentration of attention and energies on particular subjects. The student learns something of several things, but he cannot make himself master of any one of them. Besides, such a large ground has to be gone over in almost every subject that it is difficult to acquire a thorough knowledge of it within the allotted time. After the Matriculation Examination a student should have the option of specialising in a few subjects for which he may have special aptitude. He should further have the option of studying only those portions of a subject of which he may be able to acquire a thorough knowledge. For example, if instead of learning the whole of the history of India or of any other country, a student has to study a particular period, he may have time for original research and investigation.

Examinations also stand in the way of obtaining the highest training in a subject. Both the teachers and the taught care

more for success at the examination than for the acquisition of knowledge, and devote more attention to what helps in passing the examination than to what contributes to sound knowledge.

4. There is no doubt that residential Universities of the type of the proposed Dacca University, if properly conducted, would be more efficient institutions for imparting education on a sound basis than the existing Universities of the federal type. But those who are fully acquainted with the backward condition and poverty of the people of this country, cannot be altogether blinded by the attractive ideals of a residential University. The crying need of the country is extensive education. At this stage of the country's educational development, surface should not be altogether sacrificed for depth. More attention should, therefore, be devoted to the extension and improvement of federal Universities, and most of the available resources should be utilised for this purpose. The number of students who are in a position to avail themselves of the costly education, imparted in a residential University, may not be very large, and their requirements may be met by the Benares, Aligarh and Dacca Universities for the present.

8. The present conditions of admission to the University of Calcutta are not quite satisfactory. On their entrance to the University, students should have a greater command of the English language, through the medium of which instruction is imparted, than what the majority of the Matriculates at present possess

It is most undesirable that any student possessing the requisite qualifications should be refused admission, on the ground of want of accommodation, to a federal University having jurisdiction over a wide area thickly populated by millions of people still to be educated. Besides, it would be a source of danger to society as well as to Government if year after year numbers of boys have to go adrift unqualified for any useful career in life. If this deplorable state of things is allowed to continue, it would prove disastrous to the interests of the Musalmans, who have just awakened to the paramount necessity of English education.

9. (i) There is no doubt that in the existing University system teaching is unduly subordinated to examination. It is most

desirable that the rigidity of the examination system should be reduced. I fully approve of what has been stated in paragraphs (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*).

10. If an examinee secures high marks in a subject but fails to obtain pass marks in another subject he should not be required to sit in that subject at the next examination. Even if examined attendance at lectures in the subject should not be made compulsory.

It would have been well if it could have been so arranged as to examine after a short interval (say three or six months) those who get plucked in one subject only.

Those whose high proficiency in a particular subject is certified to by any recognised institution or society should not be required to pass the University test in that subject. For example, the successful students of the senior Madrassahs and of Tols should be exempted from examination in an Indian classical language. If their examination be not dispensed with, they should on no account be required to attend lectures in the subject.

As in the Allahabad and some other Universities only the Roll Number, and not the name, of the candidate should be written on the answer paper.

11. (i) I am of opinion that under the existing circumstances the medium of instruction and of examination at every stage above the Matriculation in the University course should be English.

(ii) (*a*) I do not think students have on their entrance to the University an adequate command of English.

(*b*) In my opinion up to Class VI (Middle English standard) vernacular should be medium of instruction for *all* students, and from Class VII upwards option should be given only to those students who prepare for the Matriculation Examination, to learn a subject either through the medium of vernacular or English.

(*c*) I am not at all satisfied with the kind of training at present given in English before entrance to the University. A number of voluminous books on English is recommended, and students are taught at random whichever book or books the head master of a school chooses to teach. I do not think they can

thereby acquire a clear idea of standard works or a sound knowledge of English. . . .

The method of teaching English in our schools is most defective. Boys learn words without realising their significance or knowing their proper use. Teaching by means of translation, which is perhaps the least effective method of teaching a foreign language, is generally followed in our schools. It retards the quick comprehension of the spoken tongue, and the intervention of the vernacular medium postpones the time when the pupil can speak without consciously translating from his native speech into the foreign language. In teaching English the vernacular should be very sparingly used and translation should not be the means of understanding words and sentences in English. The teacher should endeavour to connect English words directly with the ideas they express or with other English words known to the boys and thus to replace translation, as far as possible, by object-lessons, picture-lessons and explanations in the English language. As a new language is learnt more by speaking it and hearing it spoken than by a study of its vocabulary and grammar, and as boys cannot easily learn to speak the language unless they think in it, much more importance should be attached to English conversation in the class room and outside it than is done at present. Correct pronunciation, expressive reading, good composition and proper recitation, at present neglected, should be carefully attended to.

The success of the teacher's work chiefly depends upon his method, which should be suited to the needs of the pupils, their capacity, knowledge and stage of development. Teaching should be rational and not merely formal or mechanical. The mind should not be merely fed with facts, figures and words, but the pupil's power of reasoning, judging, comparing and contrasting should be properly developed. That mere telling is not teaching must not be forgotten. Besides, the teacher should bear in mind that the first thing to be learnt by the boys is not the more or less archaic language of English literature, but the spoken language of daily conversation. Quality, and not quantity, should be always aimed at. "Little and well" should be the teacher's motto. As

a rule things should be taught first and words next. Many students get up a book instead of studying a subject. Accuracy of idea and precision of statement should go together. Further the teacher should not only see that the pupils grasp his meaning, but make them give back their knowledge in their own words.

(*d*) A distinction should be drawn in school, if not in University, between practical training in the use of English language and training in the study of English literature.

(*e*) Matriculation examination in subjects other than the English language may be conducted either in English or in the vernacular.

(*f*) I do not think it is essentially necessary that English should be taught beyond the Intermediate stage to students whose general course of study may be other than linguistic.

13 Islamic studies should be included in the curricula of the Calcutta University. The history of Islam should be separately taught as a subject of examination. Boys should have the option of taking up either Islamic history or the history of Greece and Rome, or the history of India or England.

As in the case of Sanskrit, the different branches of Arabic learning should form separate subjects for higher examinations.

14 The Universities should manage their own affairs. Outside interference, I think hinders their development. A limited power of veto might, however, be reserved for the Provincial Government.

15. It is undesirable that mere University examinations should be regarded as qualifications for posts under Government. The different University examinations are tests of the different standards of knowledge in general subjects and not of the special knowledge and training required for the different branches of public service. There is no branch of Service for which academic attainments are more necessary than for the Educational Service. Yet even in this Service many officers, although they possess these attainments, fail to prove a success for want of training in and knowledge of the art of teaching and the work of inspection. If a good scholar cannot always be even a good teacher or a good educational inspector, it is much less likely that he would prove

an efficient member of any other branch of service for which special training in and knowledge of departmental work is much more necessary.

To regard success at the University examination as a qualification for public service would be disadvantageous to the students, because in that case they would be actuated more by mercenary motive than by love of learning, and they would labour not for the acquisition of knowledge but for somehow passing the University test with a view to enter service. This is the principal reason why the Indian Universities, as a rule, fail to produce such scholars as make substantial contribution to learning. Perhaps it would not be altogether an exaggeration to say that the Indian Universities do not, as a rule, produce sound scholars (there are, of course, honourable exceptions), but rather manufacture money-making machines.

18. A system of periodical medical examination of students at different stages of instruction should be introduced and cessation from studies and non-participation in games insisted upon in the case of those who are not in a position to stand such strain. That physical exercise is as necessary as over-exercise is injurious should be well impressed upon the students. Boys of weak constitution should not be permitted to take part in hard games, such as football and hockey. In selecting games for boys their physical strength, the nutritive quality of their food and the climatic condition of the country should be taken into consideration.

From what I have seen and heard I have no doubt that the eye-sight of our students is perceptibly deteriorating. Special care should be taken to check this deterioration.

22. (*a*) In the government of the University the needs and interests of the Muhammadan community should be specially considered. Numerically the Mussalmans preponderate in the Presidency of Bengal. As such they should have preponderated in the governing bodies of the University that is intended for the education of all classes of people in Bengal. But far from this being the case, since the establishment of the University, the community has never had, either by nomination or by election,

even one-sixteenth of the seats in these bodies. Notwithstanding the comparative backwardness of the Musalmans in western education they might reasonably claim a much larger share of representation in the administration of the University than what they have hitherto had. Under the New University Act the total number of Fellows has been fixed at 100, of whom 80 are selected and 20 elected. The reservation by the Chancellor of the power of nominating so many as four-fifths of the Fellows, perhaps with a view to preserve the necessary equilibrium between the different communities, interested in the University, should have secured the representation of the different communities on the different bodies of the University in proportion to their numerical strength and communal importance. Even if allowance were made for difference in educational advancement, their representation should on on account have been so absurdly disproportionate as it is at present. That an overwhelming majority of even the nominated Fellows should have come from one particular community is regarded as a grievance that calls for immediate redress. I hope and trust the Commission will see its way to make such recommendations as will remove the long-standing grievances of the community by securing for its members adequate and effective representation in the administration of the University. The statutory power of nomination reserved for the Chancellor should be exercised on some principle, and a sufficient number of Musalmans should be selected by him to be Fellows of the Calcutta University.

A fair proportion of the higher appointments and of the ministerial posts under the Calcutta University should be given to qualified Musalmans. In appointing examiners also, their claims should be taken into due consideration.

I am strongly of opinion that the special needs and requirements of the Musalmans should be taken into consideration in connection with the re-organisation of the Calcutta University, and these should not be left to the proposed Dacca University scheme. For I have much misgiving as to how far the community will be really benefited by the Dacca University. Poor as the Musalmans are, I am afraid the cost of education in a residential

University will prove too high to many of them to avail themselves of its benefits, and the special attraction held out to them in the shape of a Faculty of Islamic studies and a Muhammadan college, cannot induce them to overlook their pecuniary difficulty. Besides, the scope of a residential University being limited, a sufficiently large number of boys cannot be educated there. Moreover, there is no knowing when the Dacca University will come into existence. A federal University like that of Calcutta is best suited for the diffusion of knowledge over a wide area with a large population.

(b) The needs and interests of particular communities with reference to the courses of study also require careful consideration. The English literature taught in Indian schools and colleges deals with English life and customs, English heroes and heroines and English scenes and scenery, and as such it cannot prove as interesting and useful to Indian boys as it should be. Besides, it is difficult for them to thoroughly grasp things with which they are altogether unacquainted. It is most desirable that an English literature dealing with Indian life and history and depicting Indian scenes and scenery, should be created for Indian boys, particularly for those preparing for the Matriculation examination. If the English language is to have a permanent place in the course of studies for Indian boys, the creation of a literature of the kind suggested above is essentially necessary. The present denationalising and disturbing tendencies, I am afraid, cannot be counteracted unless such a literature is taught.

Historical text-books should be very judiciously selected. Books containing misrepresentation of facts and unjust criticisms of historical personages should not be included in the list of text-books. The object of teaching history being not so much to acquaint the reader with dry facts and figures as to inspire him with patriotic feelings and noble impulses, such books as give, without sacrificing truth, interesting and ennobling accounts of the great deeds of their great men of the past, should be prescribed as text-books in history. History of Islam should be included in the curricula of studies for the University examinations.

Some of the Bengali text-books prescribed for the University examinations are not suitable for Muhammadan boys. These books deal with subjects which, though interesting to Hindu boys, do not appeal to Muhammadan students, being full of Hindu ideas and sentiments, illustrations from Hindu history and mythology and quotations from Hindu Scriptures and classics. They prove most uninteresting and even distasteful to Musalmans. Such books as draw largely upon the history, traditions and scriptures of Islam and deal with subjects interesting and inspiring to Muhammadan youths should be included in the list of text-books prescribed for the University examinations. . . . .

(*c*) The needs and interests of the Muhammadan community should be taken into due consideration in connection with the arrangements for the residence of students. For want of suitable lodgings at educational centres, Muhammadan students find great difficulty in the prosecution of their studies. When Persian was the Court-language many of the officers and members of different professions were Musalmans and a large number of Muhammadan students used to board and lodge with them, to feed and otherwise help a student being considered by the Musalmans as a sacred duty and a social obligation. When the number of such philanthropic people considerably declined on account of the abolition of Persian as Court-language, the students supported by them had to shift for themselves. This is one of the chief causes that has deterred the Musalmans from availing themselves, to any appreciable extent, of the advantages of education imparted in English schools and colleges. Even parents, who can afford to pay the high cost of English education, hesitate to send their children far from home for want of proper guardians. In these circumstances it is urgently necessary that adequate hostel accommodation should be provided for Muhammadan students. At least half of the money available for the provision of residential accommodation should be utilised for their benefit.

As on account of their poverty Musalmans are unable to pay the high seat-rent charged in expensively constructed hostels, cheaply-built houses should be provided for them. I am not in favour

of costly edifices for the residence of students of any community. If boys accustomed to reside in scantily-furnished humble houses are accommodated in well-built and well-furnished structures they are discontented when they go back to their old dwelling. In my opinion it is most undesirable that with a view to secure their unnecessary comfort and to raise their standard of living, the taste of the boys should be changed and a desire for such residential houses created in them as they had not had before coming to the educational institutions and will not have after leaving them.

The chief advantage of the residential system lies in the opportunity it affords for the formation of character through the close association of pupils and preceptors. This is the chief reason why the residential system prevailed in olden times in most of the educational institutions in this country. It would be superfluous to say that the Musalmans attach much importance not only to religion but also to morals and manners, and they view with much disfavour any deviation from the established social etiquette. Unless the residence of Muhammadan students is placed in charge of good Musalmans and the atmosphere in which they live and move is Islamic, such deviation cannot be altogether avoided. For example, a Christian Professor may not see anything objectionable in not only tolerating but even in enforcing a football or a hockey match at a time when Muhammadan boys should be engaged in their Maghrib (evening) prayers, and he may not have hesitation in calling for a peg when he finds himself run down on the field. Such occurrences, if they chance to happen, cannot but be viewed with alarm by the Musalmans, and cannot but detract from the popularity of the institutions concerned. Such being the case, I would strongly urge the desirability of invariably putting Muhammadan students in charge of Muhammadan Professors, who can command the esteem and confidence of their co-religionists. That the success of hostels to a great extent depends upon the judicious selection of their superintendents should never be lost sight of.

The following note on the education imparted in the Madrassahs in Bengal was submitted by Moulvi Abdul Karim for the consideration of the Commission :—

During the Muhammadan rule in Bengal there were Madrasahs all over the country. Besides the well-organised institutions of the kind, every mosque was a Madrasah in miniature. Eminent scholars, who devoted their lives to advancing Islamic learning, taught Theology, Law and Literature of Islam without any remuneration from the people. Many of these institutions collapsed when the Mussalmans lost their wealth and influence on account of the loss of sovereignty. As in the beginning of British rule in India Persian was retained as the Court-language, it was necessary to have an institution, well-equipped and well-staffed, for the training of officers. Warren Hastings established the Calcutta Madrasah in order to meet this requirement. Its course of studies was so framed as to give Government servants a good training. Some of the private Madrasahs also adopted this course. As long as a knowledge of Persian and Mahomedan Law was a passport to posts of honour and emoluments, the education given in the Madrasahs was very useful. When Persian was replaced by English and the Provincial Vernaculars, the Madrasahs lost their utility and consequently lost also their popularity. But a large number of orthodox Mussalmans who cared more for religious than for secular education, continued to send their children to the Madrasahs instead of the schools and colleges. As, however, their course of studies was not revised in view of modern ideas and present conditions, the Madrasah students, as at present educated, are not qualified for any useful career in life and many of them have to be a burden upon the community. In order to remedy this unsatisfactory state of things, the course of oriental studies has lately been revised and proposals for further revision are under consideration. But unless the Madrasah students acquire a fair knowledge of English they can neither properly earn their livelihood nor can they make themselves much useful to society. The question of English education of Arabic scholars, therefore, demands careful consideration. It is a matter in which the Mussalmans are vitally interested. For, the com-

munity cannot be influenced for good or for evil to such an extent by anybody else as it can be by the "Ulamas." It is through them that the great majority of the people can be reached. It is, therefore, essentially necessary in the interests of the community as well as of the Government that Madrasah students should be given such an education as will make them intelligent and enlightened citizens.

Steps were taken from time to time with a view to induce the students of the Madrasahs to learn English. But these did not produce the desired effect, because those who learnt English did not derive any appreciable benefit. Although better educated than the Matriculates and the under-graduates, their claims to posts under Government were not recognised. Unless some inducements are offered by the conferment of special privileges, Madrasah students will not learn English to the desired extent. It is desirable that the Calcutta University should do what the Punjab University has been doing in this respect. The Punjab University has established Oriental Faculties and has recognised the Arabic Madrasahs and the Sanskrit Tols. Thus the different intellectual abilities and activities in the Province are being utilised by the University. The oriental students on their passing certain recognised examinations, are permitted to sit for examination in the English papers of the Matriculation, Intermediate and B.A. examinations and on their obtaining pass marks in English, they are declared to have passed the University examinations. Thus without attending lectures in colleges and without examination in any subject except English, oriental students in the Punjab obtain the Matriculation and I.A. certificates and even the B.A. degree.

The University of Calcutta should have Faculties of Oriental Studies like those of the Punjab University. The Arabic Department of the Calcutta Madrasah, the course of studies of which is in no way inferior to that of the Oriental Faculty in Persian and Arabic of the Punjab University, should be recognised by the Calcutta University and its examinations should be held either by the University or, as at present, by a Madrasah board of examiners. There is no reason why about fifteen years

study in the Madrasah should not be regarded as of equal value in point of mental culture and moral discipline to the study in an English University. It has to be borne in mind that in Islamic countries the education that makes great statesmen and administrators is similar to what is imparted in the Madrasahs in this country. Taking all these circumstances into consideration, I would suggest that the Madrasah students, on passing the Junior and Senior examinations, be examined by the Calcutta University only in English up to the B.A. standard and on their obtaining pass marks be declared to have passed the university examination, the English paper of which is answered by them.

When M. Abdul Karim appeared before the Commission several questions were put to him by the President and some of the members. Mr. P. J. Hartog took exception to M. Abdul Karim's statement that education imparted through the medium of Arabic can make great statesmen and administrators. He wanted instances, and when M. Abdul Karim said that Abul Fazl, Akbar's great minister, had no other education, Mr. Hartog required instances of modern times. Thereupon M. Abdul Karim said that in Islamic countries, such as Turkey, Egypt, Persia, the great statesmen get education through the medium of only oriental languages. Mr. Hartog insisted upon instances of modern India. When M. Abdul Karim mentioned the names of Sir Salar Jung and Sir Syed Ahmad, Sir Ashutosh promptly said, "any one of them might have put all of us into his pocket." In the Commission's Report M. Abdul Karim's observations were quoted at some length in different volumes.

CHAPTER V.

ENTRANCE INTO POLITICS.

Maulavi Abdul Karim had a mind to enter into politics on his retirement from Government service. But the sudden death of his friend, Nawab Sir Salimullah, on whose whole-hearted support he had counted, made him unwilling to come out of his retirement. He was, however, urged by his friends (among whom were the late Mr. A. Rasul, Maulvis A. K. Fazlul Huq, Akram Khan, Mujibur Rahman, the late Najmuddin Ahmad and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad) to enter the Bengal Legislative Council. Besides, he was reminded of what his spiritual preceptor* had said about his future. The following

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* One day when M. Abdul Karim's *Murshed* was absorbed in prayer he had a vision; he saw M. Abdul Karim sitting in a grand assembly, occupying a prominent position. From this he came to the conclusion that his disciple would get something extraordinary, which in the ordinary course he could not expect. As, however, nothing happened as long as he was in service and his *Murshed* was alive, he forgot all about it. He was reminded of this when there was a proposal of his entering politics. When he was elected a Member of the Council of State, it was thought that this was what his *Murshed* had referred to. But some of his friends thought something better was intended. Thereupon the matter was referred to some renowned spiritualists, such as the late Shah Nyaz Ahmad Sahib of Fyzabad and the late Shah Waris Hasan Sahib of Lucknow, who thought something better was yet to come. But for all this, most probably Maulvi Abdul Karim would have retired from public life long ago.

letter was addressed to M. Abdul Karim by some of the electors of the Bengal Legislative Council:

Calcutta, 1st September, 1915.

"DEAR SIR,

In an editorial note in the *Muhammadi* there is a statement to the effect that none of our co-religionists who by their education, character and social position are really fit to represent the community in the Legislative Council of the Presidency, are inclined to seek election from the Presidency Division. This, we need hardly say, is very much to be regretted. It is true that on the last two occasions some of those who had the privilege of voting at such elections behaved in a manner that reflects but little credit upon the community, to which they belong. It is hoped, however, that if well-directed efforts are made to convince these people of their folly and to enlighten them as regards the qualifications that are necessary for safeguarding the interests of the community, better sense will prevail next time. You are not unaware, Sir, that there is a dearth in our community of such men as are able and willing to work earnestly for its good. If the few there are abstain from taking an active part in matters concerning the vital interests of the community, its fate is sealed. We, therefore, request you to take into consideration all these circumstances in coming to a final decision in the matter. From what we have known of your public spirit, independence, sense of duty and earnestness and enthusiasm for the work of the community, we have reason to believe that you are eminently fit to represent it in the Legislative Council of the Presidency, and we have no doubt your candidature for election to it will be readily welcomed and strongly supported by its members."

Maulavi Karim gave the following reply:—

Calcutta, the 8th November, 1915.

"DEAR SIRS,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 1st instant. I have read the *Muhammadi's* editorial note referred to therein. I think

it is right in urging strong and effective representation of the community on those bodies that guide the affairs of the Presidency in view of the administrative changes that are likely to take place as a result of the unexpected steadfast loyalty displayed by the people in this crisis. I have, however, learnt with regret that those who are able to work for the community are unwilling to undertake the responsibility. As for my humble self, I have been leading for some time a retired life and I would like to be let alone. But if you cannot persuade any one, who may be in a position to work better, to be a candidate for election, I may comply with your request, provided there is no unhealthy rivalry with any other candidate. It should, however, be distinctly understood that I shall not permit any of my supporters to have recourse to any objectionable means or method. Although ready to sacrifice my energy and money for the community, I have serious objection to their being used for anything that is unworthy or improper. If you think you will succeed in getting me elected without resorting to improper canvassing, you may propose me as a candidate. But before doing this you should try to induce some abler person to seek election to the Council."

On receipt of M. Abdul Karim's reply his supporters issued a manifesto, of which the following is a summary :—

"Calcutta, the 25th November, 1915.

DEAR BRETHREN,

Perhaps you are aware that the time for electing representatives to the Legislative Councils has drawn nigh; the election is to take place in March next. We were exceedingly sorry to find that many of the electors in the Presidency Division were so disgusted and disappointed on account of certain objectionable proceedings at some of the previous elections that they decided not to take any interest in the next election, fearing a recurrence of such proceedings and hopeless of getting the right men elected to the Council. Finding that neither the electors nor those qualified to be elected were inclined to move in the matter we had to exert ourselves in this direction. It was explained

that the privilege of electing representatives to Councils was a valued one and it would have been a great mistake to make it practically inoperative by failing to exercise it in a proper manner. Besides, while important administrative changes are expected to take place after the termination of the war, the necessity of having capable representatives to bring our special wants and requirements to the notice of the authorities, could not be too strongly urged

2. The question now arises as to who are the proper persons to be our representatives in the Councils. We need hardly say that our representatives should be such men as are in a position to command the esteem and confidence of the community and, if possible, of Government and are able to take such an active and intelligent part in the deliberations of the Council as is necessary to safeguard its interests—men who are ready to sacrifice personal interests for those of the community, who do not think of self-advertisement and self-aggrandisement, and who have the courage of their convictions and the intelligence and capacity to give expression to them.

3. While thinking of eligible candidates for the Council election, the name that naturally occurred to our mind was that of Maulvi Abdul Karim, retired Inspector of Schools, whose princely gift of Rs. 50,000 for Islamic work and Muhammadan education and substantial assistance to the *Al-Islam,* which owes its publication mainly to his munificence, have endeared him to his co-religionists as one of its greatest benefactors. At our repeated request he has consented to stand as a candidate. What has influenced us most in proposing Maulvi Abdul Karim for election is that he is one of the most veteran educationists not only in the community but in the whole country. It is admitted on all hands that the most keenly-felt want of the community is education, backwardness in which has made us fall far behind other communities. We can think of no better person to bring to the notice of the authorities our educational wants and requirements and to suggest means for meeting them than Maulvi Abdul Karim, who may be said to have grown grey in educational service and has made such a special study of the complicated

questions connected with Muhammadan education as to be regarded as an authority on the subject. Perhaps it is not unknown to you how much Maulvi Abdul Karim has done for Muhammadan education in Bengal. It cannot be gainsaid that the ripe experience and extensive knowledge of educational questions possessed by such a man would much benefit the community if he were elected its representative. It would be superfluous to enlarge upon his public spirit, princely generosity, independence of character, courage of conviction, devotion to duty and earnestness and enthusiasm for the work of the community. Such a man is pre-eminently fit to represent our community in the Council and it is confidently hoped that he would be elected without a contest. If, however, there be a contest we would earnestly request you to take into careful consideration all that has been stated in this manifesto before you record your vote in favour of any candidate.

Yours faithfully,

A. Rasul (Bar-at-Law)	Muhammad Ali (M.Sc)
Md. Sultan Alam (Attorney-at-Law)	Serajul Islam (M.A.)
A. K. Fazlul Huq (Vakil, High Court)	Syed Majid Buksh (B.A.)
Md. Shahidullah (Pleader, Basirhat)	Shamsuddin Ahmad (B.A.)

And 72 other Graduates (B.Sc. & B.A.)

With all their utmost efforts Maulvi Abdul Karim's supporters failed to get him elected for the shortage of a single vote, on account of the machination, misrepresentation and malpractices of one particular supporter of a rival candidate. Some time after, however, M. Abdul Karim was elected to the Council of State from the Eastern Bengal Constituency, consisting of Dacca, Chittagong and Rajshahi Divisions.

Before his election to the Council of State, Maulvi Abdul Karim exerted himself to bring about an amicable settlement of the differences between the Hindus and

Muslims of Bengal. He had prolonged discussion about the matter with the late Mr. C. R. Das and the result was the formation of the following pact:—

A HINDU-MUSLIM PACT.

I

It is resolved that in order to establish a real foundation of Self-Government in this province it is necessary to bring about a pact between the Hindus and the Mahomedans of Bengal dealing with the rights of each community when the foundation of Self-Government is secured.

II

Be it resolved that:

(*a*) Representation in Council.

Representation in the Bengal Legislative Council on the population basis with separate electorates.

(*b*) Representation in Local Bodies.

Representation to local bodies to be in the proportion of 60 to 40* in every district,—60 to the community which is in the majojrity, and 40 to the minority. Thus in a district where the Mahomedans are in majority they will get 60 per cent, and the Hindus 40 per cent. Similarly where the Hindus are in majority they are to get 60 per cent, and the Mahomedans 40 per cent. The question as to whether there should be separate or mixed electorates is postponed for the present to ascertain the views of both communities.

* This may be further considered.

(*c*) Government Posts.

55 per cent of the Government posts should go to the Mahomedans to be worked out in the following manner :—

Fixing of tests for different classes of appointments. —The Mahomedans satisfying the least test should be preferred till the above percentage is attained ; and after that according to proportion of 55 to 45, the former to the Mahomedans and the latter to the non-Mahomedans, subject to this that for the intervening years a small percentage of posts, say 20 per cent. should go to the Hindus.

(*d*) Religious Toleration.

(1) In not allowing any resolution or enactment which affects the religion of any different communities without the consent of 75 per cent of the elected members of that community.

(2) In not allowing music in procession before any mosque.

(3) In providing that no legislation or enactment in respect of cow-killing for food will be taken up in the Council. Endeavour should be made by members of both the communities outside the council to bring about an understanding between the communities.

(4) In providing that cow-killing should be carried on in such a manner as not to wound the religious feeling of Hindus.

(5) In not interfering with cow-killing or religious sacrifices.

(6) In providing for the formation every year of representative committees in every sub-division, of which half the members should be Mahomedans and half Hindus, each

committee choosing its president from amongst themselves with power to prevent or arbitrate upon any dispute between the Hindus and Mahomedans in accordance with the provision hereinbefore stated.

Subhas Chandra Bose,
Secretary, B. P. C. C.
18-12-23.

After some time Maulvi Abdul Karim published a history of the "Hindu-Muslim Pact." The following are extracts from it:—

"It is very much to be regretted that the proposed pact between the Hindus and the Musalmans of Bengal should have upset some of the educated Hindus and given rise to so much acrimonious discussion in the press and on the platform There is, I am afraid, a great deal of misapprehension as to the motive that led to the proposal. It will be seen from the facts I am going to state that the idea of a pact did not originate in a time-serving siprit, but in a far-seeing endeavour to guard against a situation that seemed only too likely to arise before long and prove disastrous to the interests of both the communities. It will be further seen that it was not Mr. C. R. Das, who first moved in the matter with a view, as supposed, to court the support of the Musalman members of the Bengal Legislative Council. On the contrary, the proposal in its inception came from the other party concerned, and was developed into its final form after careful deliberation on both sides.

Realising the necessity of a pact like the one proposed, in the latter part of September last, I sent word to Mr. C R. Das, through Moulavi Tamizuddin, to arrange for a free and frank discussion of this important question. I was informed that Mr. Das would like to have at first a talk with me on the subject. Shortly after, however, I had to go to Dacca and then to Chittagong in connection with my election to the Council of State and I could

not meet Mr. Das for some time. But from what I saw and heard regarding the feelings of the Mussalmans, during my stay at Dacca and Chittagong, I was all the more convinced of the urgency of a clear understanding between the Hindus and the Mussalmans in order to avert the apprehended calamity of a violent rupture between the two communities and to ensure success in the ensuing fight with the bureaucracy for the early attainment of responsible self-government. On my return to Calcutta I had an interview with Mr. C. R Das at which Mr. Nasim Ali (now a High Court Judge) and Sreejut Bijoy Kristo Bose were present. I was glad to find that Mr. Das was inclined, unlike many of his short-sighted co-religionists, to take a long view of the situation. He wanted to know the terms on which the Mussalmans would agree to have a pact with the Hindus. When these were broadly stated to him, he said that the demands were not unreasonable and he saw no reason why they should not be accepted by the Hindus. Accordingly the 9th of December was fixed for a thorough discussion of this outstanding national problem. On that day I called at Mr. Das's place with a draft of the proposed pact, drawn up in consultation with some of the leading Musalmans. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Moulvis Nasim Ali, Wahed Hossain and others took part in the discussion which ensued and lasted for over two hours. As a result, certain definite terms were agreed upon, and Mr. Das undertook to put up the proposals for a Pact before the conference of the Swarajist members of the Bengal Council that was to have been held on December 16. As the conference was intended exclusively for the Swarajists, I did not attend it. I, however, came to learn that after a thorough discussion the terms of the draft pact were accepted with certain modifications. It was then issued over the signature of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.

It is to be regretted that a vigorous agitation against the pact was started when it was published. A largely attended meeting was held in the Indian Association Hall, with the late Sir Surendranath Bannerjee as president, to condemn it. Maulavis Abdul Karim, Nasim Ali, and

others went to the meeting to see what would happen. Although Mr. C. R. Das did not go, a number of his followers were there. When Sir Surendranath began his presidential speech he was interrupted by them. Before he could deliver half of his speech the interruption became so violent that he broke up the meeting and made a precipitate retreat. The agitation against the pact was, however, continued. Mr. Das assured M. Abdul Karim that there was no cause to be disheartened, as he was sure that the agitation would cease after some time. Unfortunately, to the country's misfortune, after a short time, Mr. Das fell seriously ill and then died. Although Mr. Bose and many others implicitly followed the greatest political leader of modern Bengal, as long as he was alive, they did nothing to give effect to the pact, and it became a dead letter. M. Abdul Karim thinks that if the pact, which was intended to be in force for five years, had been given effect to, the discord and dissension between the two communities, that have disgraced Bengal, would have ceased long ago and the pact would have been withdrawn and joint electorate enforced. M. Abdul Karim thinks that it is only when the two communities will be exhausted by their quarrels, and will realise their great mistake, they will have to come to some amicable settlement as was indicated in the pact. The earlier God gives them good sense to work together, the better will it be for the country.

CHAPTER VI.

MEMBER OF COUNCIL OF STATE.

On entering the Council of State Maulavi Abdul Karim found himself rather in an uncongenial atmosphere. The failure of those, who had preceded him, to take an intelligent part in the proceedings of the Council, had created a prejudice against the Muslim members from Bengal and hardly any notice was, therefore, taken of them by other members, particularly the officials. Within a short time, however, he succeeded in removing this prejudice. On the 19th March, 1924, the Hon'ble Mr. G. A. Natesan, non-official nominated member from Madras, moved "This Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council to take effective steps to prevent the repeated attempts of the Union Government of South Africa to impose restrictions and disabilities on the Indian Community similar to those embodied in the Class Areas Bill, as the proposed measure constitutes a violation of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement of 1911, and would damage Indian interests irretrievably besides endangering the solidarity of the Empire." After the long speech of Mr. Natesan, the Right Honourable Srinivash Sastri, the Hon'ble Dr. Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, and other members spoke in support of the Resolution. Next day when the discussion was resumed the Hon'ble Maulvi Abdul Karim supporting the Resolution spoke as follows:—

"Sir, after having heard all that has been said on the subject, I feel that it would be undesirable to record a silent vote. The

discussion, I am afraid, has taken a turn that is to be regretted. Solidarity and unanimity of opinion in a matter like this, I am sure, would have carried great weight. The Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri, I believe the Honourable Members are not unaware, was at one time sanguine of success in bringing about a satisfactory settlement, and he was pilloried in the extremist press and platform for his optimism. I think it is the personal knowledge of the actual situation, which he acquired in the course of his tours in the countries concerned, that turned him into a pessimist. After having seen with his own eyes the inhuman treatment meted out to his countrymen in those countries, and after having heard the many tales of grievances they had to tell, and, above all, finding that their opponents—I may say their oppressors —took up a most unyielding attitude and showed a determined unwillingness to entertain even reasonable proposals, he must have realised the futility of the efforts made and the steps taken from time to time to ameliorate the pitiable condition of his countrymen. In such circumstances, I believe, he was perfectly justified in using the strong language that he used in giving expression to his disappointment and in suggesting certain extraordinary measures. It seems, Sir, that those who are inclined to take exception to what the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri said, are not in touch with the intelligentsia of the country, the people who really and seriously think about such matters. I believe if the Honourable Sir Narasimha Sarma had opportunties of personally seeing and hearing all that the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri saw and heard, he would not have thought that the mild measures he is inclined to advocate would produce the desired effect. In going through the magazine, "Indians Abroad", I happened to come across a passage in which public opinion has been expressed by a certain person. It runs as follows :

"Is not the time ripe for the Indian leaders to devote their attention towards their exiled brethren also? It is an admitted fact that in the past, Leaders of Indian thought and the Indian National Congress did nothing to prevent and redress the various wrongs under which our people are labouring. The member in charge of the Emigration Portfolio in the Viceroy's Executive

Council is an Indian and of our own blood—the Honourable Sir B. N. Sarma. He must be able to feel the difficulties of his own brethren in the Colonies and he should take up this question. Hitherto he was practically in slumber. We hope that now at least he will awake, fear God, and for the sake of humanity begin to act "

I think those who are really aware of the intensity of feeling in the country cannot be so callous as not to feel the urgent necessity of adopting such measures as would prove really effective in removing the disadvantages, the difficulties and the disabilities under which our countrymen are labouring. I do not think it desirable to take up the time of the Council by enumerating the various grievances of our brethren in the Colonies. I think these are too well known to need repetition. I believe, Sir, the days of paper despatches and telegraphic protests are gone, and the time has come for taking more decisive and stronger action. An impression seems to be gaining ground (it is not at all the credit of the authorities) that the Government of India and even the Imperial Government are powerless to protect the Indians who are entirely at the mercy of the Colonial Whites. They have so far disregarded and, I think, will continue to disregard the agitation in this country. What does it matter to them if we make a noise without hurting them? This is an age of self-assertion; unless we can effectively assert ourselves, our representations and our requests will, I am afraid, be unheeded. I think, Sir, the self-respect of the people of India, and the self-respect of the Government of India as well, demand that such effective retaliatory measures should be adopted without further delay as would produce the desired effect. The time has come when the policy of representation should be changed. We should not ask any longer as a matter of favour what we are entitled to demand as a matter of right.

The speech, though short, was impressive. When the Council meeting was over the Hon'ble Mr. Missir told Maulvi Abdul Karim that Mr. Srinivash Sastri had told him, "Mr. Abdul Karim's speech was such that it would

have done credit to any speaker in the world." What happened the day following confirmed that the speech had really created a good impression. The late Hon'ble Dr. Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi gave an evening party on the 21st March. When M. Abdul Karim's car arrived at the party ground, the Hon'ble Sir Narasimha Sarma, the leader of the Council of State, who so long had not even had the courtesy of speaking to him, quickly came to him and congratulated him on his previous day's "excellent speech."

On the 24th March Maulvi Abdul Karim put a series of questions regarding the appointment of Muslims (1) as superior officers in the Imperial Secretariat, (2) as Secretariat Superintendents, (3) on the North-Western and Eastern Bengal Railways, (4) as superior officers on the Railway Board, (5) as officers on the Railways and in various Departments of Indian Railways, (6) in Agency and Loco Departments of Railways. The Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar and the Hon'ble Mr. D. T. Chadwick gave suitable replies to the questions. Before leaving the Council Maulvi Abdul Karim had the satisfaction of seeing Muslims appointed to some of the posts referred to above.

That day the Hon'ble Mr. A. C. Mcwatters, the Finance Secretary, presented the Indian Finance Bill and Maulvi Abdul Karim made the following speech :—

"In spite of what my Honourable friend, Nawab Sir Umar Hayat Khan, said I think it is a wise decision on the part of Government to reduce the salt tax which hit the poor hard. People in the position of my friend have not much occasion to come in contact with the poor, and that is the reason why they cannot realise their difficulties. As regards the other things which the Honourable Member said, I do not know whether he was at all serious. We have lived in India for centuries on terms of peace and amity. Even in the autocratic

days, when the Mussalmans ruled over this country, there was not, as the gentleman indicated, any very great fear of social rupture. The Mussalman Emperors took advantage of expert knowledge in financial and even in military matters from their non-Muslim subjects.

As regards the demand for self-government, I would not use the word Swaraj about the definition of which I find there has been so much controversy. It is not a fact that the members of my community are not as anxious to get it as the members of other communities. I believe, Sir, if it is to be a Raj other than a British Raj it will be an Indian Raj and not a Hindu or a Muhammadan Raj. I do not think that the Hindus, although they are the original inhabitants of this country, are in a position, after we have been domiciled for such a length of time, to do without us and they should also bear in mind that we have come here to stay. So the only course is to come to an amicable settlement so that we may have self-government.

. . . . . The net addition to the revenue of the country in the year 1923-24, as the result of doubling the salt tax, was only about one-third of what was estimated, a crore and a half instead of four crores. I wish, Sir, for such a comparatively paltry sum, without which no great dislocation would have taken place in the administration of the country, so extraordinary a measure as "certification" had not been resorted to. If public opinion had not been disregarded in the manner in which it was done, and if due deference had been shown to what the representatives of the people tried their best to impress upon the authorities, I think there would not have been so much irritation in the country and the regrettable obstruction in the way of a timely satisfactory settlement of that vexed problem of expansion of the constitution so as to meet the wishes of the people, could have been, to a great extent, avoided. It is hoped that in future care would be taken not to sacrifice popularity which, to my mind, is a very great asset to the administration of a country, particularly by alien rulers, to enthusiasm for a balanced budget. It would be unwise, I think, to ignore the unexpected, I may say undreamt of, change that is taking place in the

mentality and outlook of the people. I think it would be statesmanship of a high order to take careful note of these and to revise and modify the ideas and ideals of power and prestige so as to suit these to the changed circumstances. I wish, Sir, the word *"zid"*, the full connotation of which can hardly be conveyed by any English word I know, had not found a place in the vocabulary of administrators and statesmen. I believe it is at the root of many avoidable troubles. With instances before them of many a finally settled fact getting easily unsettled, not only in other countries such as Egypt, but even in India itself, it would be, I think, too much to expect that people can any longer be bulliel to acquiesce in measures they do not approve or appreciate. I would appeal with all the earnestness I can command to those whom Providence in this critical stage of the history of modern India has given an opportunity of making or marring her immediate future, to be actuated by such a solemn sense of duty, to be animated by such a high sense of responsibility, as to able to fulfil the noble mission of making a governed people self-governing.

I would like to refer to another matter, and that is the Meston Committee's Award to Bengal. Now that the salt tax has been reduced I am not at all certain what will happen to provincial contributions. (*The Honourable Sir Basil Blackett*: "Hear, hear"). It was nothing short of an injustice that was done to my province by the Meston Committee. We have been told that through some mysterious miscalculations the Committee did not see its way to allow Bengal to have sufficient revenue to meet her normal expenditure, not to speak of any margin for desired expansion in any direction. Perhaps the Honourable Members are aware that Bengal gets nothing of the income of its various industrial and manufacturing activities. What has been the result of this? The result has been that by an unfortunate irony of fate one of the wealthiest provinces in the Empire has to live upon, what shall I say, charity. It had to ask, as a matter of grace, for what it could have claimed as a matter of right. But for the remission made by the Government of India of 63 lakhs of its contribution the administration

of the province would have been very seriously dislocated. In presenting the Budget for 1923-24 the Finance Member of Bengal observed :

"We cannot look on this Budget with any great satisfaction. It makes no provision for the development and allows for no progress. It merely permits the carrying on of the administration in its minimum essentials and that, too, only by drawing to some extent on our balances."[1]

Sir, I cannot persuade myself to believe, as some people are so uncharitable as to say, that the financial embarrassment of Bengal was purposely caused in order to cripple her industrial and political activities. What I believe is that it was to keep the topheavy administration of the Central Government agoing that the financial resources of the provinces had to be drawn upon. Unless there is a substantial reduction in the expenditure on administration, particularly under the military head, I do not think it is possible to restore financial equilibrium. That more than half the revenues of the country, over 60 crores out of 107, is required for the purposes of defence unmistakably shows that there is not that freedom from fear from external invasions and internal disturbances which the country is entitled to enjoy under a Government such as the British. I think, Sir, as many of my countrymen think, that the military policy of the Government of India requires a thorough revision, and a searching inquiry into the proportion which the military expenditure should bear to the general expenditure of the administration is urgently called for. Until this is done, unless the permanent expenditure of the administration is curtailed to an appreciable extent, there can be little hope, I think, of placing the finances of the country on a sound and satisfactory basis. In conclusion, I would like to say that I endorse every word that my Honourable friend, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikary, said with regard to the right of this House to scrutinise and criticise the details of the Budget and to come to a definite conclusion of its own before passing the Finance Bill simply because it was thrown out by the other House."

On 15th September, 1924, the Hon'ble Mr. J. Crerar (Home Secretary) moved a Resolution regarding the adoption of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Superior Civil Services in India (generally known as Lee Commission). To this several amendments were moved by different members. The Hon'ble Mr. (now Sir) Yamin Khan in his speech regarding his amendment observed "I have a pamphlet with me prepared by my Honourable colleague, Maulvi Abdul Karim Sahib, who has given the figures here. It was sent to the Government of India, I believe, in the last winter session, and he has given the figures of all. I shall not thrust the details upon the House, but I shall give the totals of all the figures—that the Musalmans, in all these Departments, Railway, Finance and Accounts, Public Works Department, Education, Police, Agriculture, Jails, Medical, Judicial, Indian Civil Service, in all of them together their percentage is 2.9. This is their ratio at present in the All-India Government Services . . . "

After the Hon'ble Mr. Yamin Khan the Hon'ble Maulvi Abdul Karim spoke as follows:—

"Sir, I beg to second the amendment, though I am not quite sure that this important problem can be properly solved by an amendment of the kind that has been moved. As regards the Indianisation of the Services, my community is as keen as any other community in India, but naturally they desire that they should get their legitimate share in the services of the country and Indianization should not amount practically to non-Muslimisation. I think Honourable Members are not perhaps unaware that the representation of the Muslims in Government services has hitherto been most inadequate. In some of the most important Services, they are altogether unrepresented, and in others their representation is far below what their numerical strength, communal importance and administrative capacity

entitle them to get. In some of the Services, they are altogether unrepresented, as I have said. In the pamphlet, referred to by my Honourable friend, I have shown that in the Superior Civil Services in India their proportion barely comes up to 3 per cent, while the proportion of non-Muslim Indians comes up to over 20 per cent, and that of the Europeans and Anglo-Indians to over 76 per cent. Such disparity in the number of Government employees belonging to different communities cannot but foster much discontent and ultimately lead to great administrative difficulties. This is a fact, Sir, that should not be lost sight of by any of the parties concerned. It is about two years ago that a Resolution was passed in the Assembly that—"in making recruitment for the Services under the Central Government, steps should be taken to secure that Services are not unduly over-weighted with representation of any one community or province and that as far as possible claims of all communities and provinces are considered."

I believe it was an amended Resolution by my Honourable Colleague in front of me. If prompt action had been taken on this Resolution, there would have been hardly any cause for complaint. As far as I am aware no effect has been given to the Resolution up to this time, and the Muslims now are as conspicuous by their absence in many of the offices under the Government of India as they were before. This had to be admitted by the Honourable Mr. Crerar and other officials who gave answers to my questions on the subject in this House. I do not like to take up the time of this House by citing concrete instances of unjust ignoring of the claims of deserving Muslim candidates. Suffice it to say that there have been, to my knowledge, many instances of this kind.

So long the excuse for not appointing Muslims was that they did not possess the requisite intellectual qualifications. Now that they have taken University degrees and have qualified themselves in that respect, other excuses are brought forward, I regret to say, to keep them back. If due credit had been given for strong physique, family traditions, mental calibre, moral stamina, administrative capacity and a sense of honesty and integrity, a

combination of all of which makes an ideal officer, I believe my community would not have suffered so much as they have done. I think it would be uncharitable to presume that the descendants of those who ruled India for about seven centuries have so far deteriorated as not to be able to discharge the duties of responsible posts under the present Government.

When such is the position of Muslims in respect of Government service, it is strange that an impression should have gained ground among some of the non-Muslims that Government have been especially favouring the Muslims at their cost. It is hoped that the facts and figures given in the pamphlet referred to by the mover of this amendment, would show that far from any special favour having been shown to the community, justice has not been done to them in the matter of appointments to Government service. It has been noted, however, with satisfaction that in discussing the recommendations of the Lee Commission, Sir Alexander Muddiman made an announcement in the Legislative Assembly regarding the employment of Muslims and other minority communities. It is hoped that early steps would be taken to remove the grievances of these communities.

Unemployment among the Muslim graduates and under-graduates has been causing for some time in some parts of the country great anxiety. If they join hands with the unemployed graduates and under-graduates of other communities, some of whom, I regret to have to say, have committed regrettable excesses, woe betide the country. I hope and trust that all well-wishers of India will devise means to minimise unemployment among the educated as far as possible.

If I had any hand in the framing of the amendment moved by my Honourable friend, I would have excepted Bengal also from the amendment, because I am not certain that Mussalmans of Bengal will accept the proportion he has fixed. But, as I have said I do not think it is possible for this House to solve this important problem. I think it is a case of mutual understanding between the different communities inhabiting India, and I have reason to hope that the time is soon coming when they

will realise the gravity of the situation and will try to come to an amicable settlement."

Maulvi Abdul Karim's speeches, those mentioned and others, created such a good impression that he was requested, from time to time, by some of the honourable members to support the resolutions they proposed to move. The Hon'ble Sardar Jogendra Singh (afterwards a Minister in the Punjab) requested him to support his resolution, "This Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council that at least one competent Indian should be appointed as early as possible to the Railway Board taking into consideration the wide range of Railway activities", and M. Abdul Karim spoke as follows:—

"I am exceedingly glad that Government has accepted this Resolution. The Railway Board has the largest number of employees in any of the departments of the Government of India. I believe no other department requires so many hands to carry on the work. On the 31st of March 1923 there were 750,000 railway servants in India. I am sorry to have to say that for a long time the superior railway service was closed to the Indians. I am glad, however, to have been told by the Honourable Member who has replied to Sardar Jogendra Singh, that of late Indianisation has been going on satisfactorily. There are about 2,000 officers in the superior ranks, and of these only a few are Indians. There is hardly any Indian, I think there is no Indian, holding any responsible post in the railway service, such as Agent, Chief Engineer, Loco Superintendent, Chief Controller of Stores, or Traffic Manager in any of the Indian railways. Even in the subordinate railway service, the number of Indians is very small. Most of these posts are monopolised by Anglo-Indians, who now-a-days call themselves pure Indians.

The railways being the property of Indian tax-payers, it is but natural that Indians should desire, nay demand, that these should be worked in the interests of Indians. But I am afraid this has not been the case. It has been said by the Honourable

Mr. Bell that Indians cannot expect in the near future to get into the Railway Board because they will have to gain the requisite technical knowledge. As far as I see, the work of the Railway Board is broadly divided into four parts : (1) commercial and traffic, (2) financial, (3) engineering, and (4) administrative. I think there are Indians who can do each of these works as well as it is being done now. For example, Mr. S. C. Ghose was the first Indian Assistant Traffic Superintendent of the East Indian Railway and rose from Rs. 200 to Rs. 800. When he resigned this post, he joined the Khetra Mohan Company and constructed the Jessore-Jhenidah Railway, of which he was Manager. On severing his connection with the Khetra Mohan Company, he joined the McLeod Company and constructed the Burdwan-Katwa, Bankura Light and some other lines, and was appointed Manager of these lines on a salary of Rs. 2,000 a month. He then came to the Railway Board as a special officer on Rs. 1,500 and rose to 3,000. He left the Railway Board on the completion of the special work. He is an expert in rates, on which he wrote a book which was highly appreciated by all the railway officials. I think he is well qualified to be a member of the Railway Board. Another function of the Board is financial. There is Mr. Hydari, who was Accountant-General of Bombay and is now the Financial Minister of Hyderabad. I think he is quite competent to take charge of the financial work of the Board. As for the Engineering Department, there is Rai Bahadur Ralla Ram, who was the Chief Engineer of the Eastern Bengal Railway on Rs. 2,500. I have no doubt he would have been the Agent of that Railway if he had not been an Indian. He is now the Manager of the Patiala State Railways. I think he is quite competent to do the engineering work of the Railway Board. There is another gentleman, Mr. Ali Akbar, who is a very experienced engineer. He was the Superintending Engineer and Secretary to the Government of Bombay. I think he also is competent to take charge of the engineering work of the Railway Board. As for the administrative department, Sir Ibrahim Rahimtulla, the President of the Fiscal Commission and Sir Purshotamdas, I think, are quite competent to take charge of the administrative work of the Railway Board. I hope

and trust that one of these men or some other competent man will be appointed a Member of the Railway Board in the near future. I need scarcely say that, unless and until a competent native of India is appointed a Member of the Railway Board, the interests of Indians will not be properly looked after.

This was M. Abdul Karim's last speech in the Council of State. During the Simla session Maulvi Abdul Karim felt unwell and was told by medical experts that the high altitude of Simla was not agreeable to him. At this time the Right Hon'ble Srinivash Sastri resigned the membership of the Council of State for the same reason. When Maulvi Abdul Karim thought of attending the winter session at Delhi and then to tender resignation, a vacancy occurred in the Bengal Legislative Council. He could not stand for it without resigning the membership of the higher Council. So he tendered his resignation and offered himself as a candidate for election to the Bengal Council. The gentleman, who had stood in his way when he first sought election to the Bengal Council, was again up against him, although he had supported his candidature to the Council of State. It seems, for reasons known to him, he did not like that M. Abdul Karim should be a member of the Bengal Council. He again succeeded in getting him defeated by a few votes. But at the next Council election M. Abdul Karim was returned by a large majority.

It seems to have been a sad mistake on M. Abdul Karim's part to leave the Council of State, where he was doing very useful work, by which he became known throughout India. When a vacancy occurred in the post of Presidency Magistrate of Bombay, he received a telegram from the Musalmans of that town to try to get a Musalman appointed to the post. The only other Council member

who had received such a telegram was Mr. Jinnah. Similarly some Muslims of some other parts of India sought M. Abdul Karim's advice and assistance.

The following is a copy of the "Note" of Maulvi Abdul Karim referred to by Mr. Yamin Khan in his Council speech :—

A Note in connection with the Report on the Superior Civil Services in India.

When steps are taken to give effect to the recommendations of the Lee Commission regarding the Superior Civil Services in India, the question of adequate representation of the Muslims in those Services should be taken into due consideration. It need hardly be stated that at present the community is wholly unrepresented in some of the most important Services and in others their representation is very far from what their numerical strength and communal importance entitle them to have. The replies given to the questions I asked in the Council of State (copy attached for reference) clearly show how very discouraging the situation is to the Muslim community. At the headquarters of the Government of India there was not, in March last, a single Muslim Officer in any of the Imperial Secretariat offices, while there were 20 non-Muslim Indians holding positions of trust and responsibility. There are about 2,000 Officers in all the Indian Railways and of these not even 50 are Muslims. In the Military Finance Department, if my information is correct, there is not a single Muslim Officer in the whole of India. The Finance and Accounts Department has about 130 Indian Officers of whom not even 10 are Muslims. Out of 50 Indian officers in the Scientific Services under the Department of Industries and Labour only 3 are Muslims. Thus on the whole the number of Muslim Officers, as will be seen from the attached special notes on the different services, does not perhaps exceed 5 per cent of the total number of Indian Officers, although the community is entitled to get about one-third of the posts. Such disparity in the number of Government employees belonging to different communities inhabiting the

country cannot but foster much discontent and ultimately lead to great administrative difficulties. Perhaps it is such feelings that influenced some members of communities well-known for their steadfast loyalty to Government to join movements hostile to it. In such circumstances would it not be politic to take, without further delay, such steps as would remedy this deplorable state of things?

2 Perhaps the most effective method of ensuring adequate representation of a community in any particular Service, is to fix a definite percentage of officers to be recruited from that community. The Lee Commission realised the necessity of such a procedure and, therefore, recommended that a definite percentage should be fixed for the recruitment of officers, European and Indian. What I would suggest is that the percentage fixed for Indians* be subdivided into Muslim and non-Muslim. The announcement made by Sir Malcolm Hailey in the Legislative Assembly on the 10th March, 1923, that there should be no preponderance of any class or community in the Services under the direct control of the Government of India, leaves no doubt as to the acceptance by the Government of the principle of communal representation in the Services. Unless, however, a definite percentage is fixed and officers are recruited keeping this in view, the continuance of preponderance of certain communities in the Services can hardly be checked. Recruitment of officers from different communities in proportion to the percentage fixed will create an atmosphere of tranquillity by putting a stop to petty quarrels and jealousies, and complaints regarding the usurpation of rights and privileges of one community by another will cease. Then there will be no longer any ground for the allegation that

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* The following percentages have been recommended for Indians :—

1. I.C.S.	50 per cent.	5. Political	25 per cent.
2. Police	50 ,, ,,	6. Customs	50 ,, ,,
3. Forest	75 ,, ,,	7. Telegraphs	75 ,, ,,
4. Irrigation	60 ,, ,,	8. Railway	75 ,, ,,

the claims of any particular community have been unjustly ignored and that there has been such an overwhelming preponderance in the Services of any particular community as to be said that India is practically their Raj. The Muslims are as keen about the Indianization of the Services as any other community. But if Indianization practically amounts to Hinduization they cannot welcome it.

3. The fixation of percentage of officers in Government service for particular communities is not a new thing. The attached copies of circulars issued by the Government of Bengal will clearly show that action in this line was taken by that Government so far back as 1897 in respect of the important Department of Education. No serious objection, so far as I am aware, was taken and the efficiency of the Department has not suffered on account of the percentage of officers from the two important communities having been fixed. If, in a Department in which academic attainments are more in requisition than elsewhere, efficiency has not been affected by fixation of percentage of officers on communal grounds, there can be no reasonable risk of its deterioration in other departments, if similar action is taken. It may be noted in this connection that an important section of the Hindu community have agreed to the adoption of a fixed percentage of officers belonging to particular communities.

I understand the Meteorological Department of the Government of India, some years ago, fixed the percentage of Subordinate Hindu and Muslim employees in the offices under it. No objection was raised to this and work is going on as smoothly as ever. Does not all this clearly show that there is no reason to think that the system of fixed percentage of officers from different communities will prove unworkable?

4. It is far from my intention, in making the abovementioned suggestion, that the efficiency of the Services should in any way be affected. What is wanted is that properly qualified candidates from different communities should be impartially recruited for the Services, so that they may not be monopolised by any particular community. If competitive examinations are held, the best of the Hindu candidates and the best of the

Muslim candidates may be separately selected in proportion to the fixed percentage.

5. A sufficient number of Muslim candidates with the requisite qualifications might not have been available in the past, but at present there is no dearth of Muslim graduates and undergraduates, well-qualified for Government Service. In fact unemployment among them has been causing such discontent as it would be unwise to ignore. Besides, the University test, I think, is not the only criterion of efficiency as, I believe, I conclusively proved in a letter which I addressed some time ago to the Press, on the "Muslims and Government Service." There are qualifications other than intellectual, such as strong physique, mental calibre, moral stamina, family traditions, social position, administrative capacity, sense of honour and integrity, a combination of all of which makes an ideal officer. I understand there are several Muslims in subordinate capacities in Government offices, who are fully qualified for higher positions to which they cannot rise on account of overcrowding by non-Muslims.

6. It is difficult to find out from the Administration Reports the number of Muslim employees in different offices. In order to meet this difficulty I proposed in one of the questions I asked in the Council of State that Muslim and non-Muslim employees in the Railway Department should be separately shown in future in the Explanatory Memorandum on the Railway Budget as well as in Appendix B of the Administration Report (Vol. VI), as is done in the case of Europeans and Anglo-Indians. In reply I was told that the tabulation of the information asked for would throw extra work on the Railway Administration, which, in the circumstances, Government were not prepared to ask them to undertake. I believe the extraction of the required information from the lists of staff maintained in different offices will hardly entail any very heavy extra work. An intelligent clerk, I think, should be able to do the work in an hour or so. I need scarcely say that in the absence of this information, effect can hardly be given to the policy of preventing the preponderance of any one class or community in the Government Services in pursuance of the policy referred to above. Moreover, I think such informa-

tion should be published in the interests of Government itself, so that people may have no suspicion in the matter and there may be no occasion for allegations as regards subordination of Muslim interests to the clamour of more powerful communities and as regards hesitation on the part of Government to publish it for fear of exposure. In order to remove such an unpleasant impression, it is desirable that Muslim and non-Muslim employees in all the Departments under the control of the Government of India should be separately shown in the Annual Administration Reports and such other publications. It would also be useful if comparison were made with the figures of the previous year so that it might be easily seen what progress has taken place in the course of one year. It would be well to advise the Local Governments to follow the same procedure in case of the Departments under their control.

It would be a great advantage if Dr. Rushbrook Williams could give in his book "India in 1923-24", which he must be preparing now, statistics in the following form :—

Salaries.	TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES.	NON-INDIANS.		INDIANS.	
	——	Europeans.	Anglo Indians	Muslims	Non-Muslims.
Drawing Rs. 1,000 and over		...	.		
Drawing between Rs. 500 and 1,000 . .		.	..	..	..
Drawing between Rs. 250 and 500 .	...		..		...
Drawing between Rs. 100 and 250	..	...	...	...	.
Drawing between Rs. 50 and 100	.	.	.	...	...
Drawing below Rs. 50 ...	.	...	...	..	...
Menials	..	...	...	...	...
TOTAL ...	...	...	...	...	..

I need scarcely say that periodical publication of statistics showing the number of Muslim employees in the different Departments under the Government will have a reassuring effect on the community.

7. In order to effectively safeguard the interests of the Muslim community in respect of Government Services, it is most desirable that there should be on the proposed Public Service Commission an adequate representation of the community. In view of their grievances it would not be perhaps unreasonable to suggest that two of the five members of the proposed Commission should be Muslims, so that they may be in a position to protect the interests of their co-religionists. The Secretariat staff of the Public Service Commission should have an adequate number of Muslims both in the Superior and Subordinate grades.

Briefly, the position is that the number of Muslims in the Government Services is very small, and there is such a preponderance of other communities that it may lead to administrative difficulties. Early steps should, therefore, be taken for the appointment of an adequate number of Muslims. Qualified candidates are now available.

Perhaps the most effective method of ensuring adequate representation of the Muslim community is to fix a definite percentage of officers to be recruited from that community. Statistics showing the number of officers belonging to different communities should be published periodically. There should be adequate representation of the Muslim community on the proposed Public Service Commission for the protection of their interests.

Simla,
The 1st June, 1924.

ABDUL KARIM,
Member of the Council of State.

The following is a copy of a representation made by the Muslim members of the two India Councils regarding M. Abdul Karim's above-mentioned "Note" :—

Simla, the 10th June, 1924.

"To

THE HONOURABLE SIR ALEXANDER MUDDIMAN, KT., C.S.I., C.I.E.,
Member in Charge of the Home Department.

SIR,

We, the undersigned members of the Council of State and the Legislative Assembly beg to submit herewith the enclosed Note, drawn up by the Honourable Maulavi Abdul Karim, on the paucity of Muslims in the Government Service. It will be seen that in some of the Departments under the Government of India there is not a single Muslim Officer and in others their proportion is not even 5 per cent of the total number of Officers. For instance, the Indian Railways have got about 2,000 Officers, of whom not even 50 are Muslims. We need hardly say that this is a state of things that calls for immediate remedial measures. As pointed out in the note, unless a definite percentage is fixed for the recruitment of Muslim officers it is not possible to secure, for a very long time to come, adequate representation of the community in the Services. We have reason to believe that now there will be no dearth of Muslim candidates with the requisite qualifications. In these circumstances we beg to request the favour of your kindly taking early steps to remove the grievances of the Muslim community in the matter of appointment to Government Service.

We have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servants,

(Sd.) Umar Hayat Tiwana.	(Sd.) Md. Yakub.
,, S. M. V. Oosman.	,, Abul Kasem.
,, Abdul Karim.	,, G. Murtaza.
,, Abdul Qaiyum.	,, Alimuz Zaman Chaudhury.

And 7 other members.

Maulavi Abdul Karim then led a deputation to the Viceroy, Lord Reading, to whom the following address was presented :—

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the undersigned members of the Legislative Assembly and the Council of State, most respectfully beg to lay before Your Excellency the following facts regarding the inadequacy of representation of our community in the Services in India for Your Excellency's kind consideration.

2. As few Muslims succeeded in entering Government service in the beginning, non-Muslims got an opportunity to monopolise most of the posts in different Departments. This state of things and certain events in the Punjab and elsewhere and also the publication of the Lee Commission Report have brought the question into prominence. Agitation has been going on in the public press and meetings are being held all over the country emphasising the necessity of Muslims getting their due share in the Government Services. Facts and figures showing the position of Muslims in Government service were given in a pamphlet compiled by the Hon'ble Maulvi Abdul Karim of Bengal, which was submitted to Government in June last. In the summary printed on page 16 of the pamphlet it was shown that in the 12 important Services which actually carry on the administration of the country, there are less than 3 per cent Muslim officers, while they are entitled to about 33 per cent on the basis of their numerical strength and communal importance. The condition of Muslims in the subordinate services is in no way better than that in the higher services

3. Mussalmans have been so long under the impression that their rights were being safeguarded; but they are grieved to find that they are in a hopeless minority in Government Service. On account of the non-Muslim monopoly in almost all the Departments, Muslims do not get an opportunity of getting into the services. The actual position of the Mussalmans in the services, as shown in the pamphlet referred to, is leading the Muslim public to a belief that the Government has not taken necessary steps to safeguard the interests of the community so

far as the question of services is concerned. Some of them think that they cannot expect much from the Government which, yielding to the pressure of non-Muslim agitation, is giving more and more every day to others, quite regardless of Muslim interests.

4. In the debate in the Legislative Assembly held on the 8th. February, 1924, on the grant of full self-government in India, Sir Malcolm Hailey laid great stress on the protection of the interests of the minority communities. It is, therefore, hoped that early steps would be taken to remove the grievances of these communities.

5. If Muslims are given a chance to enter Government Service in sufficient numbers, we have no doubt they will be able to hold their own with officers of other communities in different ranks of the Services, by satisfactory discharge of the duties entrusted to them. Unless Mussalmans are appointed in sufficient numbers to different Services, superior as well as subordinate, the administration of the country will practically pass into the hands of one particular community.

6. There seems to be no valid objection to fixing the number of appointments to be reserved for the Mussalmans. The Lee Commission Report has fixed the number of appointments for Europeans and Indians. Indian appointments can similarly be sub-divided into Muslim and non-Muslim. Such a sub-division follows naturally from the recognized principle of separate communal representation. To make this principle more practicable, we respectfully beg to suggest that it may be incorporated in the revised rules under the Government of India Act, which will be framed as a result of the deliberations of the Reforms Enquiry Committee.

7. The Hon'ble Sir Alexander Muddiman, who is in entire sympathy with Muslim aspirations, has suggested that the nomination system of recruitment be introduced for the Muslims and other minority communities. He thinks that this is not a very satisfactory way of helping the backward communities, but he cannot think of any other way out of the difficulty. The object, however, can be attained, in our humble opinion, if the com-

petitive examinations are so conducted as to enable the Musalmans to compete among themselves for the posts reserved for them, just as, we presume, under the Lee Commission Report, Europeans will compete with Europeans and Indians with Indians. Thus the best Muslims and the best non-Muslims will get the posts reserved for them. Such an arrangement is not unsupported by precedents. We understand the U. P. Government has introduced a competitive system of examination on that principle; and in the Punjab in competitive examination for the post of Extra Assistant Commissioner, University graduates and district candidates compete among themselves separately, such separate competition presenting no difficulty. Successful Muslim candidates in such competitive examinations, when put in charge of responsible posts, are sure to show equal, if not better, efficiency and administrative capacity as their non-Muslim countrymen.

8. Such an arrangement would remove the charge which is unjustly laid at the door of the Government, that they foster Hindu-Muslim dissensions by keeping the billets in their gift and then favouring one community at the expense of another; this would also remove the bitter jealousies among the various communities. We understand that the Government has already fixed the number of recruits for the Army from different communities. We, therefore, fail to see why the same principle cannot be applied in Civil Departments. The extension of this principle to Civil Departments would, on the one hand, meet communal requirements and, on the other, remove all misunderstanding on the subject.

9. With regard to subordinate services, we beg to submit that the preponderating non-Muslim element in all departments succeeds in keeping out even able and efficient Muslims, who, if they get in at all, are often put to great trouble on account of the unsympathetic atttitude of the non-Muslim element working against them. If the number of Muslim posts is fixed in every department, the evil can be checked most successfully.

10. We have ventured to go into the subject at some length, feeling, as we do, that grave political issues are involved. We thought it proper to bring these facts to Your Excellency's kind

notice, as we are sure that Your Excellency will take a sympathetic view and would be pleased to do what Your Excellency reasonably can, to remove the grievance of the community we have the honour to represent."

Dated Simla, the 23rd September, 1924.

Subsequently M. Abdul Karim had a private interview with His Excellency. Among other matters he represented that no Muslim from Bengal was ever appointed a member of His Excellency's Executive Council. As the late Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi was about to retire, M. Abdul Karim strongly urged the consideration of the case of Sir Abdur Rahim. His Excellency said that in case of such appointments All-India, and not Provincial, considerations guided the authorities. Thereupon M. Abdul Karim stated that he was urging the appointment of Sir Abdur Rahim not simply because he was a Bengal Muslim, but also because he was an All-India personality, having served as a Judge of the Madras High Court, and for some time as its Chief Justice, he was also a member of the Royal Commission on Services in India. Lord Reading said that what M. Abdul Karim had represented would be taken into consideration. He afterwards learnt that the appointment of Sir Habibullah had been previously decided upon.

Sir Alexander Muddiman, Member in Charge of the Home Department, was, very much impressed by M. Abdul Karim's representation. At the close of the Simla Session when he went to take leave of him, he said, "I shall not forget that you do not want Hinduisation of Services." Sometime after Sir Alexander Muddiman came to Calcutta and put up with the Hon'ble Sir Stephenson. One day Maulavi Abdul Karim went to see him. He told

him, "I remember what you told me about Indianisation of Services. I was dining last night with the Chief Justice and I spoke to him about the appointment of Muslims in the Judicial Service. He told me that Muslims had not good lawyers among them." Hearing this M. Abdul Karim said, "he was quite right; we have not got Rashbeharis; but is it Rashbeharis who are appointed Munsifs? My information is that it is only those Hindu lawyers, who fail to be successful at the Bar that accept Munsifships; as for the Muslim lawyers, the best among them have to accept Munsifship if it can be secured, because they have not got, like their Hindu brethren, such lawyers at the Bar as can help them in their practice." M. Abdul Karim added, "If you call for one hundred judgments passed by Hindu Munsifs and one hundred judgments passed by Muslim Munsifs and find that on appeal more of the judgments passed by the latter were upset than those passed by the former, then I have nothing to say, but if you find less or even equal number of Muslim Munsifs' judgments were reversed on appeal, then you cannot say the Hindu Munsifs are better qualified than the Muslim Munsifs." Sir Alexander Muddiman seemed to have been impressed by what M. Abdul Karim stated. A week after M. Abdul Karim had an interview with Lord Lytton, who told him the very same thing about the appointment of Muslims as Munsifs (most probably His Excellency, the Chief Justice and Sir Alexander Muddiman dined together and had a talk about the appointment of Muslims) and M. Abdul Karim gave him the same reply. The result was that since that time more Muslim lawyers have been appointed Munsifs. I believe during the last

fifteen years many more Muslims have been appointed Munsifs than during the previous fifty years. This shows that much depends upon the manner in which a representation is made.

Informal offer of Vice-Chancellorship.—When Maulavi Abdul Karim was in the Council of State, one day the late Sir Bhupendranath Basu, who was at that time Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, called upon him, probably at the instance of Lord Lytton, and enquired of him, "Can you suggest any name, preferably that of a Muslim, who may be appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University on the expiration of my term?" When one or two names that M. Abdul Karim mentioned were not approved, Sir Bhupendranath said, "What about you? May I know if you are willing to accept the Vice-Chancellorship." Replying in the negative, M. Abdul Karim said that it would not be convenient for him to stay at Calcutta as his health and that of his family required his stay at Ranchi during the greater part of the year. Besides, there was no pay for the Vice-Chancellor, and it would be difficult for him to maintain two decent establishments, one at Ranchi and another at Calcutta. Moreover, he had to attend meetings of the Council of State at Delhi and Simla. If M. Abdul Karim had agreed, he would have been the first Muslim Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University.

CHAPTER VII.

A MEMBER OF BENGAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

This volume has already run sufficient length. Maulavi Abdul Karim's work in the Bengal Legislative Council, for about a decade, will require a volume of its own. I propose, therefore, to print M. Abdul Karim's speeches in the Bengal Council, dealing with various important subjects, in a separate volume with the exception of two, which are being printed as specimens. His important speeches were published in newspapers with laudatory comments. On more occasions than one he was congratulated not only by his non-official colleagues but also by some of the Government members, such as, the late Sir Provash Chunder Mitter, Sir B. L. Mitter, Mr. (now Sir Robert) Reid, Mr. G. P. Hogg, the late Nawab Bahadur Nawab Ali Chaudhury, and Nawab Bahadur Sir Abdul Karim Ghuznavi. Those who heard M. Abdul Karim speak in the Council meetings will fully subscribe to the following remarks of the Amrit Bazar Patrika in its issue of 24th February, 1937 :—"On the Muslim benches the absence of Maulavi Abdul Karim, perhaps the oldest among the Muslim members, will be keenly felt. His fine English, his persuasive eloquence, and his sober views combined to have a steadying influence on the House when it was swayed by a storm of passions and prejudices. When he spoke his voice shook with fervour of his emotions and though so old, his words could be distinctly heard from the farthest end of the House." It

is the misfortune of Bengal, particularly of the Bengal Muslims, that such active and useful members were shunted out of the Council by the undreamt-of treachery of some of those whom they honestly believed to be their well-wishers and for whom they did all they could. All this will be fully described in the second volume, so that the younger generation may learn a lesson that may stand them in good stead in their life.

On account of the renewed opposition of the same person, who had opposed his election to the Bengal Legislature on previous occasions, it might have been difficult for M. Abdul Karim to enter the Bengal Council had not Sir Abdur Rahim come to his help. He supported him whole-heartedly and went so far as to go to Midnapur and some other places to canvass for him. In such circumstances it may seem strange that when an occasion arose for putting him in a responsible position, he was superseded by one whom Sir Abdur Rahim claimed to have "raised from the dust," and whose subsequent faithlessness he described as "the greatest surprise of my life."

Resolution for an Upper Chamber.

"I rise to oppose the Resolution. In these days when there is an insistent demand for democratic institutions, a proposal for the establishment of an *Upper Chamber* is a retrograde move. Having been, for some time, a member of such a chamber, the Council of State, I am not unaware of its composition and working. We have not got from any quarter the slightest indication as to what the proposed Chamber would be like. Would it be a replica of the British House of Lords, which has outgrown its utility, and for the abolition of which, in spite of its age-long

traditions, there is persistent agitation? Would it be something like the Indian Council of State, which is dominated by the representatives of the titled and landed aristocracy and capitalists, and is thus the negation of democracy? Though intended to be a revising body and to serve as a check on hasty legislation, instances are not wanting of the obstruction of useful measures that were not in the particular interests of those who usually elect and nominate members of this Chamber. In a province like Bengal, the establishment of an Upper Chamber, I need hardly say, would be most detrimental to the interests of the bulk of its people. Without knowing the constitution and the real functions of the Provincial Upper Chamber, it would be something like signing a blank cheque to agree to its being established. I am not quite certain that the mover of the resolution has not confused Federal Government in other countries with its Federating units. Federal Governments, as a rule, have two Chambers, but constitutions corresponding to that of our Provincial Administration, generally have only one Chamber.

Under the Reform Scheme of Administration, which is at present operating, while an Upper Chamber was established at the centre, it was not thought necessary to have such chambers in the provinces. Might I enquire what has happened in the meantime to justify the establishment of such Chambers in the Provinces under the new constitution? The Punjab and the Assam Legislative Councils threw out proposals for Second Chambers in those Provinces, and Madras, I understand, has decided not to have such a Chamber. What is undesirable for these provinces is undesirable for Bengal also. It is only in the U P., the stronghold of landed aristocracy, that the proposal for a Second Chamber has been accepted.

Bengal is pre-eminently an agricultural province, where the interests of the tillers of the soil really constitute the interests of the country. Should anything be done that would jeopardise those interests? Higher franchise for the Upper Chamber would, as a rule, preclude people of moderate means, who form the majority of the intelligentsia, from finding a place in it, and the result will be that measures beneficial to the aristocratic and

capitalistic classes, but prejudicial to the masses, would always find ready support.

Deprived, as Bengal has been, of the income from some of her most lucrative sources, it would be difficult for her to bear the burden of maintaining two costly Chambers

As regards the constitution of the Upper Chamber, in the existing circumstances I cannot think of a basis other than communal on which such a chamber can be constituted. The Prime Minister's assurance in the statement on the communal award that the "communal balance" will not be disturbed in any Provincial Second Chamber, supports this view. The present Council of State has been constituted on communal basis. If its precedent is followed, any ulterior motive that there might be for getting a Second Chamber, would be frustrated and disillusionment might come when it would be too late. All these aspects of the question, I need hardly say, require most serious consideration.

There is not much to be chosen between the aristocrats of one community and those of another. As a class they are sure to combine for the furtherance of their own particular interests which, as a rule, cannot be identical with the interests of the masses.

While large powers are going to be reserved for the Governor and the Central Government will have some revisory jurisdiction, I think there cannot be any justification for a Provincial Upper Chamber in Bengal."

The Bengal Whipping Bill.

"It is extremely to be regretted that in a matter in which there ought to have been perfect unanimity, irrespective of creed and community, there should have unfortunately arisen most uncalled for difference. I am not willing to add to the acrimonious controversy that seems to me to be far from creditable to the House.

No true religion, to my mind, can minimise the criminality of the offence that is proposed to be tackled with. As for Islamic injunctions regarding sexual immorality, I am afraid the so-called

civilised modern man with modern notions of social jurisprudence will simply shudder at the severity. I refrain from detailing the drastic punishments prescribed by the Holy Quran for such crimes lest I should be looked upon as a barbarian among so many "civilised" and ultra-modern gentlemen. Had it not been for the lamentable laxity in morals tolerated, and in some cases—even caused, by so-called present day civilisation, no occasion would have arisen for the controversy that is embittering our feelings in this House.

Taking things as they are, it is most desirable, nay essentially necessary, that effective steps should be taken to put down such heinous crimes. It is most unfortunate however, that an element of what is called communalism should have crept into the discussion of such an important matter. I cannot persuade myself to believe that the sponsor of the proposed measure, who is a great admirer of the Prophet of Islam, ever thought that there was any likelihood of its being abused in the manner of which some indication has been given. What can be more reprehensible than that such a measure should be used by designing people for a vindictive purpose? Exaggerations are made and undue and uncalled for prominence is given in the press and platform by one community to the crimes committed by the ruffians in the other. Need I remind those concerned that the more such ugly things are publicly discussed the more the atmosphere is vitiated. Had there been no bitterness and exaggeration it might not have been altogether a disservice to the cause of morality. But the spirit that prompts present propaganda in a certain section of the press and platforms cannot but be severely condemned.

It is not at all unnatural that presence of young widows should tempt morally weak people to go astray. Human nature is everywhere human nature. It is unfortunate that in this country most people in one community and some in the other are opposed to widow marriage. As long as the present state of things continues it will be very difficult to wipe out the evil.

As to the savagery of severe punishment in the case of an extremely heinous crime, what may look savage to one may be

regarded as a religious necessity by another. What about the savagery of the crime itself and the worst savagery of the bestialities and even murders that often accompany it?

May I ask in all seriousness should petty objection weigh with us when combined efforts are essential to the meeting of a situation that is so very discreditable, nay disgraceful to all concerned? Should we not sink our differences and combine and co-operate in purging the country of a crime that is so very heinous both to God and man and the victims as well as the offenders of which come from both the communities as statistics undeniably prove?

There can be no question as to the urgency of devising means to check such evils. But as these have prevailed so long a little delay might not matter much. If the proposal for circulation is merely a plea for shelving or indefinitely postponing, it cannot be supported. In view, however, of the keenness for circulation shown by a number of members, I would appeal to Sir Brojendra to agree to the Bill being taken up at the end of the Budget Session. I need hardly say that it is most desirable that such a measure should be dispassionately deliberated upon in a calm atmosphere. If after thorough discussion it is found that the proposed punishment would really prove more deterrent than what has already been provided by the existing Law, then it may be adopted without hesitation.

Calcutta Riot.—When the Hindu-Muslim riot broke out in April, 1926, Maulavi Abdul Karim took the lead in devising means for the safety of the Muslims. As far as I have been able to ascertain no one exerted himself so much as he did for the relief of his afflicted co-religionists. Sir Abdur Rahim, Mr. (now Nawab Bahadur Sir) Abdul Karim Gaznavi, Maulvi Nurul Huq Chaudhury and some other leading Muslims of Calcutta co-operated with him at this critical time. M. Abdul Karim wrote a long note

(it will be published in Volume II), describing all that had happened and suggesting various means by which the calamity might be minimised. From the following copy of a letter he wrote to the Governor's Private Secretary, indication may be had of the part he played during the crisis. He was sent for by the Governor, who discussed with him the situation.

13/1, Wellesley Square, Calcutta.
The 29th April, 1926.

DEAR MR. WILKINSON,

I am sending herewith a copy of a note I drew up and of a letter I wrote to the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur Nawab Ali Choudhury regarding the regrettable riot which has made life and property in Calcutta most unsafe. These give some idea of the indescribable troubles we have been passing through and indicates certain measures, adoption of which might lead to restoration of peace and order. I shall be much obliged if you kindly place these before His Excellency the Governor.

I am writing an exhaustive note on the riot during the Easter-Week and that is going on at present. Within two days of the breaking-out of the first riot a Muslim Relief Committee, which is located at my place, was formed at my instance. I am the Vice-President and Treasurer of the said Committee. I have thus been in constant touch with what has been occurring everyday. I shall send you a copy of the note when ready.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) ABDUL KARIM.

D. O. No. 930.
Government House, Calcutta.
3rd May, 1926.

DEAR MAULVI SAHEB,

I write to acknowledge your letter of April 29th. I have placed the enclosures before His Excellency.

Yours sincerely,
(Sd.) H. R. WILKINSON.

Hindu-Muslim Riot in Pabna.—Receiving news from Pabna that Hindus and Muslims were bitterly fighting with one another, Maulavi Abdul Kartm went there, accompanied by Nawab Musharraf Hosain and succeeded in bringing about an amicable settlement between the two communities. Fortunately he found two of his old friends in charge of the District. The late Mr. Eradatullah was the District Judge of Pabna and Khan Bahadur Nasiruddin was the the District Magistrate. Both of them helped him in restoring peace at Pabna.

Tanzim Movement.—Shortly after the riot at Calcutta, Mr. Kitchlew, the Secretary of the All-India Tanzim Association, came to Calcutta and stayed with Maulavi Abdul Karim. When he went out on tour, M. Abdul Karim accompanied him to Chittagong, Dacca, Mymensingh, Darjeeling, Bogra, Serajganj, Rangpur, Dinajpur and some other places. Great was the enthusiasm displayed by the Muslims of these places. Largely attended meetings, in some of which the audience exceeded thirty, forty and even fifty thousand, were addressed by Mr. Kitchlew and M. Abdul Karim.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRESIDENT OF ASSOCIATIONS AND MEETINGS.

Shortly after his retirement from service Maulavi Abdul Karim was elected President of the Bengal Muhammadan Educational Conference of which the late Nawab Bahadur Nawab Ali Chaudhuri was Secretary. Both of them continued in their offices for some years during which annual conferences were held at Burdwan and other places. When the late Maulavi Wahed Hossain succeeded the late Nawab Bahadur, Maulvi Abdul Karim was re-elected President and continued in this office as long as the Conference did any work.

For about a decade M. Abdul Karim was the President of the Bengal Muslim League when Maulavi Mujibur. Rahman was its Secretary. When Sir Abdur Rahim succeeded him as President of the League, M. Abdul Karim became its Vice-President. He was re-elected president when Sir Abdur Rahim resigned and continued in this office until 1937, when Dr. R. Ahmad was the Secretary of the League. At the annual meeting a rupture was caused by some designing people and M. Abdul Karim left the League.

When the Muslim Graduates formed the "Bengal Muslim Graduates' Association", they persuaded M. Abdul Karim to be its President, in which office he continued as long as the Association existed.

About five years ago M. Abdul Karim was elected President of the Islamic Mission Society, founded by the

late Maulavi Abdul Aziz, father of Mr. Amin Ahmad, M.B.E. He is still the President of this Society, which has been doing useful Islamic work.

President of Meetings.—The first Educational Conference over which M. Abdul Karim was invited to preside, was held at Malda in February, 1916. The next Educational Conference over which he presided was held at Burdwan in April, 1916. It was in fact the most important session of the Bengal Provincial Muhammadan Educational Conference. It was very largely attended by delegates from different districts of Bengal. The Director of Public Instruction, Bengal, the Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan, his venerable father, Raja Bunbehari Kapur, the late Mr. Roy, District Judge, and some other distinguished gentlemen graced the meeting by their presence. The presidential speech of M. Abdul Karim was much appreciated by the audience. Among the various subjects he dealt with in his speech was the dearth of educational experts in the community.

"If we had in our community" he observed "educationists possessing the extensive knowledge, wide experience, and enthusiastic earnestness of a Sir Gurudas Bannerji or a Sir Ashutosh Mukherji, the condition of Muhammadan education, I have reason to believe, would have been very different from what it is. Without making a thorough study, to presume to have such a knowledge of the complicated questions connected with Muhammadan education as to be competent to advise the community and the Government on the subject is, to put it mildly, to trifle with the most vital interests of the community. . . . . It is no wonder therefore, that the cause of Muhammadan education has suffered grievously at the hands of pretentious people. As a concrete illustration of the deplorable waste of time, energy and money involved in such a process, I would refer to what is called the revised scheme of Madrasah education. This subject

had attracted the attention of Government from time to time. At last when after long study and a careful consideration of all the circumstances, a scheme was drawn up in 1906, the Government appointed a large committee for its discussion. For want of a sufficient knowledge of the subject many of those who had to take part in the deliberations of the committee were not in a position to make very useful suggestions. Yet there was no lack of animated and even acrimonious discussion which led to such modifications of the proposed scheme as to have amounted to its virtual rejection, and a different scheme, known as the Earle Scheme, was adopted and put into operation. This scheme practically proved a failure and the original scheme had to be adopted, after a decade, in the case of junior Madrasahs."

As regards combination of religions and secular education, M. Abdul Karim said :—

"I have always held that unless and until there is a combination of secular and religious instruction in institutions intended for the education of Muhammadan boys, the complicated problem of Muhammadan education cannot be properly solved The Prophet of Arabia inspired his followers with a religious fervour unexampled in the annals of religions. The peasants quitting their ploughs and saying their prayers in the paddy-fields, the labourers prostrating themselves in the streets when the time of prayer comes, are sights common in Muhammadan countries, but not to be met with elsewhere. To a Musalman education means first religious education, secondly moral education and lastly professional Education. It was from a consideration of these facts that the education Commission, after mature deliberation, came to the conclusion that in the case of Muhammadan boys the 'teaching of the mosque must precede the lessons of the school'. The best course, therefore, is so to arrange matters as to give both these lessons in the same seminary and, as far as practicable, at the same time. The Maktabs and Patshalas in Muhammadan localities should be re-organised on this principle."

The Maharajadhiraj of Burdwan took particular interest in the Conference, and the president and the Secretary were grateful to him for this. Since then the Maharajadhiraj has been very friendly to M. Abdul Karim.

The next important Educational Conference over which M. Abdul Karim presided was the Annual Conference of the Sylhet Muslim Students' Association held at Sylhet in October, 1919. As he went to Sylhet after a long time he met with a splendid reception, as will appear from the following letter which a Sylhet correspondent wrote to the "Mussalman" :—

"The President-elect of the Sylhet Muslim Students' Association Conference, Maulavi Abdul Karim arrived at Sylhet on the 16th October. Long before the train was timed to reach the station people began to flock from all parts of Sylhet without distinction of caste and creed; the rich and the poor, the high and the low vied with one another in manifesting their enthusiasm in the matter of reception of one of their most reputed countrymen long absent from their midst. When the popular curiosity was heightened by the faint whistle of the rushing train both the station and the northern bank of the river Surma had become a sea of human faces. When the train halted the President with his eldest son, Maulavi Abdur Rahim, M.A, alighted amidst the resounding shouts of *Marhaba* Some bombs were fired in his honour. He was then taken to the Ghat and crossed the river in a nicely-decorated *Jurinda* boat. The procession then commenced from the Chandni Ghat. It consisted of a number of horsemen, cyclists and footmen with flags in hand. The procession was followed and lined on both sides by a large number of spectators. All honour to the Reception Committee and to the volunteers who could organise so splendid a reception, unprecedented in the annals of this ancient town.

On Saturday, the 18th October, the conference sat under a large Shamiana erected in front of the Town Hall. The gather-

ing was unprecedentedly large. The elite of the town and Muffasil, both Hindus and Musalmans, were present. The late Maulvi Syad Abdul Majid, *alias* Captan Mian, afterwards Education Minister of Assam, took a very active part in arranging M. Abdul Karim's reception.

In a long presidential speech M. Abdul Karim dealt with the different questions connected with Muhammadan Education. While speaking on Technical Education, he observed :—

"Up to this time the education of our boys has been almost exclusively literary with a view to enable them to earn their bread, and consequently satisfactory result at examinations, and not acquisition of knowledge, has been aimed at. Thus the educational institutions may be said to have manufactured only quill-drivers and office-hunters and not artisans or mechanics, experts in industry or commerce. The result has been deplorable congestion in positions and professions in which literary attainments are the requisite qualification, while other walks of life have been left almost untrodden by our young men. In these circumstances Sir P. C. Roy, the apostle of industrial education, was not altogether unjustified in feeling inclined to have the Law Colleges razed to the ground and to change the lines "Likha pora kore je gari ghora chore she" (He who writes and reads rides carriage and horse) into Likha pora kore je upabash kore she" (He who writes and reads has to fast). Many of you do not know, as I do, to what pitiable straits many of our young men are reduced when they pass out of the college, some of them after obtaining even the degree of Bachelor of Arts. It is high time to devise means to meet this alarming situation. I think there should be careful elimination at every stage of instruction. It is most undesirable that every boy of average intelligence should be indiscriminately pushed up to the higher stages. Some boys should not proceed beyond the primary stage, some beyond the middle school stage, and others beyond the high school stage. Only boys of more than average intelligence and means should enter the University, and those of exceptional capacity should pro-

ceed to the Post-graduate stage. Boys thus eliminated at different stages of instruction should go to technical, industrial, commercial and other schools according to their taste and capacity, to be trained as artisans, mechanics and business men. Exceptionally smart boys of the poorer classes may be encouraged by stipends to proceed to the higher stage. I think it is a mistake to encourage poor boys of average intelligence to aspire after a purely literary education. Parents should be very careful in the selection of a career for their sons. They must not compel them to adopt professions for which they might not have any inclination or aptitude. As regards trade and commerce, Musalmans need hardly be reminded that they should regard it as a *sunnat* to follow such pursuits. The Prophet of Islam (upon whom be peace) not only advocated it, but was himself engaged in it. It was with the object of furthering the cause of trade that usury was so very strictly prohibited. I believe for the Musalmans there is a special *Barkat* in trade in as much as it was the pursuit for which the Prophet had a particular predilection.

Maulavi Abdul Karim concluded his speech with the following advice to the students:—

"Gentlemen, before concluding my speech I should like to address a few words to my young friends, the Muhammadan students of Sylhet who, at no very distant date, will take our place in society and will guide the destinies of the community. I would remind you that you are now passing through that portion of your life which is best worth living and that your career in after life will depend very much on how you make use of the opportunities which the days passing by now offer you. The same qualities and characteristics that give you distinction among your comrades to-day, will bring you to the front among your fellowmen when you grow older. The first thing that you would do well to remember is that nothing worth doing can be done and nothing worth having can be got without pain and effort. Sometimes you will meet with difficulties and even disasters, but always bear in mind, in prosperity as well as in adversity, that whatever happens in our life comes about in accordance with the Divine Will to which we should always submit without a murmur.

Islam enjoins, in fact Islam means, complete surrender to the Will of God.

"Good when He gives, supremely good
Nor less when He denies;
Afflictions from His sovereign hand
Are blessings in disguise."

Do not be disheartened by failures. Sometimes a failure serves as a stepping-stone to future success. If some of those who made their mark in the field of commerce and industry and in that of art and science had not met with failures, they would not have risen to the position to which they rose. Our greatest glory is not in never falling but in rising every time we fall. . . . Sometimes you may find one whom you consider to be your inferior in parts achieving better success than you do. Remember the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong. Success depends not so much on the possession of good parts as on their proper utilisation. The object of education is to make you righteous men, intelligent citizens and well-behaved members of society. Remember the greatest distinction between ourselves and our neighbours, the brutes, is a good character, which should be the most distinctive feature of student life. In fact no two-legged creature is entitled to be called a man unless he bears an unsullied and unimpeachable character. All of you cannot be eminent scholars or high officials, but all of you can be good men. Try to be great if you can, but remember greatness connotes goodness. No one can be called great unless he is good.

The object of human life, my young friends, is not like that of the lower animals to eat, drink and breed, but to worship the Creator and to serve his creatures. Unselfish service of fellow-beings is the special prerogative of man. To sacrifice one's interests at the altar of common weal is the highest ideal that can be set before us. Man is not born, like the beast, for himself, but he is a part of an organisation in which he has a service to render and a function to discharge. His own good consists in serving the whole of which he is a part, and so social service is the means of individual salvation. Whatever we learn and whatever we earn should be utilised more for others than

for self. Our objective should be to relieve distress, to alleviate suffering, in a word, to render happier, as far as in us lies, the lot of the needy and the friendless.

"Life is merely forth and bubble,
Two things live in stone,
Kindess in another's trouble,
Courage in our own."

"According to Islam by serving humanity we serve God. 'There is no worship better than the service of God's creatures.' Islam does not enjoin, as some people seem to think, retirement from the world with a view to lead a solitary life for worshipping God. On the contrary it requires the Musalmans to live in society and devote their life to social service. . . . Unless you set high ideals before you and try to act up to them, you cannot be much useful to society. When any ideal appears to you too high remember that the first condition of its being attainable is that you should believe it to be worthy of attainment. A good end can be attained only by good means. In fact the chief criterion of an act being good is that it can be attained by good means. It is most desirable that a strong organisation of students were formed for the creation of a *espirit de corps* and a sense of solidarity, for the inculcation of right ideas and ideals, for the protection of those who are apt to be led astray and for the formation of a strong public opinion among the student community which would expose rather than screen those whose character there might be reason to suspect. . . . . In whatever sphere your lot is cast, with whatever duty you are entrusted, never be actuated by a mercenary spirit. Remember whole-hearted devotion to duty is the surest way to success in life. Always try to keep down your expenses; never add unnecessarily to your requirements. Our forefathers sought happiness by self-denial, not by self-indulgence, by curtailing the wants of animal life, not by increasing them, by suppressing desires not by gratifying them.

In conclusion I would exhort you to be true to your faith, true to your community and true to your country. Regard it as a most fortunate circumstance and a proud privilege that you are born Musalmans. Do not merely talk of your religion, be not

satisfied with loving it, *always try to live it.* Most practical a religion as Islam is, it is easier for the Musalmans to live it than for the followers of other religions to live theirs. While firm in your faith realise that your neighbour's faith is as dear to him as your own is to you, and remember that theological hatred is at the root of much mischief in this world. Be on the most cordial terms with your non-Muslim brethren. By your words, by your deeds, by your manners and by your appearance always show that you are proud to be recognised as a Musalman. The community cannot feel proud of you, nay it may have to feel ashamed of you, if you try to hide your Islamic identity by borrowed dress, by un-Islamic habits, by outlandish manners

Gentlemen, I am very much obliged to you for giving me such a patient hearing I had occasion to address larger gatherings, some of the All-India meetings, but I assure you I never had a more appreciative audience".

During M. Abdul Karim's stay at Sylhet the poet Rabindranath Tagore, on his way from Shillong to Calcutta through Sylhet, was given a hearty and enthusiastic reception. He halted at Sylhet for a few days and was presented with an address in a largely-attended meeting, over which M. Abdul Karim presided. Since then the poet has been very friendly to him.

The last Educational Conference presided over by M. Abdul Karim was the All-Bengal Government School Teachers' Conference, held at Howrah in December, 1924. The presidential speech was highly appreciated by the audience, mostly composed of school masters, who came from different districts in Bengal.

Annual Session of Muslim League, 24-Parganas.

The first political meeting over which Maulavi Abdul Karim presided was the annual meeting of the 24-Parganas District Muslim League, held at Magrahat, in May 1915.

In his presidential speech M. Abdul Karim first referred to the death of the late Nawab Sir Salimullah and the late Mr. Gokhale as follows:—

"As the late Nawab Sir Salimullah was one of the founders of the Muslim League, of which yours is a branch, it is but natural that his premature death should be mourned by us on the first occasion we have met after the unfortunate occurrence. While many a Nawab goes down to the grave 'unwept, unhonoured and unsung', Nawab Salimulla's death has caused widespread grief in the community. The cause is not far to seek. Unlike most other Nawabs, he heartily identified himself with all that concerned his co-religionists and did all that he could to further their interests. There was scarcely a movement affecting the interests of the Mussalmans in which he did not take a prominent part. Possessed of high intelligence, extraordinary resourcefulness and uncommon powers of conciliation and compromise, he exercised a wonderful influence over the Musalmans of Bengal. The death of such a man at such a time, when the community is passing through a crisis, and following closely upon the demise of two of the master minds of Moslem India—Shibli and Hali—who by their inimitable writings and speeches infused a new spirit into their co-religionists, cannot but be regarded as an irreparable loss to the community. I cannot think of any other person who can take the unique position the late Nawab occupied, commanding as he did the highest esteem and deepest affection of his co-religionists and enjoying at the same time the unstinted trust and confidence of Government. May I hope that our young men in general and those of the class to which the late Nawab belonged in particular, would follow in his footsteps and try to carry on the good work he began. It is very much to be regretted that practically nothing has yet been done to perpetuate the memory of such a man."

Though not connected with any particular Muhammadan organisation a reference to the premature death of the greatest statesman and politician of modern India may not be out of place at this meeting. Perhaps no other Indian of our time was so widely known and so highly esteemed for his irreproachable

character, sweet manners, sympathetic heart, philanthropic spirit and unrivalled patriotism as well as for his towering genius, sound judgment and great self-sacrifice as the late lamented Mr. Gokhale. From personal experience I am in a position to say that to know him was to love and respect him. A great patriot, in the truest sense of the term, he dedicated his whole life and consecrated all his energies to the service of his country. The most distinctive characteristic of his distinguished career was the whole-hearted devotion and unsurpassed thoroughness with which he did whatever he undertook to do. In fact he did not know how to do a thing half-heartedly or haphazardly. His keen sense of duty, his great zeal, extraordinary earnestness and unbounded enthusiasm for his work called forth the admiration of friends and foes alike. The invaluable services rendered by him in various spheres which cannot be over-estimated, will be gratefully remembered by his countrymen and ineffaceably written in the history of modern India. A good and great life such as Gokhale's teaches an object lesson that is worth studying and furnishes an example that is worthy of imitation, though difficult of emulation. One distinguishing feature of Gokhale's public career, which deserves special mention here, was the spontaneous sympathy he had with the wants and aspirations of communities other than his own and the ready support he extended to those of their members who were in need of it. He did his best to promote friendly feelings between Hindus and Musalmans upon whose combination and co-operation, he rightly thought, depends the advancement of the country. If his example in this and other respects were followed by his countrymen, Gokhale would not have lived in vain.

M. Abdul Karim concluded his presidential speech as follows:—

"The fifth and sixth objects which your League has in view are to "create a feeling of unity and amity amongst the Musalmans and to maintain friendly relations with non-Moslems." It pains one to think that a feeling of unity and amity among the followers of an essentially democratic faith has yet to be created. But

this, unfortunately, is a regrettable fact which has to be faced. . . . As for unity, the annual, weekly, daily and almost hourly meetings of Musalmans in mosques and elsewhere are all intended to serve this purpose. These would be meaningless exhibitions if they could not produce the desired effect The reports published in the *Muhammadi* and other papers of the treatment of the *Badias* and other low class Musalmans, who are not permitted even to join their co-religionists of higher social status in prayers, clearly show how Islam is losing its hold on the Musalmans of Bengal. As regards the relation of Musalmans with their non-Muslim neighbours, the Quranic injunction leaves no room for doubt. Perhaps no other religion is as liberal as Islam as regards the relation of its followers with those of other religions. . . . The political interests of the Hindus and Muslims of India are so identical that hearty co-operation is essential for the good of both the communities. I am glad this is being gradually recognised by the leading members of both the communities."

The next important political meeting over which Maulavi Abdul Karim presided was the annual session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League held at Jessore in March, 1920. A quotation from his presidential speech has been given in the Chapter on Khilafat. He spoke at some length on the proposed "Reform Scheme". The following is a summary of what he said :—

The Reform Scheme.—The most important political question at present before the public is that of reform in the administration of the country. . . . . The proposed reforms fall far short of our requirements and still more so of our aspirations, and, therefore, the demand for a larger measure of nationalisation and democratisation in the administration is necessary. The proposed scheme does not go far enough, but as the first instalment of responsible government, I think, it deserves an honest trial. I wish the Central Government had a much stronger representative element in it than it is to have for the present. But I believe that with an elected majority in the Legislative Assembly and the Council of

State and with three Indians as Executive Councillors regrettable events like the shooting at Jallianwala Bagh and the passing of repressive measures like the Rowlat Act will soon be things of the past. The privilege of veto and the power of dismissing the ministers and taking over the transferred subjects into his own hands are no doubt deadly weapons in the Governor's armoury. But I think he would be a bold man indeed who would dare run the risk of wielding them frequently in his new surroundings. Taking these circumstances into consideration I am of opinion that though the reforms do not go to the desired length, and though constitutional agitation for further concessions should continue, the importance of the concessions already made should not be belittled. . . . .

It augurs well for the success of the scheme that the Anglo-Indian community, though vehemently opposed to it in its initial stage, have at last accepted it as a settled fact and are prepared to extend the hand of fellowship and co-operation to the people of the country. . . . . If the tension of feeling on account of the race prejudice and domineering attitude of the Anglo-Indian community ceases to exist, if they sympathise with the aspirations of the people and show their readiness to accept them as equal partners in the administration of the country, the prevailing atmosphere of mistrust and misapprehension will soon clear up and there will be mutual trust and confidence without which no efficient administration is possible.

As regards political matters the Musalmans of India should be Indians first and Musalmans afterwards. They should heartily co-operate with the other communities in order to obtain political powers and privileges. The unwisdom of those who are against concerted action even in matters of common interest, cannot be condemned in too strong a language. Besides the interests common to all communities, there are matters which concern the different communities individually. After the common interests are secured, each community should vigorously exert itself to safeguard its special communal interests. Unity between two communities does not mean the effacement of the individuality

or the distinctive characteristics of one or the other community. To combine for securing common interests and at the same time to exert for safeguarding one's own interests is the rule of human society. Even in a family brothers fall out in trying to severally secure individual interests while they naturally combine and co-operate in gaining jointly identical interests from others. . . . .

It is essentially necessary that the Musalmans of Bengal should take all possible steps to establish their communal importance and to secure their communal rights commensurate with it. This cannot be attained unless there is an adequate and effective representation of the community on all the deliberative and administrative bodies. . . . . If the conditions in India had been the same as those in England, if the people in this country had been divided merely into political parties like the Liberals and the Unionists, but undivided in race, religion or language, if a community here had stood for mere political rivalries and not for more substantial interests, the question of communal electorates would not have arisen at all. That separate representation of communities, forming the population of the same country under the same government, is theoretically an evil cannot be denied. But in a country where there is so much diversity of race, religion, language, manners and customs, it is practically a necessary and an unavoidable evil. Until the different communities are highly advanced in education and enlightenment and until there is a sufficient development of a spirit of common civic responsibility, communal representation is perhaps the safest arrangement by which adequate and effective enfranchisement of important communities, interested in the welfare of the country, can be secured. A common electorate at this stage of political development might lead to the practical disfranchisement of some weak communites. It would be superfluous to cite instances of the repeated failures, through sheer numerical inferiority, to get, in spite of vigorous efforts, some of the best qualified Muhammadan candidates elected at the University, Municipal, District Board and other elections. The Mussalmans being entirely at the mercy of their educationally, politically and numerically more powerful neighbours, naturally got swamped at the polling booths . . . . . .

But mere numerical strength will not avail; unless the right men who can hold their own with the representatives of other communities, are returned to the Councils, the interests of the community cannot but suffer. We want representatives who may, by their ability, energy, moral courage and social position, take an active and intelligent part in the deliberations of the bodies to which they may be elected. We do not want men who seek election merely for the sake of self-interest or self-aggrandisement, and who, for want of adequate education or a sufficient sense of duty and responsibility, prove mere figure-heads unable to make their presence felt by giving articulate expression to the opinions and ideas of those whom they may pose to represent. . . . At this critical time the community requires men of unflinching moral courage and transparent honesty. . . . Hitherto power and patronage have been in the hands of a party that had no personal interest in matters affecting the different communities and they were generally speaking impartial in their dealings and decisions unless they erred for lack of required knowledge or for want of correct information or when the interests of the European community clashed with those of the Indians. But when the Indians themselves will have to decide matters naturally every party will try to get the lion's share, and the weaker party will have to suffer. Sometime ago a gentleman, after a visit to the Writers' Buildings at Calcutta, is said to have remarked that it seemed to him as if it were a Hindu Zamindar's cutchery with some European managers, who had a few Muhammadan orderlies, and he shuddered to think of what will happen when the present managers would leave. I do not think there is reason to blame any one except the Mussalmans themselves for this state of things. It has all worked out according to the prevailing law of human society. I cannot say if the Mussalmans had the same advantages of wealth, education and influence, they would not have acted in a similar manner. What I am trying to impress upon you is that if you fail in future, as you have done in the past, to assert your rights properly, your position will be, when the administrative changes will come into operation, much worse than what is now. In the changed circumstances you simply cannot

stand still; either you must press forward or slide backwards. I would entreat you, with all the earnestness I can command, to realise the imperative necessity of selecting for this most responsible work only such able, earnest and self-sacrificing men as would rise above all personal and party feelings and would work whole-heartedly for the good of the community and the country.

The most irresponsible manner in which things in this connection have been done in the past, indicates a political lethargy and indifference on the part of the community which cannot but be utterly suicidal to its interests. Those who even in engaging a common menial servant would make a hundred and one enquiries as to his character, honesty and capacity to do the work that would be entrusted to him, would not, when approached for their votes, care to put even one question regarding the fitness of the person they were being called upon to select for a work, which was the most responsible from a communal point of view. There was absolutely no policy or principle according to which selection was made. In these circumstances it would not be a matter of surprise if some of our best men fight shy of council elections. If you are anxious to avert the political extinction of the Mussalmans of Bengal, you must bestir yourselves and make the best possible arrangements for getting the best men available to act as your representatives. If you want to benefit by the elective system you should see that those who seek the votes of the electors make their appeal to them on public grounds and that they, in their turn, give their votes in the interest of public good. You require a band of earnest and enthusiastic young men to go about all over the Presidency not to canvass for individual candidates but to educate the electorate, to rouse their political consciousness, to awaken their sense of political responsibility. This is no easy task. Steady, earnest and organised effort is necessary. Realising the stern reality of the doctrine of the survival of the fittest and remembering that it is entirely in your hands to make or mar the prospects of your community, you will, I hope, at once set about this most important and urgent work."

The following is a summary of what Maulavi Abdul Karim said regarding the Calcutta University :—

The proposals made by the Sadler Commission for placing the Calcutta University on an efficient footing and for the establishment of a Teaching and Residential University at Dacca, are of a wide and far-reaching character. The Commission's diagnosis of the situation cannot be questioned, but the remedies proposed to be prescribed are of doubtful efficacy. I shall not be at all surprised if they kill rather than cure. Theoretically the Commission's recommendations are no doubt very valuable, but I am not certain that practically they will lead to anything very useful, as they have been made without due regard to the conditions of the province and the circumstances of its people. High and lofty ideals of education may be all very well for rich countries, but they will not do for countries where many of the parents have to stint themselves even of the necessaries of life in order to educate their children. The heavy financial burden which the proposed changes will involve will place University education beyond the reach of many of the middle class people. In the present state of educational development it is undesirable to sacrifice, to any great extent, surface for depth, and to spend available funds more on consolidation than on expansion. Some education certainly cannot be worse than no education. By checking the wide diffusion of education the normal course of the intellectual, social and political evolution of the people will be crippled and curtailed. Few private colleges are likely to survive long if the Intermediate classes are cut away and the high standards recommended by the Commission are insisted upon. Besides, it will be difficult for the Government to provide an additional annual outlay of sixty-five lakhs when so much money will have to be found for the working of the Reform Scheme. In these circumstances it would be well to treat some of the recommendations for setting up lofty standards of perfection as an ideal to be gradually attained by instalments according as means are available.

As for the Dacca University, which was originally intended to serve as a sop to the Mussalmans of Eastern Bengal for the

extinction of the Province in which they greatly preponderated and consequently enjoyed special facilities for education, those who are well-acquainted with the poverty of the people cannot be altogether deluded by the attractive ideals of a residential university. The number of Muhammadan students who are in a position to avail themselves of the costly education provided in a residential university, is not likely to be very large for the present. The crying need of the country being extensive education, the ideal arrangement would have been the establishment of a teaching and federal University like that of Calcutta, and best suited for the diffusion of knowledge over a wide area with a large population. I think it would be superfluous to go into details of the scheme at this stage. I had occasion to express my views in my evidence before the Commission. One thing about which I wrote rather strongly in my memorandum was the need of representation of the community on the Governing bodies of the Universities. I pointed out how the interests of the Mussalmans in the Calcutta University had grievously suffered for want of adequate and effective representation, there being only 7 Mussalmans out of 110 Fellows, not one of them being a member of the Syndicate. Since the introduction of the elective system in the Calcutta University not a single Muhammadan has ever been returned, although competent candidates were in the field. As a result of the dominating influence of one particular community there was not a single Muhammadan out of 70 Lecturers in the Law College, not a single Muhammadan (2 in Persian and Arabic excepted) out of a large number of University Lecturers, not a single Muhammadan out of a large number of clerks in the offices of the University and only 9 Muhammadans out of 851 examiners (the examiners in Arabic, Persian and Urdu excepted) appointed for the different University examinations held during the previous year. I urged that this deplorable state of things called for early remedy. Besides, I pointed out that no scheme of reconstruction, as in the case of the Calcutta University, or of construction, as in the case of the Dacca University, could be beneficial to all classes of people for whom the University was intended unless their special wants and requirements, their

peculiar defects and disabilities, their conflicting ideals and interests were taken into due consideration."

The third important political meeting over which Maulavi Abdul Karim presided was the fifth session of the Surma Valley Conference held at Sylhet in September, 1920. It was very largely attended by delegates from different parts of Sylhet and some Sylhet gentlemen residing in Calcutta, such as the late Mr. Bepin Chunder Pal and Dr. Sundari Mohan Das. It was visited by the then Chief Commissioner of Assam, the late Sir Beatson Bell, and the Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, Mr. Dawson. M. Abdul Karim began his presidential speech by a reference to the death of the late Mr. Tilak. He said :—

"Before passing on to the subjects proposed to be discussed at this conference I should mention the irreparable loss the country has sustained by the death of Lokmanya Tilak, one of the three selfless, self-denying and self-sacrificing Indian patriots of the time. The brilliance and versatility of his intellect, the purity and simplicity of his private life, his irreproachable character, inexhaustible energy, indomitable courage, and, above all, his fearless independence and genuine love of country, called forth the admiration of friend and foe alike. A great patriot as he was, he dedicated his life, and consecrated his energies and abilities to the service of the motherland. Perhaps no other man of our time suffered so much and so ungrudgingly for his country as did the late Mr. Tilak. In fact his was a life of sufferings and sacrifices. For about a quarter of a century, since 1897, he was persecuted with a relentlessness which raised him to a martyr, but he did not for a moment swerve an inch from what he considered to be the path of duty and rectitude. He was regarded as the guide, friend and philosopher of all classes of people, and he enjoyed, for over a quarter of a century, an amount of popularity which perhaps it has not been the lot of any other Indian of his time to enjoy. His life-long services in the national cause, rendered in a spirit of exemplary self-sacrifice

and at much personal suffering, will be, I need scarcely say, gratefully remembered by his countrymen. A life such as Tilak's is an inspiring object-lesson which is well worth studying, and it furnishes an example that is worthy of imitation, though difficult of emulation. I hope and trust our young men would follow in the footsteps of this great man, and there would arise scores of Tilaks to serve the country."

M. Abdul Karim then spoke on Hindu-Muslim unity :—

"The first item in any programme of economic and political reconstruction of India," he said, "must be based on unity among the important communities inhabiting this country. Omit it and you do away with all hopes of India's future. The truth of the adage 'united we stand and divided we fall' has nowhere been so well illustrated as in this unfortunate country. From time immemorial, as a reference to history will show, disunion and discord have been the cause of most of its misfortunes. If India could have presented a united front to its invaders, its history would have been altogether different from what it is. The political revival of any particular community in India, apart from that of others, is an idle dream. The recognition of the political status of the people unless demanded by them in a body is an utter impossibility. It is a matter of much satisfaction to me that this is not a conference of any particular section of the people; it is a conference consisting of the representatives of both the important communities in the district. The fact that social cordiality and solidarity have never been much disturbed in this district and the exchange of social amenities between Hindus and Musalmans has all along been of common occurrence is a matter for much congratulation, indicating as it does the good sense of the people.

To my mind it would be impossible to achieve the economic and political salvation of India unless and until all the important communities closely combine and heartily co-operate for the common good of the motherland. It is indeed a happy sign of the times that Hindus and Mussalmans have realised the imperative necessity of peace and goodwill among themselves, and their

leaders are exerting their best to bring about the wished-for unity. The regrettable incidents in the Punjab, and the troubles in connection with the Khilafat, have brought the two communities much closer than they had ever been before. Who ever thought that Hindus would show such genuine enthusiasm in welcoming Mussalman leaders, and Mussalmans would show the same feelings in the reception of Hindu leaders as we have lately witnessed? This, I need scarcely say, marks a new epoch in the public life of the people and augurs a bright future for the country. There is already an All-India movement for working up a solid reunion of Hindus and Mussalmans upon a common political platform. The unity of the two great communities is indeed the greatest asset to the political future of India. It should be adopted by all as the first article of political creed, and not as a mere matter of political expediency. Let us always bear in mind that it is only by mutual trust and mutual co-operation between the Hindus and Mussalmans that the destiny of India can be achieved, and let there be a real unity of hearts as well as of heads, a unity bred of mutual love and trust, and free from all traces of suspicion and distrust.

Maulavi Abdul Karim devoted a considerable portion of his speech to the question of "Transfer of Sylhet to Bengal" which was at that time being keenly discussed. When the late Mr. Montagu came to Calcutta, Maulavi Abdul Karim waited upon him at the Government House with a deputation from Sylhet, consisting of the late Mr. Kamini Kumar Chanda, the late Mr. Radhabinode Das, the late Mr. Harendra Chandra Sinha, the late Mr. Nagendranath Chaudhury and others. The Assam deputation, led by the late Mr. Ghanasham Barua, was also there at the time and opposed Sylhet's transfer. The following is a summary of what Maulavi Abdul Karim said on this subject:—

"One of the provincial questions which has been exercising the minds of most of the people of Sylhet is the re-union of their

district with Bengal. My views regarding this question are perhaps too well-known to need detailed discussion. I think I am too old and too near the grave to be swayed by any motive other than the good of my country in discussing this or any other matter. If I had not been thoroughly convinced that it would be the best interests of the people of my district to be under the same administration as their kith and kin in Bengal, certainly I would not have taken so prominent a part, as I took, in the deputation that waited upon the Right Honourable the Secretary of State and His Excellency the Viceroy with a view to urge the desirability of Sylhet's re-union with Bengal. From time immemorial Sylhet was politically, as it has always been geographically, a part and parcel of Bengal. During the Muhammadan rule it was included in the Subah of Bengal and shared the fiscal system of Todarmal. . . . .

Various are the ways in which the people of Sylhet have suffered on account of their separation from the advanced Presidency of Bengal. In fact the object with which Sylhet was transferred to Assam involved a great injustice to the people of this district, who were called upon to contribute a disproportionate share of the expenditure of a poor Province. That the people of Sylhet did not acquiesce in such an administrative arrangement is evident from the fact that they strongly protested against it in a memorial dated the 10th August, 1874. Had public opinion been as strong then as it is now, when many a settled fact has to be unsettled in deference to it, the grievances of the people of Sylhet would have been redressed without much delay. Thirty years in a backward Province stunted the public life of Sylhet and checked the growth of progressive political ideas and ideals. It was with a sigh of relief that the people of Sylhet again found themselves in the free atmosphere of a liberally-administered Province when, in 1905, the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was formed. But fate was against them; in less than a decade they were again placed under the Assam administration, and were thus deprived of some of the rights and privileges they enjoyed in Bengal. On the dissolution of the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, the people of Sylhet

submitted a memorial to His Excellency the Viceroy, pointing out that in accordance with the policy of uniting the Bengali-speaking districts into one consolidated unit, formulated by the Government of India Despatch, Sylhet should have been retained in Bengal, to which it belongs geographically, ethnologically and linguistically. It was further pointed out that Sylhet has the same judicial and revenue systems as Bengal, that its recognised court language is Bengali, which is spoken by more than 90 per cent of its inhabitants, that the Bengali-speaking population of Sylhet is nearly as large as that of the neighbouring districts of Tippera and Mymensingh, that the social relations of both respectable Hindus and Musalmans of Sylhet are with their neighbours in the districts of Bengal, and not with the people of Assam, that there is the closest intellectual, moral and spiritual kinship between Sylhet and the rest of Bengal, and that the affinities of a common religion, language and literature and common intellectual aspirations form an indissoluble bond of union between the people of Sylhet and their countrymen in Bengal. . . . The Musalmans have a particular reason to desire this re-union. They are in a minority in Assam whereas they will be in a majority in Bengal. This will be a very great advantage to them as in future the majority will have in their hands the control of affairs in the country.

During the last two decades things have entirely changed; education has made rapid strides in Assam and the people have awakened to a sense of their communal importance and privileges. A cry has already been raised that Assam is for the Assamese, and the people of Sylhet are being gradually elbowed out of the Assam Services. In Assam they are disowned as outsiders and when they go to Bengal they are disowned as Assamese. Where then are they to go? There is no prospect of the Surma Valley ever being a self-contained unit of administration with everything necessary for the protection and progress of the people. In these circumstances is it at all unreasonable on the part of the people of Sylhet to agitate for getting such a deplorable state of things remedied? Should Sylhet continue to minister to the wants of Assam while her inhabitants are to be deprived

of the valued rights and privileges their neighbours in Bengal are to enjoy under the Reform Scheme? All these facts have to be taken into serious consideration in deciding the fate of Sylhet."

Maulavi Abdul Karim then attended two annual sessions of the All-India Muslim League held at Lucknow, one under the presidency of the late Sir Syed Ali Imam and the other under the presidency of the late Nawab Sir Zulfiquar Ali. He took an active part in the proceedings of both of these conferences.

When the twentieth annual session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Calcutta in December, 1928, Maulavi Abdul Karim was elected Chairman of the reception committee. He delivered a long speech which was appreciated by the President of the conference, the late Raja Saheb of Mahmudabad, by Mr. Jinnah, who opened the proceedings and by the large audience, consisting of delegates from all parts of India. The whole speech was published in a supplement by the Amrita Bazar Patrika. The following is a summary of the important portions of the speech :—

"I need hardly say that the Musalmans of Bengal are grateful to Muslim India for honouring their province by selecting it as the venue of the present epoch-making session of the premier political organisation of the community in India. Standing at the parting of ways we must at this session make deliberate, courageous and far-reaching decisions regarding the future constitution and governance of India, and of Muslim status and share in the same. It was in the fitness of things also that on such a critical occasion which will, in all probability, prove a landmark in the history of modern India, all the most important and representative political and other associations of different shades of opinions and persuasions should have met together in this historic city, which may be regarded as the fountain-head

of administrative evolution, as it has largely been the birth-place of political free-thinking and of national aspirations and strivings in India.

Upon the results of your deliberations, gentlemen, depends the future of Muslim India and to a large extent the destiny of Mother India itself. It is extremely to be regretted, therefore, that some forces are at work to divide the political strength of the Musalmans of India at a time when the vital interests both of the community and the country require that there should be solid unanimity. I need hardly say that if after due deliberations by all parties concerned, the legitimate demands of the community are not unitedly, clearly and definitely put forward, the Muslim cause will be greatly jeopardised. I am afraid people have been fighting over a shadow before getting the substance. Until the required political rights are actually secured, the question of their division cannot arise. Franchise, electorate, representation, nay even services and other kindred questions, are to be considered only in reference to responsible self-government. They have no value or significance of their own until this is attained. The primary and joint aim of all parties for the present should, therefore, be the attainment of the government of the people by the people and for the people. When this is secured, I do not think there would be insurmountable difficulties regarding the adjustment of the claims of different communities. Failure to come to a mutual understanding would only prove our incapacity to rule. One outstanding fact that should never be lost sight of is that unless a united demand by all parties is vigorously pushed forward, it would be futile to talk of self-government. All our righteous and justifiable zeal to protect minority or special interests should on no account blind us to this one vital and essential fact and factor in India's fight for freedom.

Before passing on to the subjects that may have to be discussed at this session of the League, I must refer to the irreparable loss which the community and the country have sustained by the death of Mr. Syed Ameer Ali, one of the most illustrious sons of modern India. He might be called the father

of Muslim political organisation in Bengal. After his return from England early in the eighties of the last century, he founded the first Muslim political association in this province, which for a long time did much useful work in furthering the cause of the community. After his retirement to England he was intimately connected with the London branch of the Muslim League.

Modern Bengal has not produced another Muslim of Ameer Ali's calibre and character. Endowed with exceptional qualities of head and heart, he soon made his mark in his own sphere of activity; and by dint of ability and industry he rose to some of the highest offices to which, under the present circumstances, a native of India could aspire. He did all that he could for the uplift of his countrymen. Although away from India for many years, there was hardly any question of public importance affecting the interests of the land of his birth in which he did not take a keen and active interest.

The invaluable services that Ameer Ali rendered to the cause of Islam and the Muslims are perhaps too well-known to need recapitulation. By his masterly works, such as the History of the Saracens and the Spirit of Islam, which gained him undying fame and would outlive the ravages of time, he impressed upon the world the great beauties of Islam and the unparalleled progressive religious fervour with which the Prophet of Arabia inspired his followers. Besides, he successfully refuted the unfounded charges brought against Islam by its unscrupulous calumniators. He took a very prominent part in the Red Crescent Societies that were founded for the relief of sufferers at the time of the Balkan and other wars.

The inspiring lesson which such a life teaches should not be lost. The younger generation would do well to carry on the noble work which he began—the work of disinterested service to Islam and its followers.

It is indeed India's misfortune that at this critical juncture in her history, when her political horizon is so much overcast with ominous clouds, her great sons are passing away one after another. We have to mourn also the loss of a prince among

men, known as the "Lion of the Punjab," whose whole life was one of uninterrupted struggle for freedom and of fearless, if overzealous, fight for moral and spiritual reforms. The tragic circumstances connected with his sudden and premature death have cast a deep gloom all over the country and have roused great indignation among the people. There is hardly any one in the Punjab, or perhaps even in the whole of India, who can fill Lala Lajpat Rai's place. Perhaps no other man of our time, with the exception of Lokamanya Tilak, suffered so much and so ungrudingly for the sake of the motherland, as did this undaunted patriot. His inexhaustible energy, indomitable courage, fearless independence and unfailing spirit of service and self-sacrifice call forth the admiration of friends and foes alike. The life-long services which he rendered to the national cause at much personal sacrifice, will ever be gratefully remembered throughout the land. The death of such a man at such a time is nothing short of a calamity for the country. It is hoped that his noble example would be imitated and emulated by his countrymen.

I should not close this obituary notice without referring to the passing away, since we met last, of another illustrious son of India, who excelled all others in his particular sphere of activity. Lord Sinha was pre-eminently a self-made man. By sheer dint of his extraordinary abilities and whole-hearted devotion to duty he rose to such high offices as Indians could not aspire to under the British rule. A sober politician as he was, he believed that the political salvation of the country could be achieved by evolution rather than by revolution and he deprecated the impetuous action of impatient idealists. The country could ill spare him at a time when its old constitution is in the melting-pot and counsel of representatives of various shades of opinion has to be requisitioned in forming a new one.

Aspirations of India's Intelligentsia.—The demand for political rights by the intelligentsia of India is neither unnatural nor unreasonable. In an age when self-rule and self-determination have been the order of the day and when even a semi-civilised people like the Phillipinos, having hardly any history and tradi-

tion worth the name, have been clamouring for self-government, it is but natural that the descendants of two highly civilised races whose religion, philosophy, literature and jurisprudence extorted the unstinted admiration of the world, should be anxious for effective participation in the administration of their own country. Besides, the awakening of political consciousness in India is an inevitable consequence of Western education. This was not unanticipated by those who had a hand in its introduction. Macaulay, who was one of the greatest advocates of English education in India, wrote in the year 1833, "It may be that the public mind in India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system, that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government, that by having been instructed in European knowledge, they may in some future age demand European institutions. Whether such a day will ever come I know not. But never will I attempt to avert or retard it. Whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history. To have found a great people sunk in the lowest depths of slavery and superstition, to have so ruled them as to have made them desirous and capable of all the privileges of citizens, would indeed be a title to glory all our own." On another occasion, in a moment of inspiration, Macaulay is reported to have said, "We shall never consent to stupefy and paralyse a great people whom God has committed to our charge, for the wretched purpose of rendering them more amenable to our control."

These are noble and statesmanlike sentiments worthy of the British name and character. Does it not indicate bankruptcy of British statesmanship that there should be vigorous opposition by the present wiser descendants of those far-sighted statesmen when Indians, instructed in European knowledge, are demanding European institutions, and full rights of British citizenship and self-government? It is hoped that the unscrupulous efforts for "averting or retarding" the reasonable demand for responsible self-government would prove utterly futile.

English education was intended to create and preserve loyalty and security for Britain. That this object was attained is

borne out by the Government of India. In a Despatch dated so late as 8th. June, 1880 it was stated "To the minds of at least the educated among the people of India—and their number is rapidly increasing—any idea of the suberversion of British power is abhorrent." I believe the loyalty and security procured through English education would have been retained but for the short-sighted policy of the narrow-minded British statesmen of the present day like Lord Birkenhead. Perhaps it is not yet too late to undo the mischief committed by the pursuit of such a blundering policy. That the efforts to stem the natural tide of progress due to the spread of western education would be futile was prophetically foreshadowed by several far-sighted British statesmen. John Bright wrote, "There are thousands of persons in India competent to take any position in which the Government may choose to advance them.....you would have begun to unite the Government with the governed ; and unless you do that, no Government will be safe, and any hurricane may overturn it or throw it into confusion." Sir John Malcolm, a Governor of Bombay, wrote, "If these plans of spreading instruction are not associated with the creation of duties that will employ the minds which we enlighten, we shall only prepare elements that will hasten the destruction of our Empire. The moral evil to us does not thus stand alone. It carries with it its nemesis—the seeds of the destruction of the Empire." Lord Hartington, afterwards Duke of Devonshire, wrote. "It is not wise to educate the people of India, to introduce among them your civilisation and progress and your literature, and at the same time to tell them they should never have any chance of taking any part or share in the administration of the affairs of their country, except by their getting rid in the first instance of their European rulers." Sir William Hunter, a Bengal Civilian and a Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University, wrote, "I do not believe that a people numbering one-sixth of the inhabitants of the globe, and whose aspirations have been nourished from their earliest youth on the strong food of English liberty, can be permanently denied a voice in the government of their country.....Forty years hereafter we should have an Indian Ireland multiplied fifty-fold on

our hand." Lord Cromer, once a member of the Viceroy's Council, wrote, "It is only what ought to be expected by every thoughtful man that after fifty years of free press and thirty years of expanding education, with European ideas flowing into the country on every side, and old indigenous customs, habits and prejudices breaking down, changes should be taking place in the thoughts, desires and the aims of the intelligent and educated men of the country which no wise and cautious Government can afford to disregard, and to which they must gradually adapt their system of administration if they do not wish to see it shattered by forces which they have themselves called into being but which they have failed to guide and control."

There would have been no ground for complaint if there prevailed now the British instinct and principle which induced the politicians of those days to give expression to the views quoted above. It is a misfortune both for India and England that the British public in their policy towards India should be guided not by the broad-minded and far-sighted statesmen, I have quoted, most of whom had as intimate a knowledge of India as any living Britisher, but by Sydenhams, O'Dwyers and reactionaries of their type. Is it too much to hope that the British people will realise their responsibility and avert, before it is too late, the dire consequences, so outspokenly forecasted, by adopting a generous policy in their treatment of India? Will they raise the people of India to the position of the Self-Governing Colonies, making the Empire a great Federation of equal partners, or will they drive them, in utter despair of British good sense and good faith, to set themselves to work to find means, active or passive, open or secret, to "get rid of their European rulers", as indicated by Lord Hartington? The future of India and perhaps also of the British Empire depends on the answers to these queries.

Economic Distress of the Masses.—"If change in the system of government is necessary for the satisfaction of the legitimate aspirations of the intelligentsia, it is still more necessary for the relief of the economic distress which the masses have been suffering from. The East India Company which was formed for

the purposes of trade alone, quietly and honestly carried on their business during the Musalman rule in India. But when on the disruption of the Mughal Empire, the English merchants acquired territorial possessions, greed became their one passion. All that they were anxious for was monopoly of trade and exercise of political power. Unlike their predecessors, who settled in the country and strove to better its condition, the East India Company decided to rule India from England and to exploit its resources for the benefit of their own country. While the Musalmans got domiciled in India, they spent in this country the revenue they raised here and utilised the services of capable Hindus, some of whom were appointed to the highest administrative posts, both civil and military, but the English politico-commercial adventurers preferred to remain foreigners, to spend their income in their own land and to administer the country by their own men. Thus was India fleeced in order to enrich England. Contemporary English literature, as well as the Despatches and Orders of the Court of Directors themselves, bear ample and unimpeachable testimony to the iniquities and exploitations of early British rule in India. It was not, therefore, a fact that the British Indian Empire was founded for conferring the blessings of civilisation on the people of India by benevolent autocrats who claimed to be the trustees of the masses.

In pursuance of their policy of exploitation some of the officers did not scruple to extort money from the people by means fair or foul. There was thus a good deal of oppression at times. The British Parliament, however, condemned the misdeeds of the unscrupulous officers and took steps to check them whenever these were brought to their notice. But when, after the Sepoy Mutiny, India passed from the Company to the Crown, the old commercial spirit and economic exploitation policy continued, even though the personal violence and injustice and flagrant expropriations of the East India Company's Nabobs were largely stopped. The result was the gradual impoverishment of the people, in spite of the development of some of the natural resources of the country. Millions of the Indian masses, whose ancestors had plenty to eat, are now unable to provide themselves

with two meals a day. This is the result of foreign rule. Truly did Macaulay say, "Of all forms of tyranny the worst is that of a nation over a nation, the heaviest of all yokes is the yoke of the stranger."

After carefully examining an elaborate record of a nine years' (1807 to 1816) survey and enquiry into the conditions of the people of some districts, Mr. Montgomery Martin observed, "It is impossible to avoid marking two facts as peculiarly striking —first, the richness of the country; and second, the poverty of its inhabitants." Mr. Frederick John Shore wrote in 1837, "The halcyon days of India are over; she has been drained of a large proportion of the wealth she once possesssed, and her energies have been cramped by a sordid system of misrule to which the interests of millions have been sacrificed for the benefit of the few . . . The grinding extortion of the British Government has effected the impoverishment of the country and people to an extent unparalleled. The British Government has been practically one of the most extortionate and oppressive that ever existed in India."

Mr. Saville Marriot, a Commissioner of Revenue in 1836 and afterwards a Member of the Bombay Governor's Council, writes in a letter to Sir R. Grant: "You will readily conceive that my opinions are the result rather of practical experience than deduction drawn from scientific views . . . If it is a startling but too notorious fact that though loaded with a vastly greater absolute amount of taxation and harassed by various severe acts of tyranny and oppression, yet the country was in a state of prosperity under the native rule when compared with that into which it has fallen under the avowedly mild sway of British administration." Mr. Hyndman attributes "the hideous impoverishment to the drain which has now risen to £30,000,000 annually from India to England", and he quotes Mr. Thorburn, a high Indian official, who said, "The system had reduced 70,000,000 human beings, for whom we are responsible, to such a condition of hopeless penury that no reform could do them any good."

Sir George Wingate, the author of the Bombay Land Survey System, explained the nature of the drain as follows: "Taxes spent in the country from which they are raised are totally different in their effect from taxes raised in one country and spent in another. In the former case, taxes collected from the population are again returned to the industrious classes. But the case is wholly different when the taxes are not spent in the country from which they are raised. They constitute loss and extinction of the whole amount withdrawn from the taxed country. Such is the nature of the tribute we have so long extracted from India." Lord Mayo said, "I have only one object in all I do. I believe we have not done our duty to the people of the land. Millions have been spent on the conquering race which might have been spent in enriching and elevating the children of the soil." Lord Curzon truly diagnosed the evil when he said in his characteristic style, "There was no spectacle which found less favour in my eyes than that of a cluster of Europeans settling down upon a Native State and sucking from it the moisture which ought to give sustenance to its own people." This, in brief, is the economic history of British rule in India, as vouched for by British chroniclers, ancient and modern.

Comments on the above quotations would be quite superfluous. The impoverishment of the people has led to the spread of distress and discontent all over the country. Unless and until both the economic and political causes of this regrettable state of things are removed, there can be no peace and prosperity in the land. The bulk of the people all over India have all along lived in villages. There was a time when each village was a self-contained little state, a republic in miniature. The villagers themselves managed almost all their affairs and themselves produced almost all they required. They had enough of light and air in the open country and a sufficient quantity of food and clothing for their use. They not only produced raw materials, but also turned them into articles for everyday use. Thus they not only grew their own paddy and vegetables but also their own cotton, which was converted into yarn by means of the *charka*, and then into cloth by the weavers. They stored what

they produced for the use of the village and did not export it to other countries. The result was that they were almost unaffected by any abnormal state of things prevailing elsewhere—by a war in Europe or a strike in Manchester. Alas! those good old days are gone; the villages have much declined and a large number of villagers have migrated to the towns, where they find employment. Thus modern industrialism has created hordes of homeless and landless labourers and brought about the physical, moral and material degeneration of the people. Besides, the standard of living is continually rising, making the luxuries of one generation the necessaries of the next. The wants of the people have thus immensely increased while the means to meet them have not increased in the same proportion. Consequently the condition of the people is gradually getting worse, and this is leading to the increase of crime and discontent in the country.

In no other country are the people so greatly dependent on agriculture as in ours, and yet in no other country are the people so much lacking in agricultural education as in this. The tillers of land, who form an overwhelming majority of the people, still follow the antediluvian methods of cultivation and are unable to make the soil yield as much as it is really capable of yielding. The result has been that millions have not got enough to eat all the year round, and in times of drought and famine thousands die of starvation and disease. It is said that the cultivators now get higher prices for their products. But this gives them little advantage as they have to meet the higher wages of field labourers and the dearer rates of the necessaries of life. The pressure might not have been so heavy if they had stored their savings, like their ancestors, in kind instead of in cash. The railway and other facilities for conveyance lead to the offer of attractive prices for their products and they cannot resist the temptation of selling them. But far from gaining any advantage they ultimately lose by such a bargain. Having ready cash instead of a store of grain, they spend it upon festivities and superfluities, a strange taste for which has been disseminated among them by various agencies of western civilisation. The temptation lies in the attractiveness and cheapness of the articles. The consequence

is that when famine stares them in the face they have no money and little food to fall back upon.

The influx of foreign imports has brought about the decadence of our indigenous industries and has seriously affected the artisans. Imported cotton and woollen fabrics have thus practically killed our old indigenous cotton and woollen manufactures. The industrial concerns established in the country, mostly by foreigners, have given relief only to an insignificant fraction of the people. If the wages have been raised the prices of food grains and other necessaries of life have increased in a much higher proportion. Consequently the labourers in spite of increased income have a much smaller margin of profit and saving than they had before. While the people are thus becoming poorer, their artificial necessaries are growing with the importation of foreign articles into the country, without any corresponding inflow of wealth by exportation of India's once famous muslins, silks, shawls and cutlery, all of which industries have been deliberately neglected or put down.

Industrial expansion with foreign capital and under foreign management cannot benefit the people to any appreciable extent. National poverty can be removed only by the increase of national wealth. Wealth increases in a country when its people derive profit from their own business concerns and not by the wages of labourers. The profits of tea, jute and other profitable concerns in the country which have been financed by foreign capital, go to foreign lands and do not add to the economic staying-power of the people. Thus the economic potentialities of the country are being drained by foreigners, who are ever on the look-out for exploiting the raw materials and cheap labour in India. It is high time that the gravity of the situation should be realised and steps should be taken to avert the denudation of the country of its wealth. Unless the indigenous industries are resuscitated and the development of the industrial resources of the country is undertaken by the people into their own hands and India is made industrially self-contained as far as possible, there can be no hope of its economic salvation.

Various are the ways in which the people have suffered by the break-up of the village organisation and the abandonment of the simple methods of doing things. In the good old days the villages were independent centres of self-government. The people who had a sense of self-reliance and self-respect, themselves managed their own affairs relating to administration of justice and arrangements for education, sanitation, public works etc., in a way well-suited to their requirements. The administrative functions were vested in a council of elders, usually five in number, and, therefore, called a Panchayet. There was no formal election with the concomitant evils of the electioneering campaigns of modern times. Men with force of character were looked upon as leaders and they tried the criminal cases, arbitrated in civil suits and managed municipal matters. The Panchayet tried cases in a simple and a summary way. While in a law-court one can hardly avoid telling some sort of a lie, in a Panchayet lying was almost impossible as the truth was sure to be out sooner or later. It was much easier for the Panchayet to get at the truth and decide a case in a way that might have commanded public approval than it is for a Magistrate or a Judge sitting in a formal law-court. Thus, while the Panchayet tended to diminish crime, the ordinary law-court of the present day tends to increase it. One of the causes of discontent among the people, specially among the masses, is the hardship caused by the cost and delay in getting justice and by the operation of some of the civil and criminal laws. The old summary method of administering justice without unnecessary delay and without realisation of fees by law-courts and by legal advisers was much more popular. The law-courts of the present time have come to be regarded as something like shops where justice is sold through their brokers, the lawyers; and where, as a rule, only he can be successful who is in a position to spend sufficient money in paying lawyers and bribing witnesses.

Reform Schemes.—The desirability of associating the people with the administration of the country must have been realised long ago. But the half-hearted measures grudgingly adopted for the purpose fell far short of the requirements and aspirations of

the people, specially so as each instalment was given after it was long overdue. Hardly anything worth mentioning was done till Lord Morley, as Secretary of State for India, enlarged the Legislative Councils on an elective basis. This did not satisfy the politically-minded people who began agitating for more substantial rights. When the great European war was raging, it was thought advisable to conciliate these people. So the then Secretary of State for India, the late Mr. Montague, formulated a scheme of administration which has been in operation for about eight years. One section of the people welcomed it as an appreciable improvement on the existing state of things, while another section deprecated it as inadequate and unsatisfactory and, therefore, unacceptable. The latter thought that the Reforms were hedged in with such restrictions and reservations as to be practically futile. The system of dyarchy, though not altogether unworkable, has practically proved to be so on account of insufficient funds provided for the transferred departments and the domineering attitude of Government Members on one side and the subserviency of nominated Ministers and Members on the other. Besides, the whole administration has become too top-heavy to run smoothly. In these circumstances it is but natural that there should be agitation for radical change in the system of government.

Simon Commission.—. . . . It should be unmistakably realised that the British policy in India is definitely committed to the progressive realisation of responsible government, and the periodical Commissions are merely to determine the extent and nature of each further instalment of such reforms and of India's advance towards Swaraj which, as declared by His Imperial Majesty and reiterated by his Ministers, is the ultimate goal of India. In fact to disregard the demand for Provincial Autonomy and responsible Central Government, as the next instalment of reforms, would be a political blunder. It is too late in the day to doubt India's fitness for democratic institutions when Turkey and Persia have already attained them without Western tutelage for a century and a half. Even the moderate labour leader, the ex-Premier Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, recently declared that in a few months,

not years, he expects India to join the brotherhood of free nations of the Commonwealth on terms of equality as a self-governing nation, enjoying full Dominion status. Considering the psychological juncture of this first revisory enquiry and the basic nature of the report called for, as well as the epoch-making events outside India and the British Empire which must inevitably react on our political ideals and administrative organisations, it is essential that the Indian view-point should be effectively represented. It would be a calamity if sentence were to be pronounced on India's political destiny without a proper presentation of her case.

A natural corollary of progressive realisation of responsible government is, on the one hand, India's independence and self-reliance in matters fiscal, financial and administrative and, on the other, an adequate provision for self-contained development of each of the Provincial units which are to be federated into the future self-governing Dominion of India. The realisation of even a semblance of autonomy would be unthinkable unless the financial resources of the Provinces are put on firm and permanent foundations, and any tampering with the same by the Central Government made impossible by definite statutory provisions. The financial independence of Bengal as well as of other Provinces should be adequately secured by the re-adjustment of that unsettling Meston Settlement under which Bengal, more than any other province, has groaned for years, and which has been officially admitted to have had most damaging and destructive results in handicapping the development of the nation-building departments.

The Indianisation of the Services is an unchallenged right of India and follows as an inevitable corollary from its goal of responsible Self-government. It cannot be denied that the present rate of Indianisation is not consistent with the declared aim of progressive realisation of responsible government; and it must be accelerated. Closely connected with the question of Indianisation is the problem of balancing the rights and interests of minorities and even of disorganised and backward majorities. Alike in the political and economic schemes and the Indianisation

policy we must insist upon a harmonious blending of the claims and legitimate rights of different sections of the Indian population, so that the public might have an abiding faith and the fullest confidence in the new administration to be evolved.

Had Britain in her treatment of India done the right thing at the right time and with good grace, the situation would have been very different from what it is. If further trouble is to be avoided an honest attempt should be made to find a satisfactory, generous and lasting solution of the political and constitutional problems which have been causing much discontent and even disaffection in the country. On the other hand, the issues for discussion should not be confused by wild talk of independence. I do not think that there breathes a man in India with soul so dead as not to desire complete independence of his Motherland. But to demand it at once, in the present circumstances, might be regarded as mere bluff. Independence, however, should be our ultimate goal, for the attainment of which all legitimate means should be systematically adopted.

Nehru Report.—Under the impression that political India would not be able to draw up a workable constitution for the future administration of the country, Lord Birkenhead threw out a haughty challenge. Pandit Moti Lal Nehru and his co-adjutors deserve our best thanks for promptly and effectively responding to that challenge, and they are to be congratulated on the success with which they accomplished the patriotic and onerous task undertaken by them. As an excellent basis for final deliberation and an effective presentation of India's minimum joint demand, the value of the report cannot be over-estimated. I wish, however, the constitution were drawn up on oriental and indigenous lines and not on the lines of occidental foreign countries. Perhaps it would have been well if the constitution had been worked up from the bottom upwards, from the village Panchayet, as in the well-thought-out plan of the late lamented Deshabandhu Das. I need hardly say that I am not inclined to approve of the policy on the part of some people, to rush the proposed constitution into universal acceptance by treating it as almost sacrosanct and refusing to listen even to sober and helpful

criticisms. Nor do I for a moment agree with its detractors who would summarily reject it because it has not glorified their own pet panaceas of constitutional independence or special and separate representation. I have already stated my lack of faith in mere resolutions and even constitutions unless they are backed by real and abiding unity of hearts, singleness of purpose and active and harmonious effort at national reconstruction.

The controversy between Dominion status and Independence is merely academic and futile, because nowhere has a race or nation secured independence by mere paper constitutions. Political independence has come only through military violence or through an irresistible economic, social and cultural advance and a true and permanent political consciousness. The former may be at once dismissed as impracticable under present conditions, and repulsive under any conditions considering our national genius and traditional antipathy to violence as long as it can be honourably avoided. The latter, to my mind, is the only way to attain our freedom. For economic and cultural autonomy Dominion status gives us, as it has given to all other Dominions under the British Commonwealth, all the scope we need for the present. It would be unwise to fritter away our limited national energy for the mere name and chimera of independence. Our greatest asset to-day is unity of purpose and action and it would be a national treachery to jeopardise that essential factor in our fight for progress by not accepting the honourable and unrestricted possibilities of Dominion Status, which is at present the highest common factor of the political demands and ideals of different groups, schools and communities.

I understand, gentlemen, you are going to discuss the Report at this meeting. It would not be proper for me to anticipate your verdict. I should like, however, to let you know what I personally feel about certain matters dealt with in the Report. Perhaps the most controversial question discussed in the Report is that of representation. As I pointed out in my speech in the last July session of the Bengal Legislative Council what the Musalmans want is adequate and effective representation. From their past experience they have reason to think that unless seats

are reserved and special electorate is provided, an adequate number of Musalmans, able and willing to safeguard the interests of the community, cannot be returned to the Councils under the present circumstances. Unlike other countries where religion alone divides the people, in India it is not merely religion but traditions, culture, manners, customs and in some cases even language and literature that divide the different races and communities inhabiting it. Besides, restricted suffrage has reduced the number of Musalman voters much below what they might have claimed on account of their proportion in the population and their communal importance. Hence the reasonable fear of the Musalmans that they would be swamped in a common joint electorate. As a safeguard against the election of undesirable persons, I once proposed the insertion of a proviso in the Electoral Rules to the effect that unless a Musalman candidate secures a certain considerable percentage of the recorded Muslim votes his election shall be null and void. This would have averted the election of a person bearing Muslim name merely or mainly by non-Muslim votes. The situation, however, has radically changed with the adoption of adult suffrage as a condition precedent to the acceptance of the Nehru Scheme. Adult suffrage automatically ensures electoral fair-play to all communities and makes it possible for each of them to fight for and attain all the representation it is entitled to by its own assertiveness in politics. Adult suffrage is also the greatest guarantee against the oppression and exploitation of the masses, which lies at the very root of our national disorganisation and economic imbecility. The Muslims of Bengal, I think, would be ill-advised and short-sighted if they do not approve of the actual and educational potentialities of adult suffrage as a solution of their special difficulties in joining the common national strivings for responsible self-government, and as the ultimate political weapon by which they can secure their own emancipation by exercising effective electoral and legislative power, from all those educational, economic or adminitsrative disabilities which their own past neglect and the natural dominance of the more progressive community had so long doomed them to the position of a backward and weakling

community. Election to Local bodies in Eastern Bengal districts unmistakably shows how the Musalmans may profit by the change if they only learn how to assert themselves. It should, however, be distinctly understood that if adult suffrage is not provided the Musalmans of Bengal would demand representation in proportion to their population. The Musalmans on their part should realise that it is not possible to stand always on artificial props. These are sure to break down sooner or later. So the sooner they can dispense with artificial props and manfully stand for their legitimate rights the better for the community.

Apart from representation the community attach much importance to the proper administration of Islamic Law. Not very long ago, even during the British administration, special officers, such as Muftis and Kazis, used to administer Islamic Law regarding marriage, divorce, waqf and kindred subjects. It is the desire of the Musalmans that similar arrangements for the administration of their personal and property law should be made under any new constitution.

One thing to which I should like to draw your particular attention is that any attempt at fusion of the various communities either social, cultural or even political is, I am afraid, doomed to failure. It is their federation, and not fusion, that should be aimed at. In all matters of common and identical interests concerted action must be taken. To do otherwise would be committing political suicide. After the interests common to all are secured, and only then, each community should exert itself to safeguard its special interests. Unity between two communities does not mean the effacement of the individuality or distinctive characteristics of the one or the other community. To combine and co-operate to secure common interests and at the same time to exert for safeguarding one's own particular interests is the rule of human society. Progress of a particular community is the progress, though indirect, of the nation which consists of various communities. If the different communities are all individually advanced, co-ordination cannot be a matter of much difficulty. . . . Our aim is to attain democracy which signifies rule by classes and masses and submission to the will of the

majority. If even after advancing all the arguments we might have to advance, we find the majority against us, our duty is to accept the decision of the majority in a sportsmanlike manner. To do otherwise would be demonstrating our incapacity for the democratic form of government. In conclusion, I would again exhort you not to fritter away your energies in petty squabbles over rights and privileges of doubtful utility, but to organise yourself, and, closing up your ranks and, sinking minor differences, unitedly demand your legitimate rights. If you succeed in doing this I am sure your goal will be in sight before long. Allahu Akbar!

Maulavi Abdul Karim was selected to preside over the function that was arranged to meet the Muslim delegates from Bengal to the Round Table Conference. The following is a summary of his speech on that occasion :—

"I deem it a pleasure and a privilege to be associated with this evening's function. I think the Bengal Presidency Anjuman have done well in arranging to meet the Muslim delegates from Bengal to the Round Table Conference. It is very desirable that they should have some indication of our demands regarding the future constitution.

I have known Moulvi Fazlul Huq from his very boyhood and have had the pleasure of watching his career with deep interest all these years during which he made his mark in the political arena of the country. His close association with different matters concerning the Muslim community entitles him to speak with some authority on behalf of his co-religionists, whom he has been called upon to represent on this historic occasion. His versatile genius and undoubted debating power eminently qualify him for effectively putting the case of the Muslims before the Round Table Conference.

Much as we appreciate the choice of Moulvi Fazlul Huq, I can hardly conceal the disappointment the Bengal Muslims feel in not finding in the list of delegates the name of Sir Abdur Rahim. As one Province, Bengal accounts for the largest Muslim population in India, and as such the Bengal Muslims rightly

expected a more generous treatment in the matter of representation to such an important conference. Sir Abdur Rahim, as you are aware, occupies a unique position in Bengal and he is a politician of all-India repute with varied experience. His sagacity and grasp of the constitutional issues involved might have made him of invaluable service to the Round Table Conference. Our hopes are, however, centred in Moulvi Fazlul Huq and his colleague, Mr. Abdul Halim Ghuznavi, whose forceful advocacy of Muslim cause would, we trust, secure the redress of our grievances and safeguard our interests in the future constitutional arrangement.

Representation in Local Legislature.—As regards demands, I think you will agree with me when I say that the first and foremost demand of the Muslims of Bengal is that their representation in the local legislature should be in accordance with their numerical strength in the Province. The Muslims of Bengal could never get themselves reconciled to the inequitable arrangement proposed in the Lucknow pact and unfortunately accepted by the framers of the current Reform Scheme, which relegated the Muslim majority in the Province to the intolerable position of minority. It is a pity that Sir John Simon and his colleagues could not gauge the intensity of Muslim feeling in the matter to propose adjustment of this unfair state of things. If representation to the local council in proportion to their population in the Province is denied to the Muslims of Bengal a grave injustice will be done to them, and it will always remain a rankling sore in their heart.

Electorate.—The next matter of paramount importance to the Muslims is the question of electorate. Seasonal visit of a flying character can hardly be expected to lead one deep down into the causes which necessitated the seemingly incongruous demand for a separate electorate by a community which happens to have a numerical superiority. I wish the members of the Simon Commission were present on the occasion of election in Bengal to realise the unbounded influence exercised on the Muslim voters by the landed aristocracy and by those who are responsible for financing of occupations in which the Muslims of Bengal are

generally engaged. Until the Muslims are educationally pushed forward and lifted from their present position of economic degradation, so that they may freely exercise their suffrage, there can be no escape from the existing system of electorate. Its change at this stage would inevitably perpetrate in effect the rule of the minority over the majority.

Safeguard.—Another vital demand of the Muslims in common with other minorities is the incorporation of the necessary safeguards for the protection of Muslim interest in the Statute itself instead of leaving them to the whims and caprices of individuals or bodies. The delegates would do well to insist upon this in the conference.

Representation in Central Legislature—The attention of Muslim India is at present riveted on the question of Muslim representation in the proposed Federal Assembly. Apart from numerical strength their political importance and history should be taken into account in deciding the proportion of their representation. A third of the seats is their minimum demand and no alteration in this proportion would be tolerated by the community. I think we shall be only correctly representing Muslim opinion in forewarning the Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference not to be party to any compromise in this matter.

Method of Election.—Coming to the method of election proposed for the Federal Assembly, we make no hesitation in characterising the indirect method suggested in the Report of the Simon Commission as surprisingly retrograde. Hardly any convincing justification has been put forward for inviting us to go backward. The assumed proportion of seats likely to be held by the Muslims under the proposed system, as shown in the Report, is based on superficial evidence of people unacquainted with the reality of the Indian situation. The proposed system of indirect election would hardly give the Muslims adequate representation in the Federal Assembly. The community cannot, therefore, countenance the idea of changing from the direct to the indirect method of election for the Assembly.

Central Government.—While the country is crying hoarse for Dominion Status and impatience is driving people to the ideal of complete independence, the Simon Commission propose a constitution for the Central Legislature which hardly makes any attempt to meet popular aspirations. We welcome the idea of a federal constitution, but cannot lose sight of the fact that the powers proposed to be vested in the Federal Assembly are not calculated to bring the administration of India under greater popular control. In certain respects the proposed constitution marks a distinctly retrograde step. The vesting of effective control of affairs in the hands of peoples' representatives is the most universal and insistent demand of India, and no section of the Indian public can be expected to get reconciled to any form of constitution which falls short in this respect. The Federal Assembly in the form suggested would be, I am afraid, nothing more than a glorified debating society. We do recognize the necessity of safeguards for the transitional period, but that should not be made a plea for non-transference of effective power to the representatives of the people.

Public Service.—Nothing is more calculated to solidify Indian opinion in support of the future constitution than to give it a shape that would dispel all suspicion of ushering in class rule. Everything possible should be done to reassure all classes of Indian people that their legitimate claims for sharing in the administration of the country would not be denied. This would create the necessary enthusiasm which alone would ensure successful working of the constitution. Every class and community should be invited to vitalise the administrative machinery of India by their special contribution. The danger of preponderance of any class or community in the services of the country should, therefore, be scrupulously avoided. It is desirable that some statutory provision should be made so as to ensure to the community its legitimate share in the administration.

Provincial Government.—As regards Provinces, the Diarchical constitution, hedged in by numerous restrictions and reservations, has proved unsatisfactory and unsuitable for the growth of a sense of responsibility. No one expected better result from such

a hybrid system of government. Indian opinion is unanimous that so far as the Provinces are concerned, complete responsibility should be vested in the people and provincial administration should be carried on with little interference from any quarter. The Simon Commission's proposal for the inclusion of official Minister in the cabinet is so diametrically opposed to all principles of democratic government that it rightly deserved the scathing condemnation the proposal has provoked in different quarters. Acceptance of this suggestion of the Commission would only mean perpetuation of the same much-abused diarchical form of government under the camouflage of a different name. Too much reserve power given to the Provincial rulers would prove another impediment to the growth of democracy and a right sense of responsibility. Not that we do not realise the necessity of reserve power, but extensive power of this kind, concentrated in the hands of the Governor, would frustrate the very object of developing democratic government.

It is not for me to remind the delegates of the solemn responsibility that rests on them. They have been called upon to represent India on a momentous occasion, unprecedented in the history of British connection, and involving issues on which the future of India so largely depends. We hope and trust India's representatives would rise to the height of the occasion and approach important problems in a liberal spirit and with breadth of view to be in a position to present a united front in the conference. I fully share the regret expressed in various quarters on the unfortunate decision of the congress party not to participate in the deliberations of the Round Table Conference. This decision, I need hardly say, has added enormously to the burden of responsibility of the delegates attending the Conference. I am sure they would spare no pains in effectively presenting the case of India in that august body so as to secure the largest measure of acceptance of our demands. In the discharge of their onerous duties the delegates will have the support of our prayers, blessings and benedictions.

On January 24th, 1929, a crowded meeting was held in the Albert Hall to express sympathy for King

Amanulllah in his troubles. Maulavi Abdul Karim was elected president of the meeting and he opened the proceedings with the following speech :—

Gentlemen, I thank you for the honour you have done me by asking me to preside over this meeting. The object that has brought us together here this evening, as you are aware, is to express our sympathy with the ex-King Amanullah for the loss of the throne, and to condemn the action of those who have caused his fall. I need hardly say that it is with the utmost concern and anxiety that we have been watching the regrettable happenings in Afghanistan, where reactionary forces have got the upper hand for the present and put an end, let us hope only temporarily, to peace and order in that country. As you know King Amanullah, within the short period of his reign, made his mark in the political world and proved himself an ideal ruler. In fact by his wise administration and enlightened reforms he has captured the imagination not only of his co-religionists, but of all right-thinking people all over the world. His industrial, educational and political reforms have converted the medieval kingdom of Afghanistan into a modern progressive state. He might have been a little over-zealous in the social reforms and might have proceeded too fast, but there can be no question about the purity of his motive. The reforms which he initiated were intended for the amelioration not only of his subjects but of humanity at large and they might have done great credit even to the most enlightened and progressive sovereign in any country and in any age. Let us hope that the seeds which he has sown, though on ill-prepared soil, will germinate before long and will ultimately produce such fruits as will leaven up political Asia and invigorate human society. The fall of such a king cannot but be regarded as a great calamity not only for Afghanistan but for the whole of Asia. The rebels and reactionaries, who have brought about his overthrow, cannot be condemned in too strong a language. We hope and trust they will be soon put down and Amanullah will be restored to power and will be in a position to take a prominent

part in the federation of the races and nations of Asia. Being our next-door neighbours, the Afghans are entitled to our moral and material support. It is most desirable that all possible practical steps should be taken to help them in their trouble.

The situation in Afghanistan is already very complicated. It is to be hoped it will not be further complicated either by Bolshevic intrigue or British intervention. A suspicion has, however, arisen in the latter respect on account of what our old friend, Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who never misses an opportunity to give expression to his friendly feelings, has said. He should have known that it is now too late to accuse Amanullah of usurpation. Is it not preposterous to say that one who ascended his father's throne, with the consent of all his people, was a usurper, although he might have omitted to procure the consent of the great Governor of the Punjab? I need hardly say that it would be a dangerous political blunder, perhaps involving disastrous consequences, to interfere in any way in the internal affairs of Afghanistan. It is hoped due notice would be taken of the timely warning sounded from some quarters.

I am exceedingly glad, gentlemen, that this meeting has been attended by such a large number of our non-Muslim brethren. It is but natural that they should sympathise in the troubles of a sovereign who has been very generous in his treatment of his non-Muslim subjects, and so frankly sympathetic to India's political aspirations. In fact the non-Muslim subjects of all important Muslim States, such as Hyderabad and Bhopal to name only two in India, have all along enjoyed the same rights and privileges as their Muslim fellow subjects enjoy. In a paper which I have to read in the Parliament of religions to be shortly held at Calcutta, I am going to illustrate how in the eyes of Islamic Law the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of Muslim States are equal. If generous sentiments, undaunted patriotism, reformative zeal and passionate striving to modernise and advance an Islamic Asiatic country go for anything, the name of Amanullah will live long in human memory even as Afghanistan has now been placed by him on the world's inter-

national maps. If, God forbid, he should not rise again, his fall will yet deserve the epitaph that :—

"It is better to have striven and lost,
Than never to have aspired at all."

Acharyya Prafulla Chandra Roy moved the following resolution with a powerful speech :—

This meeting expresses its deep and profound sympathy with His Majesty King Amanullah in His Majesty's present troubles and earnestly hopes that under God's providence and aided by the loyalty and devotion of his Majesty's faithful subjects, His Majesty will prevail over the machinations of his enemies and will long be spared to lead Afghanistan in the path of glory and progress.

This meeting expresses its deep abhorrence of those intriguers, domestic and foreign, whoever they may be, who have fomented the present troubles in Afghanistan to further their selfish purposes and to put obstacles in the path of progress and prosperity of the country.

This meeting is clearly and emphatically of opinion that the British Government should observe strict and absolute neutrality in the matter of the present Afghan troubles, that it should not either overtly or covertly take a single step such as may be construed as an encouragement to the rebels, and above all that no part of India's money should be diverted so as to help the rebels in any way to hamper the activities of His Majesty the King Amanullah.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. J. L. Bannerjee and supported by the late Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal, Mr. Subash Chandra Bose, the late Mr. Shyam Sunder Chakravarty and others.

Maulavi Abdul Karim was elected President of the Annual Session of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League, held in November, 1933. His presidential speech, which was his last important political speech, was highly appre-

ciated by some of the eminent personages of Bengal whose opinions will be found at the end of the speech.

"Gentlemen, as you are aware we have met after two years; there was no annual session of the Provincial League last year. It is extremely to be regretted that at this critical juncture in the history of modern India, when the need for unity and solidarity cannot be over-stressed, there should be so much bickering among some of the prominent members of this unfortunate community. While other communities have been actively organising themselves and vigorously mobilising all their forces for the fight ahead, Muslim energy and resources are being frittered away in unseemly wranglings for leadership, by setting up organisations of doubtful utility. Need I say this is tantamount to committing political suicide? . . . .

White Paper Constitution.—Of all the questions that at present require serious consideration of the country, the constitution forecasted in the White Paper is the most important. Notwithstanding some improvement on the present constitution in certain respects, the proposed constitution has such fundamental defects that it would not be altogether incorrect to characterise it as a reactionary measure. As unmistakably indicated by the trenchant criticism and severe condemnation pouring in from almost all quarters in the country and from almost all sections of politically-minded Indians, it falls far short of the aspirations of the people. It is not a compliment to British statesmanship that six long years' incessant and careful deliberation has not succeeded in producing a constitution acceptable to the people concerned. It would not be far from truth to say that the White Paper is a triumph for the die-hard reactionaries of the Churchillian type, who are anxious to retain political dominance over the people of India and cannot think of relinquishing their so-called sacred trust . . . . . .

The scheme adumbrated in the White Paper seems to have its birth in suspicion and distrust rather than to be based on confidence and goodwill; otherwise so many restrictions and reservations would not have been thought necessary. It envisages a government which is neither akin to Dominion

Status nor to any kind of real self-government. In fact the White Paper contains no commitment that Dominion Status could ever be secured or that Defence and Finance would ever be handed over to the Indians. Unless the outlined scheme undergoes radical alteration at the hands of the Joint Parliamentary Committee in the direction of the removal of the various checks on the freedom of the legislature and guaranteeing of an appreciable measure of genuine responsibility, the political discontent in India cannot be allayed to any great extent.

It seems to have been so arranged that responsibility in the Central Government, without which Provincial Autonomy would be an anomaly and a misnomer, might not come into operation within any measurable distance of time. I am not quite certain why the federation of the States is to be regarded as so very essential I am afraid it may serve as a ballast against Indian nationalism and the hesitation of the States to join the federation may be an excuse for putting off indefinitely the introduction of responsibility at the Centre. There seems to be no reason why the units of British Indian Provinces and Presidencies could not have been federated together for the purpose of administration in British India. The States, if they liked, might have come in later on. The proposed federation might not have the willing acquiescence of the Indian Muslims. For, the inclusion of the States in the federation would prove rather detrimental to the interests of the community, the proportion of whose representation in the Central Administration would be considerably reduced thereby.

As indicated by the numerous restrictions, reservations and so-called "safeguards", India under the proposed constitution is not likely to get a substantial measure of genuine self-government. That the alien grip will be further tightened rather than relaxed in certain essential matters, may be realised by a reference to the extensive powers and prerogatives proposed to be vested in the irresponsible Executive Heads of the Provincial and Federal Governments. The constitution will be practically at the mercy of an Executive Head, who can bring about, by his wide and loosely-defined overriding powers, a deadlock at any

time, if he be so inclined, his ultimate responsibility being not to the people of India but to the British Parliament through the Secretary of State. The Legislature will be absolutely powerless to make its own will operative against his wishes. I think there is no parallel to this anomalous state of things in the history of self-governing institutions. The irresponsible Executive Head will not only hold absolute sway over the administration of the "reserved subjects", including Defence and Foreign Affairs, but he will have power to enact laws on his own sole authority and over the head of the Legislature, which he cannot do even under the present constitution. There can be no analogy between the powers to be exercised by the Executive Heads in India and the powers exercised by the President of the United States of America and other self-governing countries, where the President is a national leader and though not formally responsible to the Legislature, has always to act on the authority derived from the people by whom he is elected.

No one can deny that some reserve powers for the Executive Head are necessary, particularly during the transitional period. But these must not be so very wide and unrestricted as to enable him to paralyse the working of the constitution whenever it suits his purpose. Besides, nothing has been said as to when such extensive powers will be curtailed or withdrawn.

The smooth working of the proposed constitution will entirely depend upon the capacity, sympathy, tact and resourcefulness of the Executive Heads. I have no doubt they will be selected with due care and discrimination. It would be, however, too much to expect that all or most of them would possess the sympathy, liberal views and breadth of vision of a Ripon or an Irwin. There is hardly anything in the proposed constitution that may restrain a Governor of the Sydenham or O'Dwyerian type from assuming, whenever it may please him to do so, the role of an absolute dictator and to play the part of an aggressive Hilter or Mussolini. Let us hope that, as a rule, such considerate and far-seeing Governors would be appointed as would refrain from creating occasions for the exercise of their

extraordinary overriding powers, which might cause a break-down of the constitution.

I think there is time yet to get the White Paper constitution revised and modified in the desired direction by vigorous agitation. I should not omit to state that I deprecate movements for the boycott of the council and working of a constitution when it is actually placed on the Statute Book. For a subject nation it is futile to say we would not accept it, we would not work it. I could have understood such a position had there been unanimity and solidarity in the country. In the existing circumstances, while one will not accept and work a constitution and another will, it is well to work the established constitution for what it is worth. I have sad experience of how the vital interests of the country have grievously suffered by the boycott of the councils by a class of people who might have formed a very strong opposition and might have averted the enactment of ordinances and other stringent measures that have hit the people very hard.

Communal Award.—Up to now I have scrupulously avoided saying publicly anything regarding what has come to be known as the Premier's "Communal Award", which has unfortunately evoked much acrimonious controversy both in the press and on the platform, lest I should add to the regrettable bitterness of feeling already prevailing, particularly among the aggressive members of both the communities. Now that, as President of the League, I have to speak and reference to this controversial matter is unavoidable, I hope to be excused for giving free and frank expression to my views in spite of the risk I may run of being pilloried by a section of the public. I think it is time to speak out boldly. At the outset I should not omit to say that I am not one of those who think that any section of the Indian people can really benefit by the discomfiture of any other section. My honest belief is that neither the political nor the economic salvation of India can be achieved unless and until its two great communities, the Hindus and the Muslims, who are destined to swim or sink together, closely combine and heartily co-operate for the common good of the motherland. The full recognition

of the political status of the people, unless demanded by them in a body, is, I think, an utter impossibility. The first item in any programme of economic and political reconstruction of India, must, therefore, be the unity among the communities inhabiting it. Failure to create inter-communal harmony and goodwill means the perpetuation of her bondage by stultifying all schemes of reform and progress. Nothing is more essential for the political and economic regeneration of the country than the solidarity of its people.

Accustomed, as I have been, to an atmosphere in which inter-communal unity and cordiality were hardly ever disturbed, and social amenities between the Hindus and Muslims were of common occurrence, it pains me much to see that at this critical stage of the history of the country, some short-sighted members of both the communities have been adopting the suicidal policy of injuring one another. It seems that a fit of insanity has seized them and, in their madness, they are flying at each other's throat; thus affording an opportunity of further tightening the chains of bondage with which they are knit together. Slaves fighting among themselves for imaginary wrongs or doubtful rights must be a most unedifying spectacle for the world's free onlookers to witness. What is most strange in connection with this unfortunate affair is that this is being done in the name of religion, which is intended to be the greatest humanising and harmonising force in the world. Promotion of goodwill and fellow-feeling among God's creatures is the message both of the Vedas and the Quran. Yet some members of both the communities, forgetting the injunctions of their respective scriptures, have been quarrelling frantically over trifling matters in which no cardinal principle of either religion is really involved. Have not the Hindus and Muslims, whose economic and other interests are identical, peacefully lived together for centuries in the common land of their birth? Did not the Hindus observe their religious rites with music and the Muslims by sacrificing cows? Did any body ever hear until recently of terrible occurrences such as those that have made Kulkati and Beldanga, which are no new colonies and must have been inhabited for centuries by

Hindus and Muslims, so very notorious? Am I to understand that the present-day Hindus and Muslims are more religious, more orthodox, than their ancestors were, that the former cannot tolerate sacrifice of cows only once a year for a religious purpose, while, as forcibly pointed out by Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, thousands of cows are slaughtered everyday for supplying food to the British soldiers and Christian and Muslim inhabitants, and the latter are so very disturbed merely by the music of Hindu processionists and not by the screams of motor horns, tram sounds and piano and gramophone music in their neighbouring houses, that they cannot say their prayers properly? My impression is that it is the work of designing people who miss no opportunity to create imaginary grievances for their own ends. Some trifling political rights that were conferred at first by the Minto-Morley scheme of reform and then by the Montague-Chelmsford scheme and now proposed to be a little augmented by the White Paper constitution, seem to have proved a veritable apple of discord. Need I say that if this lamentable communal tension continues, it would be futile to talk of political or economic regeneration of the country? Would it be too much to expect that the thoughtful and far-sighted members of both the communities, realising the extreme gravity of the situation, would bestir themselves betimes to avert what may prove disastrous to the true interests of their country and community? I refuse to believe that a real reconciliation cannot be effected. I would appeal to them, with all the earnestness I can command, to immediately set about clearing the atmosphere of all suspicion and distrust. It has to be realised that providence has cast our lot in one common motherland and we have to live together and die together in this great land of our birth It is impossible for one community to annihilate the other. In fact the unity of the two communities is the greatest asset to the political and economical well-being of India. It should, therefore, be adopted as the first article of political creed, and not as a mere matter of political expediency. Let us not forget for a moment that it is only by mutual trust and mutual co-operation between the Hindus and the Muslims

that the destiny of India can be achieved, and let there be a real unity of heart as well as of head, a unity bred of mutual love and trust and free from all traces of suspicion and distrust.

I disagree with those who hold that in Bengal, for the present, the only course is to run the administration on communal lines, and there can be no alternative to a communal government. In the existing circumstances, such a government, I am afraid, will break down sooner or later, and after much suffering, when good sense will prevail, a non-communal government will have to be established. By this I do not mean to indicate that either community has not the capacity to carry on the administration efficiently Hindus have ruled over Muslims and Muslims have ruled over Hindus without any extraordinary perturbation Even now the Prime Minister of the largest Muslim State in India, Raja Kishan Parshad, is a Hindu, and Sir Mirza Ismail is the Dewan of the largest Hindu State. They are quite efficiently administering their respective States Just now another eminent Muslim, Sir Muhammad Habibullah, has been appointed Dewan of the important state of Travancore. From what I know of him I have no doubt that he will justify his appointment But circumstanced as Bengal is at present, only a government in which different communities will have their legitimate share, is likely to be successful.

Let us for a while examine the credentials of those who have been posing themselves as leaders of their communities, deriving their authority from bodies like the Hindu Mahasabha on one side and the Muslim Conference on the other, and making the world believe that they are sincerely fighting for their vital interests. It may be pertinently asked in this connection who form the great communities in Bengal—the microscopic classes or the overwhelmingly large masses? The answer to this query, I have no doubt, will be, "the masses". If this answer is correct, then the inevitable conclusion is that it is the interests of the masses, and not those of the classes, that constitute the interests of the country and the communities. The next question to be considered is whether the interests of the classes and the masses are one and the same. For an answer to this

question I would refer you to the proceedings of the Bengal Legislative Council on the occasion of the discussion of the Bengal Tenancy Bill, which will show what a strenuous fight the representatives and hirelings of the landed aristrocacy put up for the protection of their so-called rights against the rights of the agriculturists. If the interests of the classes and the masses are not indentical, what justification can there be for the representatives of the landed aristocracy and the capitalists to claim to be the protectors of the interests of the agriculturists, who by their numerical strength constitute what may be called the Indian nation. Have they made any attempt, worth mentioning, for the relief of the peasant sufferers? Did they stir a finger when poor peasants who had assembled at Hasnabad to ventilate their grievances and to organise themselves for advancing their cause, were fired upon, and on other similar occasions?

Who are responsible for the unseemly communal squabbles? Certainly not the uneducated illiterate masses. My official duties carried me to many of the villages in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, where I found Hindus and Muslims, whose economic and other interests are, in most cases, identical, living most peacefully on the best of terms, never quarrelling for any doubtful right or imaginary grievance. It matters little to them if one community gets a seat more or a seat less in the council or a post more or a post less in service. My belief is that it is people who call themselves educated that have set the communal squabble agoing, in many instances for their own ends. There is nothing strange in this; of the many evils that a purely secular godless occidental education has introduced into the country, selfishness is decidedly one.

Now let us calmly and dispassionately examine the "Communal Award" and see what ground there is for the unseemly row over it. Has it really given any undue advantage to one community at the cost of the other? If democracy is our just demand, if adult franchise is really wanted, then on what other basis can the seats in the legislature be distributed than on the basis of population? If this assumption is correct, then it is

numerical strength of a community, and not education, wealth or influence, or even service or sacrifice, that counts. That this has been well realised by our Hindu brethren is evident from their anxiety to swell their numbers by the possible means. There was all along a general impression that a Hindu can only be born and not made. Conversion of non-Hindus and re-conversion of converted Hindus to Hinduism, was altogether unknown in India. In fact the survival of Hinduism almost in its pristine condition, despite the many vicissitudes through which it had to pass for centuries on account of the onslaughts of Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Christianity, is rightly ascribed to its extreme conservatism and non-proselytising character. The Suddhi and kindred movements, recently started, seem to have altered the situation. It remains, however, to be seen whether the high caste orthodox Hindus, so proud of their pedigree and orthodoxy, really accept the converted and reconverted people as their own, or treat them as outcastes. From a Muslim point of view there is nothing in it to be sorry for. Suddhi movement is nothing but an approach towards Islam. If it spreads extensively, it may ultimately lead to the real Islamisation of the whole of India, if not in name.

It was on the assumption that in a democratic form of government seats in the legislature have to be divided on the basis of population that the Premier gave the assurance that in no province would the majority be reduced to minority or even to equality. Has he acted in accordance with this assurance? Has he not by his "Communal Award" reduced the Muslim majority in Bengal into a statutory minority? If so, is not this a real grievance for the redress of which the Muslims would be quite justified in agitating? Providence has placed certain communities in certain provinces in an advantageous position. It would be futile to agitate to change it. The sooner the clamour ceases the better will it be for the country.

If the row over the "Communal Award" had been on account of the abnormally large proportion of seats assigned to the Europeans, who have got 25 while barely entitled, on a population basis, to a couple of seats, I would have been con-

vinced of its justification. The attack on the Muslims, who are in no way responsible for the award and who have themselves a serious grievance in the matter, is wholly unjustified. I have reason to believe if the Hindus and Muslims had combined in a vigorous agitation against the allocation of an enormously larger number of seats to the Europeans than they are entitled to, they could have got back some of them. In allocating seats to the Europeans the Premier has not been unjust particularly to the Hindu community of Bengal. If arithmetically worked out, it will be seen that he has taken as many Muslim seats as he has taken Hindu seats according to the respective population of the two communities. The Hindu delegates from Bengal to the Round Table Conference are perhaps more to blame, if my information is correct, for the Communal Award than anybody else. If they had not objected to the allocation of 51 per cent. seats of the whole house to the Muslims, they being entitled to 54 on population basis, in a joint electorate, the Premier's interference might not have been necessary. I have got in my possession a letter signed by the two Muslim delegates from Bengal asking our consent to the above mentioned arrangement.

The "Communal Award", as it stands at present, will never be accepted by the Bengal Muslims, as it saps the very foundation of democratic principles and put them in a statutory minority. I should not omit to sound a note of warning to the self-appointed and Government-made leaders of the community, and to others concerned, that young Muslim Bengal, now wide awake to their true interests, are not likely to allow the bartering away of their birthright without a challenge. If to-day the Muslims of Bengal were well-organised to give unequivocal expression to their cherished ideas, who could have dared sell their rights for a mess of pottage?

In the controversy that is raging round the communal award frequent reference has been made to the Lucknow Pact by some notable Hindu leaders, who have tried to make capital out of its terms, oblivious of the fact that these were replaced by the terms of the "Hindu-Muslim Pact" of 1923, details of which have been given in chapter VI of this book. The Lucknow

Pact, which was meant for the whole of India and did not take into account the peculiar local circumstances of Bengal, did not envisage a democratic form of government, but was concerned with a scheme of some small reforms in the existing bureaucratic administration. Besides, the Lucknow conference was dominated by influential Muslims of upper India who, for the sake of getting the weightage of a few additional seats for their co-religionists in the legislatures of their Provinces, did not hesitate to give their consent to the reduction of the Muslim majority in Bengal to a definite minority, and the Muslim delegates from Bengal were too few and too weak to get their protest heard. This inequitable arrangement was regarded by the politically-conscious Muslims of Bengal as a grave injustice done to their community, and they could never get themselves reconciled to it ; it remained a rankling sore in their heart. In a decade's time the circumstances in the country greatly changed, the Pact was found to have outgrown its utility, and it was thought that the changed circumstances required a new programme to meet them. Accordingly I entered into a discussion of the situation with the late lamented Mr. C. R. Das. The term that evoked much controversy was the one that related to electorate. Fearing that there might be a break-down, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was present, proposed joint electorate for two terms, and in case of its failure, reversion to separate electorate. But on the insistence of the Muslims present, the order was reversed, and it was agreed, though not stated in the Pact, that there could be joint electorate after two terms. Had Mr. Das been alive and had there been no embitterment of feelings between the two communities over trifling matters, the question of electorate would have been, by this time, settled, I think, to the satisfaction of all concerned. The Bengal Provincial Muslim League expressed their definite opinion, times out of number, regarding the system of electorate, but they did not receive any active co-operation in this matter from any section of the Hindus, nationalists or liberals. The recent happenings in the Calcutta Corporation and elsewhere seem to have stiffened the attitude of the Muslims, and some of those who were very much in

favour of joint electorate seem to have changed their mind. If time had permitted, I could have shown that this is not such a vital thing to either community as to be the cause of incalculable injury to the interests of the country by friction between the two communities. Would that good sense had prevailed even now and some formula on the lines of the late lamented Maulana Muhammed Ali's formula or Maulana Azad's suggestion referred to, were evolved and sincerely accepted by both parties.

Tremendous was the agitation that was set up against the Pact by a section of the Hindu community, headed by some of their most influential leaders. But the towering personality of that great patriot whose keen vision could transcend the limited boundaries set up to the political horizon by his narrow-minded and short-sighted co-religionists, triumphed, and bore down all opposition. Mr. Das, truly called Deshbandhu, the true friend of the country, who stood by the Pact as long as he lived, got it passed by the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, the signature of whose the then Secretary, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, it bears. The records of that Committee will corroborate the truth of what I have stated. The Pact still stands ; I am not aware of the cancellation of the proceedings of the meeting of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee at which it was passed. Subsequently when the Pact was vehemently opposed in the All-India Congress Committee by the late Pandit Shyamsundar Chakravarty and others, Deshbandhu firmly stuck to his guns and so unyieldingly pleaded for Provincial Autonomy that he had to be allowed to manage the affairs of his Province in accordance with the decision of the Provincial Committee. Later on in the Sirajganj Provincial Conference, and not only in the provincial Conference but in the Provincial Hindu Mahasava Conference as well, the Pact was passed by an overwhelming majority, despite vehement opposition by some of the most prominent members of the Hindu community. The charge against the Government of showing undue favour to the Muslims by giving them a larger number of seats than they were entitled to, has, therefore, absolutely no foundation. If seats were allocated according to the terms of the Hindu-Muslim Pact,

the Muslims would have got a larger number. Would that some Hindu leader with Deshbandhu's long vision, large heart, indomitable will and courage of conviction had arisen and brought peace to his unfortunate motherland. No doubt it augurs well for the future that just at this psychological moment the worthy son of a worthy father has very emphatically spoken out. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has viewed the situation in its true perspective. He has not hesitated to characterise Bhai Pramananda's Mahasabha as "a small reactionary group professing to speak on behalf of the Hindus of India whom it was very far from representing." Nothing during recent months has pained him so much as the activities of the Mahasabha group, which has, "proclaimed its policy to be one of elimination of Muslims and Christians from India and the establishment of a Hindu Raj." "The statement has made it clear", says Mr. Nehru, "what the pretensions of the Mahasabha about Indian nationalism amounted to under cover of seeming nationalism." "The Mahasabha not only hid the rankest and narrowest communalism", he goes on, "but also desired to preserve the vested interests of a group of big Hindu landlords and princes. The policy of the Mahasabha, as declared by its responsible leaders, was a denial of every vestige of nationalism and a suppression of every manly instinct in Hindus . . . . . Anything more degrading, reactionary, anti-national, anti-progressive and harmful than the present policy of the Hindu Mahasabha it is difficult to imagine. The leaders of the Mahasabha must realise that the inevitable consequence of this policy is for the rest of India, Hindu or non-Hindu, to face them squarely and oppose them."

What can be more condemnatory than this? It is indeed a happy sign of the times that the staunch upholder of Hindu orthodoxy, the great Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who presided over the meeting at which Pandit Jawaharlal made the above-quoted observations, endorsed the views of the young Pandit, if not his words, and dissociated himself from the resolutions passed by the Mahasabha. I may say in passing that that it has given me a great shock to see the Congress organs

in Bengal, both English and vernacular, taking active part in the acrimonious controversy over the "Communal Award."

There is nothing unnatural in what is being done by some short-sighted members of both the communities. It would be ignoring human nature to expect that emoluments long enjoyed would be readily relinquished or that rights regarded as legitimately due would not be unyieldingly demanded. If the position of the two communities were reversed, perhaps the situation would not have been very different. For reasons too well-known to need narration, our Hindu brethren have long enjoyed an enormously large share in the provincial administration. Once a gentleman referred to, as I said in another public speech, after a visit to the Writers' Buildings is said to have remarked that it looked to him something like a Hindu Zamindar's Cutchery with a few European managers and some Muslim orderlies. The offices of the Calcutta University and the Calcutta Corporation are said to present a similar spectacle, minus the European managers. Would it not be too much to expect that all these would be philanthropically parted with? On the other hand, those who have at last realised the grave mistake committed by their predecessors and are gradually becoming conscious of their legitimately due rights, are not likely to take the situation with philosophic equanimity. So if a fight after all becomes inevitable, fight it by all means, but, for God's sake, fight it in a sportsmanlike spirit, without wantonly embittering feelings by empty threats and vain dangling of swords; fight just as two brothers fight in asserting their rights over their legitimate shares in the paternal property, but unhesitatingly unite when occasion arises, say when the joint property is encroached upon by a third party.

My speech has already run a great length, and I am afraid I have trespassed too much upon your patience. I shall have therefore, to refrain from discussing in detail some other important subjects I intended to discuss. Of the questions that are at present exercising the public mind, the dastardly criminality that has brought disgrace upon the province and the depressing

unemployment that has dispirited our youths, require special consideration.

Terrorism.—The youths of a country, I need hardly say, are its greatest asset. History bears incontestible testimony to the fact that it was the impulsive youths who brought about most of the revolutions in human affairs in all ages and in all climes. Woe betide the country the youthful capacity and activity of which are misdirected and misused. To imbue the youths with patriotic feelings and to inspire them with lofty ideals is the highest duty that a lover of his country can set before him. Those who instil criminal ideas into young minds are the greatest enemies of the country and humanity.

On the occasion of the last Russo-Japanese war, all the seven sons of a Japanese widow fell in battle. When her neighbours went to condole with her, they found her in tears. On their offering her consolation, she expressed great annoyance, and, to their surprise, told them that she was grieving not because she had lost all of her seven sons, but because she had not any other to sacrifice for her country. Who can check the progress of a nation, whose sons and daughters are animated by such a spirit? It is this spirit of service and sacrifice that has made Japan, half a century ago a mere geographical expression, one of the greatest world-powers of the day. If such a spirit continues, who knows that one day her ambition not only to dominate Asia but to encroach upon Europe, like the Huns of old, would not be fulfilled?

The splendid services that some of our young men and women have rendered in connection with flood, famine and pestilence, have given unmistakable indication of their having imbibed a laudable spirit of self-sacrifice. Those instrumental in creating it deserve our grateful thanks. On the other hand, no words can be strong enough for the condemnation of the miscreants, who divert it to mischievous channels leading to disaster. It is high time that all available forces in the country were mobilised for putting down terrorism and purging the land of the miscreants, preaching justification of the means by the end, and inculcating the cult of the bomb and the revolver.

It is a matter of great gratification that Muslim youths have not succumbed to mischievous machinations and have kept their hands clean of blood that has stained other hands. In this connection I should not omit to say that I strongly deprecate the wholesale condemnation, indulged in in certain quarters, of a great community, whose Shastras, traditions, training and temperament militate against such criminal acts, for the misdeeds of a few misguided wretches. If scores of them are guilty of bloody deeds, hundreds unhesitatingly risk their lives in hunting the criminals out and getting them punished.

Unemployment.—The unemployment problem, with its concomitant disorder and distress, has assumed a magnitude unparalleled in the history of modern Bengal. Since the consolidation of British administration in the Province, life and property have never been so insecure as at present. During the six months ending in June last, there were no less than 1,053 cases of dacoity and 440 cases of murder in Bengal, and during the same period in the previous year 1,253 dacoities and 510 murders were committed. What can be more horrible to think of than this? Barring a few cases of what may be called political dacoities, all others were due to unemployment and economic distress prevailing in the country. What is most to be regretted is the participation of educated people in these atrocious crimes. This deplorable state of things is due, to a large extent, to the futility of the education imparted in our educational institutions. Those who, like me, had opportunities of closely studying the subject in its various aspects, must have been convinced that the system that was originally introduced mainly with a view to train clerks and other subordinate officers for the assistance of British administrators, has long outgrown its utility. A large number of those educated under that system, are not only unemployed but also unemployable. Young men who, in their childhood, were taught that "those who read and write, ride horses and carriages", find, to their utter disappointment, that the education they have received leads instead to the path of penury and starvation. Having hardly any useful work to do and unable to maintain themselves by honest means,

educated young men betake themselves to mischievous ways. As long as the educated could be absorbed into the services for which they were intended, no one ever heard of dacoities and other heinous crimes having been committed by *Bhadralogs*. If over-production of graduates and under-graduates could be stopped and new avenues of employment could be created, the educated *Bhadralogs*, with the exception of the few victims of political exploitation, would, I have reason to believe, cease to commit such excesses as have brought indescribable disgrace and disaster to the people of Bengal.

For a long time I have been persistently urging the revision of the course of studies prescribed for our educational institutions, so as to make those passing out of them fit to earn an honest living. Unless and until this is done and activities of the youths are diverted to useful channels, the unemployment problem will continue to baffle solution, and there will be no peace in the country. What is really wanted is not ready-made automatons who will fit into the fixed grooves of services under Government or commercio-industrial concerns, but enterprising and adventurous youths, spiritually strong, who may carve out new destinies and create fresh openings for themselves and others in independent walks of life.

It is a matter of great regret that hundreds of our young men are going from door to door for employment, while many of our natural resources are lying untapped. Most of the industrial concerns in the country are in the hands of foreigners. Our Hindu brethren are gradually realising the necessity of moving in this direction, and resuscitating some of the dying indigenous industries, but the Muslims are still slumbering. Their suicidal indifference to the industrial regeneration of the country will, I need hardly say, immensely add to their impoverishment. I would appeal to our young men, in the name of all that is sacred, to emulate the glorious example of the Saracens of old in the field of trade, commerce, industry and science.

System of Education.—The present system of primary education which has been in operation for over half a century, has proved a failure. It has not proved suitable to the requirements

of those for whom it was intended. It has not made the agriculturists better agriculturists nor the artisans more proficient artisans. On the contrary, it has proved detrimental to the interests of the masses in as much as it has created in them a distaste for manual labour and for their hereditary callings and mode of living. They do not care to improve agriculture or handicrafts, anxious as they are to follow occupations of an unproductive nature, in imitation of *Bhadralog*. They hate to earn their livelihood by manual labour and know nothing else by which they can earn an honest living. Thus they are not only unemployed but also unemployable, and they help to accelerate rather than retard the decadence of indigenous arts and industries, and thereby aggravate the economic distress prevailing in the country. Does not all this unmistakably indicate the necessity of thorough reform? It has to be borne in mind that the little education the masses receive in the beginning of life greatly influences them for good or for evil throughout their later career. In fact their aims, their aspirations, their mentality and their outlook of life, are all moulded and guided by what is instilled into their minds at the most impressionable stage of life.

I wish I could give a better account of secondary education. The main purpose of its introduction was so well served that it may not be far from truth to say that it converted the intelligentsia of India into a race of quill-drivers. Our schools and colleges, while quite successful in turning out efficient tools for the administrative machinery, failed to produce men of light, of culture, of character, of business capacity and of bold initiative in different departments of human activity. If there still appears a Tagore or a Bose, it is not on account of the system, but in spite of it. Once a high European educationist truly remarked that the difference between schools in India and schools in England was as great as the difference between chalk and cheese. It is high time that a system of national education, suited to the taste and temperament, needs and aspirations of the people, were devised without further delay. On the one hand technical and vocational education, correlated to the

avenues of employment open to the people, should be given, and on the other, high cultural education should be imparted to those who can afford it, so as to produce such citizens of light and leading as may be fit for progressive self-government. The future educational policy must aim at a large scale production not of graduates and under-graduates but of agriculturists, industrialists and rural workers. If young men, nurtured on history, philosophy and political theories, are unable to find honourable channels for the employment of their talent, knowledge and energy, it is nothing unnatural that they should go astray in sheer desperation, starvation staring them in the face.

Hardly any effective measure has been adopted to reform the educational system in the desired direction. Whenever there was any agitation for anything particular, conferences and committees were appointed, and these perhaps served more as eyewash than anything else. A dozen and one volumes of the most valuable report of the Sadler Commission, which was specially appointed for the reform of the Calcutta university, and by acting upon the recommendations of which most of the other universities in India were appreciably benefited, have hardly done anything for Bengal, except adorning the archives of the Secretariat. The Report of the University Re-organisation Committee has so far produced little practical effect on the affairs of the University. The Committee over which Lord Lytton presided (I was one of its members from Assam) did nothing worth mentioning. The Primary Education Act is likely to be regarded merely as a document of historical interest. Nothing is known as regards the findings of the Deprovincialisation Committee. Nothing has been heard for about a year of the Advisory Committee for Muhammadan Education, which sat for about two years. After all this, what prospect can there be of the success of the latest "endeavour to find ways and means to remedy the existing deficiencies in the present system of university and secondary education in the Province?" As the matter has been discussed threadbare, the required reform might have been effected without further

enquiry by a committee of "educational experts". My impression is that those wedded to stereotyped work and wanting in insight and initiative may not be competent to carry out the required reform. Men with broad outlook, wide experience and adequate imagination, such as Dr. Rabindranath Tagore, Sir P. C. Roy, Sir Ross Masud, are required for the purpose. Let us hope that the new constitution would usher in an era of educational progress, when the portfolio of education would come into the hands of such Ministers as would be able to devise a system of education well-suited to the requirements of the country.

In Bengal who lives if peasants die?—Bengal, as I have already said, is pre-eminently an agricultural Province; over 80 per cent. of its population are tillers of the soil, and consequently producers of the country's wealth. Anything happening to this mainstay of the country vitally affects its whole population. Perhaps it needs no mention that the poverty of Bengal's peasantry has passed into a proverb. Internal and external exploitation seems to have been its chief cause. At present, when the price of all agricultural produce has gone down to a staggering point, they are passing through an economic crisis which beggars all description. Need I say that it behoves all concerned—the rulers, the landlords, the capitalists, the money-lenders, the professionals—to come to their immediate relief. It is difficult to forecast what is going to happen if their distress is not forthwith alleviated. Here is a chance for those who call themselves the people's leaders, the peasants' well-wishers, to prove their claim by deeds and not by words.

. . . . Co-operative banks, established on a large scale, with agriculturists as shareholders, under Government supervision, might greatly benefit the peasants and labourers. The price of jute having fallen so low as not to cover even the cost of production, the jute growers are now in great distress. Such a situation would not have arisen if the price of jute had been controlled and other effective measures taken in time, as suggested by the Jute Growers' Association, of which I am the

President. Government's indifference in this matter is very much to be deplored.

The appalling illiteracy, prevailing in the country, is a standing discredit to its administration. In all civilised countries most of the people are literate. In Japan the percentage of literates is 97, in the United States of America 96, in England 93, in Germany 91, in Russia 76 among males and 63 among females. What do you think is the percentage of literates in this benighted country? Hardly 5 per cent. in India as a whole and 10 per cent. in Bengal. The insignificant amount spent on education by the Indian Government could not have produced any other result. The expenditure for education per head amounts to Rs. 16 in America, Rs. 9 in England, Rs. 8 in Japan, but in India it is the magnificent sum of annas two. How could it be higher when the Military Budget exceeds sixty crores?

In all countries primary education has a greater importance than higher education. In India, where the upper and middle classes are numerically insignificant, its importance is far greater than elsewhere. The comparative backwardness of India in almost every sphere of human activity, may be traced to her illiteracy. It is because the masses are illiterate that they are swayed by superstition and prejudice, know little of sanitation and hygiene and are carried off by thousands every year by cholera, malaria and other preventible diseases, have to depend upon the freaks of nature for the success or failure of their crops, fall victims to the mischievous machinations of political self-seekers and religious fanatics, who exploit them whenever it suits their purpose. Unless and until illiteracy is wiped out from the land, there can be little progress, social, economic or political. It is education, and nothing but education, that can remove social evils, sanitary troubles and economic distress from the country, and can awaken political consciousness and create solidarity in the people. Self-government without literacy would be nothing but a farce, and might possibly be a tragedy.

It is to be extremely regretted that the Primary Education Act, which was passed with so much ado three years ago,

has not yet been given effect to, and it is not known when it will come into operation. If on account of economic depression, levy of an educational cess was undesirable, the Government might have temporarily, if not permanently, introduced the long-overdue free compulsory education into the province by meeting the necessary expenditure out of its provincial revenues, making retrenchment, if necessary, in other less important directions. The responsibility of a civilised government in making the people literate cannot be over-stressed. To regard expenditure for this purpose as one of the first charges upon a country's revenues, would be certainly an act of wisdom. In this connection I should not omit to mention that the indigenous and inexpensive education in vogue before, was more suited to the social and economic conditions of the people. Its replacement by an exotic system, which prefers book education to nature study, insists on reading more than on thinking, fosters an artificial taste for unnecessary things and costs much more than poor people can afford to bear, has made education rather unpopular with the masses. I need hardly say that a thorough over-hauling of the system in order to make it natural, simple, inexpensive, modern, but true to India's genius and suited to the requirements of the masses is urgently necessary. Such a system of primary education must be made universal, free and compulsory, simultaneously with the inauguration of responsible self-government, if not before.

OPINIONS ON THE ABOVE SPEECH.

8/1, Harsi Street,
Calcutt, 6th December, 1933.

DEAR DR. AHMED,

I am very thankful to you for kindly sending me a copy of the Presidential speech of Maulvi Abdul Karim Saheb. I read a part of the speech in the papers and was longing for a copy of the entire speech. I have now read the whole of it and I am tempted to say that it is an epoch-making speech fit to be

preserved in letters of gold in every Hindu and every Moslem household. With thanks again,

Yours sincerely,
M. N. MUKHERJEE,
(Judge, Calcutta High Court).

College of Science,
Calcutta, 10-2-34.

DEAR MR. ABDUL KARIM,

I have been reading, marking and digesting your admirable address and am quoting at length from it in my 2nd volume of "My Life and Experiences". I look upon you as the nestor of the cultured Moslem community. Every line of your address breeds lofty patriotism and is singularly free from the tint of communalism. To quote your own words: You are not a Government-made leader—but that is your highest claim to gratitude of us all. May you live long and continue to preach the gospel of United Bengal in which the Hindu and the Moslem should have absolute equality of status.

Yours sincerely,
P. C. ROY,
(SIR P. C. ROY, KT., C.I.E.).

2, Chandra Chatterjee Street, Calcutta,
6th December, 1933.

MY DEAR MULVI SAHEB,

I am indeed greatly gratified for having been favoured with a copy of your excellent and rousing speech. I read a sketch of it in the "Statesman" before and admired the same, but the full speech is really a glorious study. I wish it were translated for the use of our largely misguided countrymen, who greatly

need such plain-speaking in no uncertain language. Pages 7 to 10 and pages 18 to 20 have made a particularly deep impression on my mind—how boldly and effectively a genuine leader and an esteemed son of Bengal has spoken out his mind. You have by your speech fully maintained the traditions of your life, culture and experience for which you are so much respected by both the communities. May God spare you a long time yet to serve our dear motherland with your courage and foresight

With kindest regards and best thanks,
I am yours very sincerely,
SURENDRA NATH MALLIK (C.I.E.),
(Late Member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India).

23rd December, 1933.
Calcutta,

MY DEAR MR. KARIM,

Thanks for your kind letter. I not only received your speech but read it with interest and appreciate. Speeches like yours lead me to hope that some day there may be an end of the present unfortunate situation for which my community is as much to blame as yours. Best regards,

Yours sincerely,
N. N. SIRCAR,
(Advocate General, Bengal. At present Law Member, Viceregal Council).

CHAPTER IX.

SOME LETTERS.

Whenever there was public discussion regarding anything important Maulavi Abdul Karim took a conspicuous part in it. It will require a large volume to publish all the letters he wrote on various subjects to newspapers and individuals. As a few pages can be spared, only some select letters are being printed for the present. These will give some idea as to what kind of letters were written by M. Abdul Karim. In December, 1916, he was requested by the late Mr. Gourlay, then Private Secretary to the Governor of Bengal, to write a short history of the Muslim rule in Bengal for the use of Lord Chelmsford when he would come to Bengal, and he wrote the required history, which was presented to Lord Chelmsford. He then wrote some long letters to the late Mr. E. S. Montague on constitutional reforms. Some of these were sent direct and some through the Governmtnt of Bengal. He was informed that these would be taken into considration by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State.

When the Montague-Chelmsford Scheme was under consideration the following letter of Maulavi Abdul Karim was published in the Statesman :—

SIR,—In a letter that I have addressed in my capacity as a Vice-President of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League to the Secretary of the League, to be placed before the meeting to be held to-morrow to consider the Reform Scheme I have written as follows :—

"As for acceptance or rejection of the scheme, the question, to my mind, does not arise at all. We have to deal with a report

in which certain proposals have been made not for acceptance or rejection but for criticism and discussion. The framers of the Scheme were not authorised to offer any Scheme for acceptance or rejection by the people of India. They were instructed to survey the situation, to collect information, to weigh opinions and to formulate proposals. This they have done, and criticism and discussion have been invited. When the Scheme will be embodied in an Act and the question of its being put into operation will arise, then will be the time for acceptance or rejection. . . . .

The Scheme has to be carefully perused and thoroughly digested. The difficulty of getting a thorough grasp of such an inimitably written document, which traverses a wide area and covers a long period, must not be lost sight of. From what I have been able to gather by going through it once I have no hesitation in saying that the Scheme deserves most serious consideration. Called upon to deal with one of the most complicated problems that any statesman had ever to face in any country, the framers of the scheme, to my mind, have acquitted themselves with exceptionable ability and praiseworthy earnestness. How difficult it is to draw up a cautious and at the same time a liberal scheme can be realised only by those who had the misfortune of being placed in such an unenviable position. I think the Scheme, on the whole, has been conceived in a spirit of genuine sympathy with India's political aspirations, and an honest attempt has been made to grapple with the present political situation in India by reconciling diversities of views and interests. The Scheme is a decided improvement on the existing state of things and it marks a definite advance in the system of administration, calculated to lead by stages if properly worked out, to the realisation of the ideal of responsible government in India. In my humble opinion it deserves a calm and considerate handling.

That the Scheme falls short of the aspirations of the people and is not adequate to meet the present situation in India there can be no denying. That it requires substantial modifications and expansions in some important respects cannot be gainsaid. That some of the restrictions and limitations imposed as safe-

guards through excessive caution, require to be removed or relaxed must be admitted. But all this cannot be achieved by obstructive agitation or destructive criticism. The Scheme will have to be modified through calm and careful discussion and considerate and constructive criticism. Strong and earnest public opinion cannot fail to produce the desired effect. I would, therefore, strongly urge the concentration of all attention and energies for getting the required modifications and I would propose the appointment of a strong committee of the League for this purpose. It is hoped the committees which will have to determine the powers to be transferred from the Government of India to the Provicial Governments and from the Provincial Executives to the Indian Ministers and will have to settle the electorates and the proportion of elected members, will be formed without further delay."—Yours, etc.,

Ranchi, Aug. 3. ABDUL KARIM.

While the Round Table Conference was sitting Maulavi Abdul Karim wrote the following letter to the late Sir Syed Ali Imam, one of the delegates from Bihar :—

Calcutta, the 23rd September, 1931.

DEAR SIR ALI IMAM,

I hope to be excused for the liberty I am taking of intruding upon you when you must be very busy with the work of the Round Table Conference. Had not the Muslims of Bengal been vitally interested in what I am writing, I would not have troubled you. You must have noticed that the Muslim delegation from Bengal is not only most inadequate but also very weak. One of the delegates is committed to separate electorate, upon which perhaps his political existence depends, and the other practically has no opinion of his own and may be gained over by any party. In these circumstances may I hope that you will kindly do all that may be possible for safeguarding the interests of your co-religionists in Bengal?

I am enclosing herein copies of three letters which I wrote regarding the requirements of the Muslims of Bengal. I shall be much obliged if you kindly spare a little time to go through them. The circumstances of Bengal being different from those of other provinces, the case of the Bengal Muslims requires special consideration. The Lucknow pact, as you are aware, did great injustice to the Muslims of Bengal. They will have to suffer grievously if they are again relegated to the position of minority in spite of their majority in the province. Will you kindly exert your influence to prevent a recurrence of such injustice? It is not unlikely that the Muslim delegates from Bengal will agree to sacrifice our majority in the legislature for the sake of separate electorate

The next important thing is to get the number of Muslim voters raised to their proportion in the population by lowering the franchise qualification. Adult franchise, if given to females also, will, however, prove injurious to the Muslim cause, as few Muslim females will attend the polling booths. If universal adult franchise is sanctioned, special facilities for recording female votes, such as recording by proxy or at home, should be arranged, otherwise few Muslim female votes will be recorded. I hope you will kindly bear this in mind when the franchise question will be discussed.

The electorate question in Bengal requires serious consideration. In other provinces separate electorate might not be so injurious to the Muslim cause as in Bengal, which contains about one-third of the total Muslim population of India and double of that of the Punjab. About 90 per cent of the Bengal Muslims being cultivators, their interests in fact constitute the interests of the community. The liberation of the cultivating class (both Hindu and Muslim) from the economic bondage of the landlords cannot be achieved unless and until the Hindu and Muslim masses, who have been divided into watertight compartments by separate electorate, are able to join their forces in a common electorate. Thus from the point of view of the masses, who form 80 per cent of Bengal's population, the case for joint electorate is overwhelming. It is to be regretted that the Muslim landlords

of Bengal have been trying their utmost to perpetuate the system of separate electorate. By exploiting the cultivators, who form an overwhelming majority of the electors, they get themselves elected to the Council. All the Indian members of the Bengal cabinet, two Executive Councillors and three Ministers, come from the landowning class, whose interests, as a rule, are opposed to the interests of the cultivating class. Even most of the Swarajist members, who are landlords or their agents, do not hesitate to sacrifice the interests of the cultivators. Party division in the Councils, unless based on class interest, will be most detrimental to the interests of the masses, and will thus be a negation of democracy. Any division on the basis of religion, being the creation of interested persons, will retard the progress of the country as well as of the community.

Separate electorate has had its trial for a long time. Has it really benefited the Muslim community? Has it enabled the Muslims to organise themselves? Have they returned the right type of representatives to the Councils? I am afraid the answers of these queries will have to be given in the negative. On the contrary, dependence on artificial props has engendered a false sense of security and has thus retarded the growth of self-reliance and political organisation. Besides, separate electorate, in the words of the Simon Report, has proved "an obstacle in the way of the growth of a sense of common citizenship." The only people it has benefited are the opportunists and job-hunters, who have exploited the Bengal masses for their selfish ends. As long as this system of electorate will continue there can be no chance for Hindu and Muslim masses to better their condition. In these circumstances it is most desirable that every possible effort should be made to get joint electorate introduced in Bengal, if not permanently, at least for two terms, so that it may be seen how it works. Separate electorate, though tried for a long time, has not produced the desired result. Let joint electorate have a trial for some time.

As for reservation of seats, I wrote at some length about it in the letter, a typed copy of which is enclosed. For reasons stated therein it is desirable, in the interests of both the Hindus and

the Muslims of Bengal, that seats should be reserved for both the communities until there is a change in the circumstances that make such reservation necessary. In conclusion, I would request you to do all that is possible for raising the number of the Muslim electorate by lowering the franchise qualification, and for the reservation of seats on a population basis for some time.

Maulavi Abdul Karim wrote the following letter on intercommunal amity:—

"It is with supreme pleasure that I have perused your article entitled "The Bakr-Id", couched in laudable tone and terms, published in to-day's issue of the "Amrita Bazar Patrika". What a happy day it would have been for India if writings such as this were the rule and not an exception. I sincerely wish all the Hindu and the Muslim journals will imitate the praiseworthy spirit which underlies the article under reference.

Nothing can be a greater travesty of truth than to say that Islam is an intolerant religion propagated by force "with the Quran in one hand and the sword in the other". Islam, which enjoins complete surrender to God's will, is a religion of peace. Its message to humanity is the unity of God and the equality of man. Its most distinctive feature is universality; nowhere in its scripture, the Quran, has it been said that God is Rabbul Muslimeen, Lord of the Muslims; everywhere He has been described as Rabbul Alamin, Lord of the created worlds.

History bears incontestable testimony to the fact that Islam was spread by preaching and persuasion, its simplicity, its sublimity, and its practicability having made the most effective appeal to all classes of people, who had occasion to come in contact with it. Mahatma Gandhi very truly observed on one occasion, "It was not the sword that won a place for Islam in the scheme of life." The Muslims might have wiped Judaism and Christianity out of Arabia, Syria, Spain and many other countries, if they had recourse to forcible conversion. Had Islam been propagated in India by the sword, there would have been few non-Muslims left in the land, particularly in the neighbaurhood of the seats of Muslim Government. But where do Muslims preponderate in India? Not in Delhi, or in Agra, or in Lucknow,

where an overwhelming majority of the population still continues to be non-Muslims in spite of seven hundred years of Muslim rule, but in Sylhet, in Chittagong, in Noakhali, far away from the capital cities, where saints and sages, like Shah Jalal, spread Islam by the use of the tongue, not by the use of the sword, by preaching, persuasion and personal example, not by force, compulsion or coercion.

Accustomed, as I have been, to an atmosphere, in which inter-communal unity and cordiality were hardly ever disturbed and social amenities between the Hindus and the Muslims were of constant occurrence, it pains me much to see that, at this critical stage of the history of the country, when peace and good-will are so very essential, some short-sighted members of both the communities, influenced by the machinations of designing intriguers and unscrupulous fanatics, have adopted the suicidal policy of fanning the flame of communal jealousy and enmity, thus affording an opportunity for the further tightening of the chains of bondage, with which they are knit together. Slaves fighting amongst themselves for imaginary wrongs or doubtful rights must be a most unedifying spectacle for the world's free on-lookers to witness. What is most strange is that all this is generally done in the name of religion, which, to my mind, is the greatest humanising and harmonising force in the world. Promotion of toleration and fellow-feeling among God's creatures is the message both of the Quran and the Vedas. Yet some members of both the communities, forgetting the injunctions of their respective scriptures, frantically quarrel over trifling matters, in which no cardinal principle of any religion is really involved. What can be more regrettable than this? I need hardly say that if the present intercommunial tension continues, it would be futile to talk of political or economic advancement or of national and social regeneration

I hope and trust good sense will prevail at last, and far-sighted members of both the communities, realising the extreme gravity of the situation, will exert themselves to bring about a lasting reconciliation. I would appeal, with all the earnestness I can command, to all thoughtful members of both the commu-

nities to bestir themselves betimes to clear the atmosphere of all suspicion and distrust. It has to be realised that Providence has cast our lot in one common motherland, and we have to live and die side by side in this great land of our birth.

When Maulavi Abdul Karim was invited to give evidence before the Hartog Committee he made the following statement in the form of a memorandum and issued it to the press :—

The responsibility of a civilised government in making the people literate cannot be over-stated. Expenditure for this purpose should on no account be stinted. In fact it ought to be regarded as one of the first charges upon its revenues. It is satisfactory to note that the Bengal Government seems to have at last awakened to its responsibility in the matter of primary education in the Province. It has been admitted that "the present system is inadequate, the teaching is inefficient and the distribution of schools unsystematic, the teachers are under-paid and a large number of pupils who attend primary schools leave the schools before having received the most elementary instruction and consequently lapse into illiteracy." It has also been admitted that Bengal's contribution for primary education has been hopelessly small and it compares very unfavourably with that of other Provinces. While Bengal contributes for primary education only 1·6 per cent. of her total Provincial revenues, Bombay contributes 6 per cent., Bihar and Orissa contributes 5·1 per cent., and the Punjab contributes 3·6 per cent., for the same purpose. Besides, unlike other provinces, education is top-heavy in this province, a disproportionately large amount being spent on Secondary and University education at the cost of Primary education. It is hoped that all this would be taken into most serious consideration and universal primary education would be introduced in Bengal without further delay.

The system of primary education that has been in operation for over half a century, has not proved suitable for the requirements of those for whom it is primarily intended. It has not improved either the knowledge or the condition of the rural population; it has not made the cultivators better cultivators,

nor the artisans more efficient artisans. On the contrary, it has proved detrimental to their interests inasmuch as it has created in them a distaste for manual labour and for their hereditary callings and mode of living. They do not care to improve agriculture or handicrafts, anxious as they are to follow occupations of an unproductive nature in imitation of the middle class people. They hate to earn their livelihood by manual labour and know nothing else by which they can make an honest living. They are thus not only unemployed but also unemployable and they accelerate rather than retard the decadence of indigenous arts and industries and help to aggravate the economic crisis prevailing in the country. This is the reason why in some places people, far from supporting the local school, desire its abolition.

It is essentially necessary that pupils of rural schools should develop a genuine attachment to their simple mode of living and family craft, and it should be seen that nothing in their school-life, nothing in their text-books creates in their mind a longing for a luxurious mode of living or a dislike for the humble calling of their forefathers.

Various things have to be taken into careful consideration in this connection. What is essentially required by the Indian masses is a thorough grounding in the three R's. Illiteracy in this country is not always synonymous with ignorance. The masses, though illiterate, generally possess the requisite knowledge of affairs pertaining to their sphere of life and they are perhaps morally and spiritually more advanced than the masses in other countries.

The educative value of a good school building and decent furniture can hardly be over-estimated. But too much stress should not be laid on these as necessary funds for their provision are wanting. The people will benefit more by the spread of literacy acquired under the tree during the dry season and within huts in the rains than by a smaller number of boys reading in imposing buildings. If the right instruction is imparted it would not matter much whether pupils squat under a peepul tree or sit in a marble hall. Until other and more

essential requirements are supplied and sufficient funds for construction of school buildings are available, mosques, thakurghars and out-houses might be utilised for the accommodation of Maktabs and Patshalas. The erection of a school house should not always be made a condition precedent to the opening of a primary school.

The Department will make out a case for a large inspecting staff who will eat up a big slice of the Education Fund. My intention in dilating on this aspect is to emphasise the point that primary education can be made free at a smaller cost if it is carried on, more or less, on primitive lines without unnecessary intervention of experts of Government, who very often are more embarrassing than helpful. Primary education even now at places is imparted to the boys under a banyan tree by a teacher who lives on the meagre doles of paddy and other crops from the villagers. But now we must have expensive school buildings on typed plans and the teachers must be trained gurus. Did the great Vidyasagar go through a guru-training course? The less western or foreign innovations are made in primary education in India the smoother will be its progress."

The most important factor in any scheme of education is the teacher. Unwilling and inefficient teachers have retarded the progress of education in this country. Nothing should, therefore, be left undone to improve their capacity and to better their prospects. Every step should be taken to train the required number of teachers as soon as possible. Until a sufficient number of trained teachers is available, services of Gurus and Mianjis with the requisite academic attainments should be utilised. Establishment of schools, where necessary, should not await the supply of trained teachers. The quality of the instruction imparted by untrained teachers might not be quite up to the mark, but some education would be better than no education. It was untrained teachers, judiciously selected, who so long spread education in the country.

Cost of Primary Education.—In all civilised countries education of the people is considered as one of the most important duties of Government and expenditure for this purpose is never

stinted. Unfortunately in India the Government has been lamentably late in realising its responsibility in this respect. It is a matter of regret that even now Government is not inclined to contribute liberally for the education of the people. In the Bengal Primary Education Bill, now before the Council, no indication has been given as to what portion of the necessary cost Government is prepared to bear. On the other hand, it has been proposed to heavily tax the people, who are proverbially poor.

This has naturally called forth vigorous protest from different quarters. There is an unanimity of opinion that the Government should contribute a fair share, say at least half, of the cost of primary education in the Province and an express provision to this effect should be inserted in the Bill. Unless the statutory obligation on the State to contribute a definite share of the cost is expressly recognised, there is likely to be a good deal of agitation regarding the proposed cess. Another point regarding which an almost unanimous opinion has been expressed by those who were consulted in the matter, is that indirect taxation should be preferred to direct taxation. I think it is most desirable that all avenues of indirect taxation should be thoroughly explored. Various suggestions have been made as regards taxing tea, sugar, cigar and cigarettes, piece goods and such other things as are considered more or less as luxuries and not necessaries. It is believed that people would not object even to the raising of the salt tax. In 1922-23, 151 lakh maunds of salt were consumed in Bengal and a revenue of 184 lakhs was raised. Raising of the excise duty for meeting the cost of Primary education has also been suggested. I think the Railway Board might be induced to agree to the addition of one pice per rupee on all railway tickets issued at Howrah, Sealdah and other railway stations in Bengal. This may yield a substantial amount which may be ear-marked for primary education. Much stress has been laid on moving the Government of India to give back to Bengal the export duty on jute which is grown only in Bengal by the peasants for whose education money is required. Imposition of a surcharge on jute with

the sanction of the Government of India has also been suggested. If more than three crores of rupees can be had from the duty on jute, primary education can be made free and compulsory in Bengal without further delay.

Exclusion of Urban Areas.—Exclusion of urban areas from the scope of the Bill is not desirable. The question of primary education should be considered as a whole for the entire province. There might be differences in the curriculum for different areas and denominations, but there should be one uniform law for the whole province. The Bengal Primary Education Act of 1919 seems to have become inoperative for want of funds. Besides, few of the municipalities have shown any enthusiasm for primary education. As many of the municipalities are merely overgrown villages with a large rustic population, injustice would be done to people living in these areas if they are not brought within the range of the Bill.

The proposed District School Board has been the subject of much adverse criticism by the public. It is said to have been too much officialised without sufficient reason and vested with more powers than what is possessed by similar bodies in other countries. For the success of a new scheme, like the one under consideration, sufficient popular support is essential. It is desirable, therefore, that the responsibility of introducing free and compulsory primary education should be placed upon such bodies as might command public confidence. The formation of the Board, as proposed, smacks too much of official tutelage, which is resented now-a-days. As a rule the representatives of those who are vitally interested and of those who have to pay the cess will not be on it. Nor will the educational experts, with the exception of the District Inspector of Schools, non-official educationists and teachers of primary schools have anything to do with it. Besides, the proposed Board would be rather unwieldy and a large amount might have to be spent in paying travelling allowances. It is a matter for consideration if a Central Board for the whole Province should be constituted on a popular basis with representatives of various interests and vested with general powers of supervision and of laying down

principles for the co-ordination of primary education throughout the province. The Education Committees of the District Boards, which are permitted to co-opt educational experts and which have been controlling, for some time, not only primary but also a portion of secondary education in the districts, might then, under the guidance of the Central Board, do the work that is proposed to be done by the District School Boards.

The question of Inspectorate requires careful consideration. It should be seen if something can be done to curtail the quantity and improve the quality of inspection. Can the work be partially entrusted to an honorary agency? As in some other Departments should some honorary inspectors be given a trial in the Education Department? In the inspection of primary schools assistance of educated members of District and Union Boards and of teachers of higher schools might be requisitioned and in the case of Middle and even of High English Schools private educationists and distinguished teachers might be invited to help the Inspectors and District Inspectors of Schools. This may reduce the expenditure without affecting efficiency. Any saving thus effected might be profitably utilised in increasing the pay of the poorly-paid teachers.

When there was a controversy regarding what Sir Abdul Karim Ghuznavi and the late Mr. Mahmud Suhrawardy stated before the Hartog Committee in December, 1928, Maulavi Abdul Karim wrote the following letter to the newspapers:—

"The statement published by the Hon'ble Mr. M. Suhrawardy, regarding the medium of instruction for Muslim boys in Bengal, is so full of mis-statements of facts that, in the interest of the community, it should not go unchallenged. I should state at the outset that it is not a fact that the "consensus of Muslim opinion in Bengal is, that Urdu should be the medium of instruction". Mr. Suhrawardy, I am afraid, had little opportunity to know Muslim public opinion and it is therefore no wonder, that he should betray lamentable ignorance of the real requirements of the community. I think "The Mussalman" is quite right in

saying that "if Mr. Suhrawardy takes a plebiscite on this question and seeks re-election on this issue, he will at once realise how he misrepresents Muslim opinion of West Bengal in this connection.

It is ridiculous to question Sir Abdul Kerim Ghuznavi's authority in a matter like this. Being in intimate touch with his co-religionists all over Eastern and Northern Bengal, if not in the whole Province, he is perhaps in a better position than others to express an authoritative opinion regarding this important matter concerning the vital interests of the community. Although I do not see eye to eye with him in certain political matters, I am in entire agreement with him, in what he stated regarding the medium of instruction for Muslim children in Bengal and also with his views regarding the education of Bengal Muslims, expressed before the Hartog Committee.

It is an admitted fact, that the mother tongue of 95 per cent of Bengal Mussalmans (I shall not be surprised if the percentage is found to be as high as 99) is Bengali. Both the classes and the masses use the Bengali language not only in their conversation, but also in their correspondence, records, accounts, documents etc. Besides the city of Calcutta, where Mussalmans from different parts of India and Muslim countries outside India have congregated together, it is only in a few towns, such as Murshidabad and Dacca, where perhaps the majority of Mussalmans speak a kind of Urdu. I am not certain that there are even a score of Mussalmans, born and bred in Bengal, who can speak idiomatic Urdu. Even some of those who are very loud in their advocacy of Urdu, cannot open their lips without breaking simple rules of Urdu grammar. Not that Bengal Mussalmans have not the capacity to master the Urdu language, but they do not care to learn it as it is hardly of any use in their everyday affairs. Even the Mussalmans of Sharifabad in West Bengal, which is known as a stronghold of Muslim idiosyncracy in Bengal, use Bengali in their conversation and correspondence. There are thousands of Mussalmans in Bengal, who do not understand a word of literary Urdu. Such being the case, the question to be considered is whether Bengali, which is the mother tongue of the

Mussalmans of Bengal, or Urdu, which is practically a foreign language to them, should be the medium of instruction for their children. I am far from under-estimating the value of Urdu as the *lingua franca* of India. The Mussalmans of those Provinces, where it is not their mother tongue, should learn it for communication and interchange of thoughts with their co-religionists all over India. But it can on no account be adopted as the medium of instruction for their children in preference to their mother tongue. It is not worth while refuting the view held by some people, who regard themselves aristocratic, that Bengali is not the language of respectable Mussalman society. It is nothing but preposterous to say that a language, in which their mothers and sisters converse, is not the language of respectable people.

The cultural growth of Mussalmans of Bengal, has been much retarded, for not using the mother tongue in the education of their children. I need hardly say that it is most unsound and unscientific to impart instruction to a child through the medium of a language other than his mother tongue. A child's early education should invariably be given through the language which he learns with his mother's milk. It is impossible to convey to a child a thorough knowledge of a subject and to impress it upon his mind through a language, in which he is not fairly grounded. Perhaps there is no other civilised country in the world, where children get their education through the medium of a language that is not their mother tongue. If any community has a reasonable predilection for any particular language, as some of the Mussalmans of Bengal have for Urdu, they should first make it the language of the home before making it the language of the school.

The Mussalmans of Bengal have suffered a great deal, for neglecting the vernacular of the Province. Many of the Mussalman Zemindars of Eastern Bengal and perhaps also of other parts of the Province, have grievously suffered at the hands of their Amlas for not learning Bengali, in which their records and accounts are kept. The Bengal Mussalmans have not been able to contribute, as others have done, anything worth mentioning to science, literature and other arts. They have not got amongst them great

thinkers or great writers or great workers. They cannot put forward even one from among them equal to a Hali or a Shibli or an Iqbal, not to speak of a Syed Ahmed or a Salar Jung. They have not produced a Bidyasagar, a P. C. Roy, an Ashutosh Mukherjee, not to mention outstanding personalities like Ram Mohan Roy, Rabindra Nath Tagore or J. C. Bose. Does not this unmistakably indicate deplorable intellectual poverty? Is this due to the inferiority of the Mussalmans of Bengal, in intellectual capacity and aptitude for the acquisition of knowledge, to their co-religionists in other parts of India, or to their neighbours, the Hindus of Bengal? I am not prepared to give to this query an answer in the affirmative. Given equal facilities for study and training, the Mussalmans of Bengal, I think, are well able to hold their own with the Mussalmans of other places and with the Hindus of this Province. How then is their intellectual deterioration to be accounted for? This is a question that should engage the most serious consideration of everyone interested in the welfare of the community. It is the cultural advancement of a community upon which depend, to a great extent, their moral progress and material prosperity.

The "Mussalman" commented on the above letter as follows:—

We are glad to note that Moulvi Abdul Karim who grew grey in the educational service of the province and who, as an inspecting officer, being in intimate touch with all sorts of schools has had a correct idea of the educational needs and requirements of the Mussalmans, has in a statement to the press given a crushing reply to the *ipse dixit* of Mr. Suhrawardy and others of his ilk. We need not repeat the arguments that the Moulvi Saheb has put forward in favour of Bengalee being the medium of instruction. He has said almost all that one has got to say in favour of a boy's or a girl's mother tongue being the medium of his or her instruction. . . . .

The statement that Moulvi Abdul Karim has issued has been very opportune as it reflects the opinion of the whole of Muslim Bengal with the exception, of course, of a microscopic minority who, we are afraid, do not or would not understand the

interests of their own community, in connexion with a matter of such vital importance."

Maulavi Abdul Karim issued to the Press the following statement regarding the "Bande Mataram" song :—

It is with much regret that I have read the letters published to-day by Messrs. B. C. Chatterjee and Ramani Mohan Chatterjee regarding the recitation of Bande Mataram song at the ensuing session of the Indian National Congress. As for the present I have been keeping aloof from Bengal politics, I need feel no hesitation in speaking out what I feel regarding the unfortunate controversy about this matter.

It was a coincidence that some time ago after a careful perusal of the Bade Mataram song just when I was going to write to the Press that there could be no objection to the singing of the first two stanzas of the song, my attention was drawn to the decision of the Congress.

It is extremely to be regretted that neither the Bengal Muslims nor the Bengal Hindus have taken this decision in the spirit in which it ought to have been taken. This tends to show that as a whole neither community, whatever they may outwardly say, is really willing to come to an amicable settlement regarding political problems concerning Bengal.

It is most regrettable that while on the one hand the Bengal Muslims object to the singing of even the first two stanzas, the Bengal Hindus insist upon singing all the stanzas. If the first two stanzas do not contain anything objectionable what does it matter under what circumstances the song was composed and by whom it was composed? How many people know when and by whom the song was composed? It is its tone and terms that matter and have to be taken into consideration.

As for the subsequent stanzas, I cannot persuade myself to believe that the Bengal Hindus do not know how very objectionable all idolatrous ideas are to the orthodox Muslims of Bengal and how very unwilling they must be to tolerate writings in which Hindu gods and goddesses such as Durga and Saraswati, find a place. The Congress, which is for all communities, must have taken into careful consideration all these aspects of the question

in coming to a decision. I do not think there could have been a better solution. I hope the decision of the Congress will be adhered to and in order to conciliate Muslim feelings Iqbal's "Hindustan Hamara" will be also sung on all occasions on which Hindus and Muslims combine.

In August, 1935, an "Open Letter" was written by M. Abdul Karim to the Duce Mussolini of Italy on the Abyssinian crisis and it was published in the newspapers. The Emperor of Abyssinia wrote to M. Abdul Karim thanking him for writing the letter. The letter is given below.

"A note of protest from an unknown person of a far-off country may cause surprise and even resentment to one aiming at world-dictatorship. As, however, trifling incidents have brought about undreamt-of events, I have not thought it improper to address you, although you may be inclined to regard it as an audacity on my part to do so.

Some of your recent utterances regarding Italy's relations with Abyssinia have greatly shocked the whole civilised world. People have indeed characterised them as outrageous, arbitrary, inhuman, immoral and irreligious. You seem to be following the policy of the proverbial lion in its relation with the lamb. Irritated at the Ethiopian King's declaration that "his country would not lightly tolerate foreign aggression, but would defend itself to the utmost", you have been reported to have entered a strong protest. But pray, on what canon of morality or statecraft is your action based? Might I enquire what you yourself would have done under similar circumstances? Is it not the bounden duty of every man to defend his motherland from foreign onslaughts? Is not the king of a country responsible to God and man for the protection of his subjects? Would it not be sheer cowardice and extreme dereliction of duty to surrender one's State and its people to an ambitious foreigner? Does not your protest against such a natural, honourable declaration tend to show that the statesmen of Europe are losing all sense of right and justice, and are falling back upon the savage principle of "Might is right"? The

world will watch with keen interest what notice the League of Nations takes of such an outrageous "protest."

You seem to be relying too much upon your large army and your abundant armaments; and you are flushed with the idea of an easy victory. Need I remind you that Napoleon acted and behaved exactly in the same way when he was out for world conquest. What actually happened need not be repeated. Is a similar cataclysm impossible in the present days of unanticipated floods, devastating earthquakes and violent pestilence? If God wills it, all your armies and armaments may vanish in a minute. Would you not do well to remember all this?

You look down upon the Abyssinians as "savages" and "barbarians", according to the ideas prevalent in Europe. In our country, on the contrary, those are regarded as savages and barbarians who do not scruple to kill innocent people and plunder their property in order to satisfy their greed under the plea of "colonisation". To us such unscrupulous and greedy people are no better than those looters and dacoits whose crimes are condemned throughout the civilised world.

You have asked if the League of Nations is to be the tribunal before which "Negroes and savages and backward races can arraign the great nations which have revolutionised and transformed humanity." You seem to betray here utter ignorance or deliberate disregard of ancient history. Abyssinians knew the art of government and ruled over a powerful empire, which at one time extended even to far-off India, when Europe was still shrouded in ignorance, superstition and barbarism. If the Moors in Spain had not taught science and civilisation to the Europeans, God alone knows what place they would have occupied to-day among the comity of the nations of the civilised world. I have referred to this point in some detail in my articles on "Islam's Contributions to Science and Civilisation", published recently in some of the English magazines and newspapers in India, a copy of which is enclosed in case you care to peruse it. Besides, disinterested people may feel inclined to demur to the characterisation of those people as "great nations" over whom religion has so little influence, who are guided more

by the fear of man than by the fear of God, and whose outstanding achievements in the field of Science have been in the domain of arms and ammunition, explosives and poisons—in short, of death and devastation rather than of peace and construction. If only their religion had sufficient hold on them and influenced their actions, the followers of Christ (who enjoins the turning of the other cheek if one cheek has been smitten) would never have been so very eager for the invention of death-dealing instruments and they would not have been always armed to the teeth for military expeditions.

You have been reported to have said in a speech, "If Europe is not still worthy to fulfil her colonising mission to the world, then the hour of her decadence is irrevocably sounded." Need I tell you that the old days are now irrevocably gone when on account of the chaotic circumstances prevailing in some of the countries of Asia and Africa, there might have been some justification for Europe's colonising policy; and times have now entirely changed. It is creditable to the British people who have been much more successful in their colonisation policy than any other nation that they have been wise enough to realize the spirit of the times and to have cried a halt to the policy of extending their colonies and have recently even been trying to train the people of their existing colonies in the arts of self-government. Their efforts also to bring about a settlement of the Italo-Abyssinian crisis are being well appreciated throughout the civilised world.

Europe, I think, has already fulfilled her colonising mission. If she pursues it still further, as desired by you, then indeed, I am afraid, the "hour of her decadence will be irrevocably sounded." Your hope of "the Italian nation occupying a great place in the world" after "making a great effort" seems doomed to remain unfulfilled.

God's ways are inscrutable. It does not seem to be His will that world dominating power should remain in one country or in one nation for an indefinite period. The rise and fall of all the great Empires have a lesson for their successors. If they fail to profit thereby, their own doom is inevitable.

Referring to Japan in a Presidential Speech which I had occasion to deliver in November 1934, I remarked, "Who can check the progress of a nation whose sons and daughters are animated by such a spirit? It is this spirit of service and sacrifice that has made Japan, half a century ago a mere geographical expression, one of the greatest world powers of the day. If such a spirit continues, who knows that one day her ambition not only to dominate Asia, but to encroach upon Europe, like the Huns of old, would not be fulfilled?" Little did I think that in my own lifetime an occasion would ever arise for Japan to meddle in Europe's affairs. The sympathy that Abyssinia's helpless condition and your own conduct seem to have evoked in the heart of Japan might sooner or later —possibly sooner than later—offer an opportunity for Japan's interference. You will be solely responsible for such an eventuality.

The Muslims all over the world feel specially for Abyssinia, as this was the country which afforded shelter to the early Muslim converts whom the persecution of their idolatrous kinsmen drove to her hospitable shores. Besides, a large number of Abyssinian inhabitants are Muslims. Any misguided action on your part might conceivably cause such a conflagration in sympathetic Muslim countries as to precipitate a world war, with rejuvenated Turkey and possibly also Persia and Afghanistan etc., ranged on the side of Abyssinia. Also there might be such a reaction among the coloured races of the world at your high-handed action against an unoffending oriental nation as would make all future "colonisation" administration extremely difficult, if not impossible. As an old man of 72 I would be very sorry at such dire eventualities; and that is my main reason for writing to you so outspokenly on this subject.

I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken in addressing you at such length on a delicate matter.

CHAPTER X.

AN AUTHOR.

Maulavi Abdul Karim has the reputation of being a historian and an author of books on Islam. When in service he wrote on historical and educational subjects and since his retirement he has written some useful books on religious subjects.

While he was a teacher of history in the Calcutta Madrasah, Hunter's History of India was the text-book on Indian history for the Entrance Examination of the Calcutta University. As it was too difficult for ordinary students to learn, Maulavi Abdul Karim was requested by his pupils to write its epitome and he published a well-written epitome. The candidates for the University examination were much benefited by it as testified to by the distinguished linguist, the late Mr. Harinath De.

History of India for Beginners.—As there was no good history of India in English for the middle classes of high English schools, Maulavi Abdul Karim wrote his "History of India for Beginners". It was approved by the Education Department and was adopted as a text-book by many high English schools in Bengal and Bihar. Its popularity may be gauged from the fact that twenty-four editions of it had to be published from 1892 to 1930. Its style was so much liked by the students that some of them were heard to recite passages from it thirty and even forty years after they left school.

History of India in Urdu.—It was brought to Maulavi Abdul Karim's notice that there was no suitable history of India in Urdu for schools. When his Urdu history was published it met with unexpected public approval. It was reviewed very favourably by all the well-known Urdu newspapers in India—the "Afzalul Akhbar" of Delhi, the "Azad", the "Karnamah" and the "Anjuman-i-Hind" of Lucknow, the "Zamana" and the "Kaistha Conference Gazette" of Cawnpur, the "Agra Akhbar" and the "Akhbar-i-Islam" of Agra, the "Kohinoor" of Lahore, the "Shaukatul Islam" and the "Mulk and Millat" of Hydrabad and the Urdu newspapers of Rawalpindi, Ludhiana, Jalandhar, Gorakhpur and other places. Besides, the renowned Urdu scholars of the time, such as the late poet Altaf Hossain Hali of Panipat, Shamsul-ulama Shibli Nomani of Aligarh, Shamsul-ulama M. Zaka Ullah of Delhi, Shamsul-ulama Syad Imdad Imam of Patna, Khan Bahadur Muhammad Shad of Patna, spoke highly of the book. It was prescribed for Middle Examination in some of the provinces and in the Nizam's Dominions, and seventeen editions were published from 1896 to 1936.

Maulvi Abdul Karim published a school history of India in Bengali and Hindi also. His "Bharat Barsher Itihash" in Bengali was adopted as a text-book by a large number of schools in Bengal and it had 27 editions up to 1930. The Hindi edition was a text-book in Bihar schools for some years and there were two editions of the book. M. Abdul Karim wrote in collaboration with his friend, the late Rai Saheb Ishan Chunder Ghosh, a "School History of India". It was selected as one of the

historical text-books for the Matriculation Examination by four of the Indian Universities, including that of Calcutta.

"Bharatbarshe Mussalman Rajatter Itibritya".—This book was well-received by the public. Most of the Bengali newspapers of the time—the "Bharati", the "Hitaishi", the "Education Gazette", the "Bardwan Sanjibani", the "Hitabadi", the "Mihir Shudhakar", the "Rangpur Dik Prakash"—published very good reviews.

The "Indian Mirror" remarked, "Mr. Abdul Karim is by birth and attainments eminently fit for compiling a history of India (so far as the Mahomedan period is concerned) which he has undertaken. The introductory portion treating of the life and doings of the Prophet and his immediate successors will be found invaluable by Bengali students. . . . ."

"From what I have seen of the book, I find that it is written in a style that is elegant and easy, and in a spirit that will make it acceptable to all classes of readers. The book is no doubt a valuable contribution to Bengali literature."

GOOROO DAS BANNERJEE,
(Judge of the Calcutta High Court).

"As the first book of its kind which is not a mere translation of English text-books and which is written for a more advanced class of readers than school boys, the book will be a valuable addition to our Bengali literature. It will supply a real want. It is hoped that it is but the beginning of a great effort, which, apart from all literary considerations is sure to have far-reaching moral and social effects."

RAMENDRA SUNDAR TRIVEDI,
(Premchand Roychand Scholar).

"Hints on English Pronunciation".—Requested by several school masters, who knew that M. Abdul Karim had made a special study of the subject, he published his

"Hints". It was reviewed in complimentary terms by the "Indian Mirror", the "Bengali", the "Daily Post", the "Weekly Chronicle" and several other newspapers. The "Statesman" in its review pointed out certain inaccuracies and M. Abdul Karim referred the matter to the Editor of Chamber's Twentieth Century dictionary and he received the following reply—

"We are glad that you are able to recommend our dictionary for use in schools under your care, and are confident its merits are such that you will never regret that course.

With regard to the word "palmist" the usual pronunciation at one time was pal-mist and that is the pronunciation still in vogue among many educated people, and is given by Dr. Murray as the *preferable* one in his monumental English Dictionary. As, however, Dr. Murray recognises pa-mist as an alternative pronunciation, and, moreover, that form of the word is also heard on the lips of educated people, we are following Dr. Murray's example and giving the alternative pronunciation as an addition to the one already given. With respect to the words "attempt" and "contempt," we are again supported by Dr. Murray, who gives the pronunciation of the one as at-temt, and of the other as "kon-tempt."

"Hints on Class Management and Method of Teaching".—This book was dedicated to the school masters "on whose efficiency and devotion" wrote M. Abdul Karim "mainly depends the moral and intellectual progress of the country." It was looked through by Mr. H. Sharp, Mr. R. B. Ramsbotham and Rai Saheb Isan Chander Ghosh, who made valuable suggestions for its improvement. The second edition was thoroughly revised and much enlarged. It was used as a book of reference in different places in India. Sir Alfred Croft wrote from England "I approve of your 'Hints' and think them likely to prove of great use both to teachers and to young

officers beginning the work of inspection. They show careful observation and sound thought on the matters of your daily work."

Reference has already been made to M. Abdul Karim's "Muhammadan Education in Bengal." His "Primary Education in Bengal" and Letters on Hindu-Muslim Pact" were considered very useful by those for whom they were intended.

"Islam's Contribution to Science and Civilisation."— This was the first book of its kind. Poet Rabindranath Tagore was pleased to favour M. Abdul Karim with the following "Foreword" :—

"One of the most potent sources of Hindu-Moslem conflict in India is that we know so little of each other. We live side by side and yet very often our worlds are entirely different. Such mental aloofness has done immense mischief in the past and forebodes an evil future. It is only through a sympathetic understanding of each other's culture and social customs and conventions that we can create an atmosphere of peace and goodwill. With this end in view I started a few years ago a department of Islamic Culture in Visva Bharati with the generous financial support of His Exalted Highness the Nizam. I am glad to say the experiment has been successful. But work of this sort must be elaborated a hundred fold. Individual educationists and scholars must also take it up and as such I heartily welcome the series of articles from my distinguished countryman, Maulvi Abdul Karim, on Islam's contribution to Science and Civilisation. The writer has clothed his erudition in as simple a garb as possible and the book should have great popular appeal. It is with pleasure that I commend the book to my countrymen."

The following are some of the opinions on the brochure :—

"Articles from your pen have a worth of their own and I confess they have always a peculiar fascination for me. The

two sister communities which are destined to live side by side in India and can never think of severing from each other however much their differences may be, do in fact know very little of each other. A mutual understanding is really all that is necessary to cement them together, and for that end this booklet of yours will be of priceless value."

(SIR) MANMATHANATH MUKERJEE,
(Judge, Calcutta High Court.)

"I have read it with great interest. As the modern educated man knows so little of the past services rendered by Islam, your brochure should prove to be of considerable utility."

(SIR) S. M. SULAIMAN,
(Chief Justice, Allahabad High Court.)

"Many thanks for your interesting booklet "Islam's Contribution to Science and Civilisation." It is a thought-provoking publication and will, I am sure, prove useful not only to Muslims, but also to non-Muslims.

I greatly appreciate your Islamic sentiments and the solid work you have been doing. I have been greatly impressed by your open letter to Signor Mussolini which is a faithful and true expression of the nobility of your heart.

I hope and pray you will live long to do the constructive work you have taken in hand and to be one of the very few Muslims, who feel for their community and country."

(NAWAB SIR) ABDUL QAIUM,
(Minister of Education, Frontier Province.)

This brochure has been translated into Malayalam and permission has been given for its translation into Burmese.

Prophet of Islam and His Teachings.—This is a short life of the holy Prophet of Islam. His work as a religious

reformer, as a social reformer and as an educational reformer has been described. Besides, how Islam was propagated peacefully, without the use of force, and what undreamt-of progress it has already made, spreading over the whole continent of Africa and a large part of Asia, and a movement being on foot to Islamize Europe and America, has been described in some detail. Moreover, one chapter has been devoted to non-Muslim opinions about Islam and its Prophet—the opinions of Gibbon, Carlyle, Goethe, Isaac Taylor, Bernard Shaw, Guru Nanak, Raja Rammohan, Mahatma Gandhi and others. The appreciative reviews published by a large number of magazines and newspapers, such as the Light, the Mussalman, the Amrit Bazar Patrika, the Advance, the Tribune, the Hindu, the Hindustan Review, the Kashmir Times, the Federated India, the Islamic Culture, the Bombay Chronicle, the United India and Indian States, the Young Builder, the Comet of Nigeria, show that the book has met with public approval. Besides the opinions quoted below a number of other eminent personages such as the Maharajadhiraj of Bardwan, Sir Manmatha Nath Mukherjee, Maharaja Sir Manmatha Nath Roy Chaudhury, Rai Bahadur P. C. Dutt, Sir Abdul Qadir have expressed appreciative opinions.

5, Outram Street,
10th February, 1936.

"I was on my sick-bed when your kind present "Prophet of Islam" came. It was refreshing as the breeze of heaven and I read the book through without a stop. I could not wish for a better tonic. I congratulate you on your beautiful presentation of Islam—simple, sincere and devout. It was a joy to me to

refresh my mind with the story of the Prophet's life and his teachings. My wife is now reading the book."

(Sir) B. L. Mitter (K.C.S.I),
(Ex-Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council
and Advocate-General of Federal Court).

Lahore, 27th March, 1936.

It is refreshing in the midst of the sectarian wrangles with which the Muslims are generally occupied, to come across a noble attempt, such as the one made by Maulavi Abdul Karim Sahib, in writing a beautiful booklet entitled "Prophet of Islam and his Teachings". It presents to the common reader a bird's eye view of the life of the Holy Prophet and the various reforms brought about by him. Books of this type are the greatest need of the day, as by clearing misunderstandings about Islam they do a useful service to the cause of humanity.

(Maulana) Muhammad Ali,
(Renowned translator of the Quran).

Many thanks for your "Prophet of Islam and His Teachings." This is a very opportune publication.

The teachings of the Prophet are often misconstrued and misapplied. A correct interpretation of them will go a good way towards removal of misunderstandings and communalism.

I commend your little book both to the Moslems and the Hindus.

May your noble efforts bear fruit.

(Sir) P. C. Roy,
3-6-36.

Hyderabad, Deccan, 6th March, 1936.

Please accept my hearty thanks for sending me your book "The Prophet of Islam and His Teachings." Your clear and straightforward presentation of the essentials of Islam, freed from the non-essentials which really provoke unnecessary and harmful controversy, is admirably suited to give Muslims a

correct idea of Islam and of its universal nature while creating a sympathetic understanding of our faith among non-Muslims. Such publications are bound to advance the cause of unity in India. Your book should be in the hands of every young man in the country irrespective of the community to which he belongs.

AHMAD HUSSAIN,
(Nawab Aminjung).

This is an excellent epitome of the life of the Prophet and an erudite exposition of the spirit of Islam within a small compass. Permit me to congratulate you warmly on the achievement. I hope the book will have a very wide circulation, especially among non-Muslims in India whose profound ignorance of the life of the Prophet and the true spirit of Islam, is largely responsible for communal troubles. It would be an excellent thing if the book could be prescribed as a text-book in all high English schools in India. I hope it will be translated into all the important vernaculars in India before long.

GHAZANFER ALI KHAN, (C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S.),
(Retired Divisional Commissioner,
Central Province).

"Islam, a Universal Religion of Peace and Progress" is Maulavi Abdul Karim's latest work on Islam. The following quotation from it will indicate the nature of its contents :—

"Belief in the existence of a Supreme Being with supernatural powers and performance of duties of love and obedience to Him is what is generally understood by Religion. Of all the handiworks of God man is the masterpiece. He is an amalgam of divinity and brutality. By developing the divine element in his nature man can elevate himself to the loftiest plane of morality and spirituality; and by allowing unrestricted scope to the development of the germs of evil in him he may lead himself to the lowest depth of degradation. Thus while by developing his unlimited moral and spiritual potentialities man may excel the

angels and approach the borders of Divinity, by giving free rein to his carnal passions he may drag himself down to a much lower level than that of brutes."

The brochure has been translated into Urdu and Bengali and permission has been given for its translation into Chinese and Malayalam. On requisition from China, Japan, Burma, England and America copies have been sent to those places. Orders are being received for its supply from various parts of India. Excellent reviews are coming from different persons of which only a few are given below.

". . . . This little work of yours has taught me many things which I never knew before. How much do people misunderstand things out of ignorance and what lamentable consequences follow. May you have many more years of health and happiness to expound the true principles of Islam and further the cause of peace and progress."

(SIR) MANMATHA NATH MUKERJEE,
(Acting Law Member, Viceregal Council).

". . . . Allow me also to tender you my hearty congratulations on the way you have chosen for the utilisation of your energies and resources at this advanced stage of life. It falls to the lot of few to devote themselves to noble objects. May God grant you long life and vigour and health to carry on this work."

MOHAMMAD YAQUB KHAN,
(Editor of the *Light*).

"The present pamphlet sustains the high level of thought and composition that characterises all your writings. Besides, these writings of yours are presented to the public in a very opportune moment, when the need for Hindu-Muslim unity is felt by all well-wishers of the country. This intercommunal unity and harmony can be best attained by mutual appreciation of culture and a better understanding of the lives and teachings

of our Prophets and Scriptures. To this end your clear thinking of the high ideals and noble achievements of Islam, as presented in these writings, will make a very valuable contribution."

S. C. ROY,
(Principal, Cotton College, Gauhati).

"Islam, a Universal Religion of peace and progress, will clear many a misunderstanding about Islam and contribute in no small measure towards peace and harmony. I shall preserve it as a valuable possession."

(SIR) ABDUL HALIM GHUZNAVI.
(Member, Legislative Assembly, Central).

"I have read your 'Islam—A Universal religion of peace and progress' with very great interest indeed. You have brought out the various aspects of Islam in an admirable manner."

(SIR) S. M. SULAIMAN,
(Judge, Federal Court of India).

LIFE OF MAULAVI ABDUL KARIM.

"Perhaps no apology is needed for reviewing a book which apparently deals with the life-story of an individual person. Maulvi Abdul Karim is no mere individual ; he has been an institution in the life of Muslim Bengal for the last quarter of a century or more.

Life stories of men who contribute in some way or other to the advancement of their fellow-men are the greatest asset of humanity. They are so many mile-stones, as it were, along the road of human progress. Every living people, realising the value of these, have enshrined the memories of these workers in the cause of the nation in the hearts of the coming generations. Among the sister-Hindu community, *My Experiments with Truth*, recording the life-story of Mahatma Gandhi and *My Autobiography*, the life-story of Jawaharlal, are two such attempts. *Two Servants of God*, setting forth the struggle of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his brother is a Congress publicity publication intended to serve the same purpose. *The Life of Maulvi Abdul Karim* should serve the same purpose and inspire the coming generations of Musalmans, particularly in Bengal, with the same fervour for the service of Islam and Musalmans as characterised the whole life of Maulvi Sahib. Maulvi Abdul Karim has made an endowment worth Rs 50,000, with an annual income of Rs 2, 500 for the cause of Muslim education and Islamic missionary work. This is a great thing. A retired Inspector of Schools cannot be expected to be a millionaire. To dedicate the hoarding of a life-time for the advancement of fellow-men and of truth is a great thing. But by far the greater of Maulvi Abdul Karim's legacy is the riches of traditions of devotion and service extending over a life-time that he is leaving behind. That to our mind is the greatest of all endowments.

It is on traditions such as these—traditions of a burning faith, of unflagging devotion and service that the foundations of a nation can be laid strong and secure. One Hitler has saved Germany and at one stroke put her on the van of world powers. But take the case of the Jews. Not all hoarded millions or wits could save them from ignominy. There are scores of Muslim Princes and hundreds of Muslim Nawabs in India. But if Islam can ever hope to come into