movement, and equality before law. But the Mahasabha was careful not to insist on the adult franchise, though it accepted the right to a decent standard of living, to fee and compulsory primary education and to all facilities in respect of liberal education, and the right to defend India against foreign aggression and to bear arms and to be educated in all branches of the Army, Navy, and Air Force. The Hindu Mahasabha prefers to refer the problem of minorities to the League of Nations of which India is a member.

Mahatma Gandhi maintains that "the Congress is an all inclusive body" and that "it is the only body that has represented for over half a century without a rival the vast masses of India irrespective of class or creed".1 Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as Congress President has maintained the proposition that there are two parties in the country, viz., the Congress and the British Government. Mr. Jinnah criticises Mahatma Gandhi for the contention that the Congress alone represents India. In Mr. Jinnah's view, the Congress is stimulating throughout India a Hindu renaissance and the domination and supremacy of Hinduism over the entire sub-continent, and is a Fascist and authoritarian body. The view that the Congress and the Moslem League do not represent the whole or even the bulk of India and that any constitutional or administrative arrangement arrived at between the Government and the Congress and the Moslem League only cannot be binding on the Indian people is expressed in a joint statement issued from Bombay on the 2nd of October 1939 over the signatures of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, Sir Cowasji Jehangir and Mr. V. N. Chandravarkar (Liberals), Mr. V. D. Savarkar (Hindu Mahasabha), Mr. N. C. Kelkar and Mr. Jamnadas Mehta (Democratic Swaraj Party) and Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (Depressed Classes).

Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress accepted the position that Hindu-Moslem unity was the basis of India’s

1 Gandhi's statement in September 1939.
independence. But the stand of Mr. Jinnah and the Moslem League was found to be reactionary and uncompromising, and accordingly the Congress veers round to the proposition that the communal problem cannot be satisfactorily met so long as different parties are there to look to a third party through whom they may expect to gain special privileges, even though at the expense of the nation. The rule of a foreign Power over the people involves a division among the elements composing it, and lasting unity is possible only when foreign rule is completely withdrawn. This was the stand approved by the Congress Working Committee at the Wardhaganj meeting in December 1939, and it was further maintained when the Congress demanded the withdrawal of British power from India and criticised the political parties that look to the British power for their sustenance. Mahatma Gandhi explaining the logic of such a stand observes in an article in \textit{Harijan}: "The conception is not that of a settlement with the British Government. That could happen only if there is a settlement between the principal parties, and as a preliminary between the Congress and the League. But that, so far as I can see, is not to be. Therefore, the only settlement with the British Government can be that their rule should end leaving India to her fate."

\section*{The Forward Bloc}

The formation of the Forward Bloc under the leadership of Mr. Subhash Chandra Bose was the first organised attempt at internal revolt against the authoritarianism of the Congress High Command. Many brilliant individual Congress leaders, such as Dr. N. B. Khare, ex-Chief Minister of the Central Provinces, and Mr. K. F. Nariman, President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee, have gone down under the axe of Congress

\footnote{The Resolution of the Congress Working Committee at the Wardha meeting on the 14th of July 1942, ratified by the Bombay meeting of the all-India Congress Committee in August 1942.}
discipline. All this raised a mild ripple of protests which
died down in the ocean of Congress influence. But the
conflict of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose with the Congress
authorities gave birth to the Forward Bloc. Mr. Bose
incurred the displeasure of the Congress High Command by
seeking the suffrage of Congress members in respect of
the Congress Presidentship for the second term in opposition
to the candidature of Dr. Pattabhai Sitaramiya. Mahatma
Gandhi and the Congress Working Committee did not
favour the re-election of Mr. Subhash Chandra Bose, and
were shocked at his success over Dr. Sitaramiya. That was
a significant event in Indian politics and a still more sig­
nificant event for Congress politics. Mr. Bose, confronted with
the united opposition of Mahatma Gandhi's followers,
had to resign the Congress Presidentship in 1939. But he
did not remain silent after resigning, and announced the
formation of the Forward Bloc at a public meeting in
Calcutta on the 3rd of May 1939. The Forward Bloc, he
explained, would function as an integral part of the
Congress and would accept the present constitution of the
Congress, its creed, policy and programme. To quote
Mr. Bose, "the Forward Bloc will not be a party as ordi­
narily understood but a platform for rallying all those who
accept the programme of the Bloc". The programme of
the Bloc was to consolidate or co-ordinate all left wing
parties, separate religion from politics, combat provin­
cialism, work out a parliamentary programme with a view
to setting up a parallel Government, adopt the policy of a
united front with the people of the Indian States, and take
the offensive at the right time. Presiding over the first
session of the all-India Forward Bloc Conference in Bombay
on the 22nd of June 1939, Mr. Bose said: "We are out to
fight with authoritarianism in the Congress. We do not
believe in authoritarianism, and the theory of homogeneous
Cabinet can only proceed from those who believe in authori­
tarianism." The Forward Bloc spread its organisation all
over India and got the support of many nationalists who-
were discontented with the Congress technique of power politics.

In Bengal the Forward Bloc gained ascendancy as the official Congress Party was weak in strength and leadership, but it came into conflict with the Hindu Mahasabha Party which obtained powerful support under the de facto leadership of Dr. Syama Prosad Mookerjee. The two provincial organisations, the Bengal Hindu Sabha and the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha, were amalgamated in 1939 into one consolidated party, the Bengal Hindu Mahasabha, which was bent on the vindication of Hindu rights, and the new Hindu Mahasabha Party in Bengal challenged the leadership of Mr. Subhash Chandra Bose. In the Calcutta Corporation elections in 1939, the Hindu Mahasabha Party came into the field and had a trial of strength with Mr. Bose's party, from which the Hindu Mahasabha came out with flying colours to the general surprise. In a bye-election to the Bengal Legislative Assembly in 1941 from the North Bengal General Municipal Constituency, the Hindu Mahasabha candidate Mr. Ashutosh Lahiri was elected with a majority of nearly nine thousand votes to the disgrace of the Forward Bloc candidate. All this showed that Bengal moved away, in the first instance, from the influence of the Congress to the whip of the Forward Bloc, and later to the fold of the Hindu Mahasabha. The growing prestige of the Hindu Mahasabha in Bengal was a sudden reaction from the communal approach of the Moslem League Ministry in Bengal, and it was helped by the lack of leadership in the Bengal Congress organisation. But with the decline of communal ill will, nationalist Bengal is sure to come out of the communal groove of the Hindu Mahasabha and to move with the all-India political movements of the radical kind. The motive power of emotionalism which Bengal possesses to a great degree is easily ignitible, and Bengal is caught more by slogans than by slow constructive action. The ascendancy of the Hindu Mahasabha which confuses politics with religion as the
Moslem League does is bound to be short-lived. The Bengal of Raja Rammohan Roy, Aurobindo Ghose, Surendra Nath Banerjee, C. R. Das and Rabindra Nath Tagore cannot accept the creed of the Hindu Mahasabha for any length of time. In the search for leadership, Bengal veered round to the Hindu Mahasabha, and in quest of nationalism Bengal will have to discard the Hindu Mahasabha. It is a passing phase for Bengal. In the process of time, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Moslem League may meet as the champions of vested interests if the Congress ever gains supremacy with any bold economic programme. That interesting phase is yet to come.

The Liberal Party

The Montford scheme of Reforms was the signal for the secession of the Moderate leaders from the Indian National Congress. The Moderates decided to abstain from the special session of the Congress held at Bombay at the end of August 1918, and formed themselves into an independent party to work the reforms. They held a special session of the Moderate Conference in November 1918 to formulate their views on the Montford proposals. They were impressed with the profound change in the spirit and the policy of the Government, and they stood for working the reforms which were considered on the whole satisfactory. They wanted to strengthen the hands of Mr E. Montagu by their support. This Moderate or Liberal Party has stood by the Government in working the constitutional reforms even when they are considered unsatisfactory. Such an approach in the spirit of co-operation discouraging the rally of anti-British forces for direct and subversive action is the unique contribution of the Moderate politicians.

The Liberal Party suffers from the main defect that it does not maintain living touch with the towns and villages through a net-work of organisations, nursed by the
sacrifices of volunteers. It has remained a purely city organisation, and its importance is dwindling away along with the extension of the franchise and the dominance of party elections. The contributions of Liberals to Indian politics can, however, hardly die. They have behaved as the vanguard of constitutionalism; they have put forth their best efforts and made sacrifices in the exploitation of the constitutional machinery for the welfare of the country; they have sailed in the vessel of constitutionalism in the darkest storm of disobedience and unconstitutional activities launched by the Congress. Mr. Srinivas Sastri rightly observed in the nineteenth session of the National Liberal Federation: “It may be that the days of our (Liberals) power are gone, but the days of our influence are by no means gone. Few though we are, we are not without the power of warning against danger, of advancing in difficulty, of pointing out the way of safety and sanity.”

The Liberal Party stands for the grant of full responsible government of the British model, and has advocated Dominion Status for the country. A genuine effort and a definite advance towards the progressive realisation of responsible government in India have earned appreciation from the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party approaches the country’s problems with the aid of constructive patriotism; it stands far above communalism or spiritualism in politics; it refuses to confuse politics with non-political considerations; it works for the synthesis of class and communal interests; it abjures power philosophy which is the antithesis of democracy. The Party goes down in elections through the absence of organisational strength, as “constitutional principles and forms do not operate in a vacuum of abstract reason”; it is, however, vindicated in the ascendancy of the right-wing Congress men in Indian politics. With the Liberal Party, however, the call to direct action without exploring possibilities along the path of constitutionalism is a counsel of despair.
The Justice Party

The Justice Party in Madras was formed with the object of fighting the predominance of Brahmins in the political life of that Presidency. It was a non-Brahmin party, but the cleavage in Madras was not solely sectarian. The non-Brahmins were prepared to work the Constitution of 1919; their opponents were not. The Justice Party of Madras secured a majority in the first election to the Madras legislature under the Reforms Act of 1919; it was helped by the eloquent fact that the Congress under the influence of the non-co-operation policy boycotted the elections. The Simon Commission reports that "the existence of a majority party in Madras made it possible to constitute a Ministry which accepted the principle of joint responsibility and acknowledged the leadership of a Chief Minister" and that "for the first and last time in the history of dyarchy throughout India, there was a Ministry both drawn from a single party and supported by an assured majority of elected members in the Legislature". The Justice Party made use of its power "to secure favourable treatment for non-Brahmins in the matter of appointments to the Government services and to local bodies". In the next elections in 1923, the Justice Party was opposed, but it retained a majority. In the 1926 elections, the Swarajists succeeded in reducing its majority. In the elections in 1937 under the Act of 1935, the Justice Party went down before the Congress Party.

The Unionist Party

The National Unionist Party of the Punjab is not a communal organisation, although it is predominantly Mahomedan. The Party helped the working of the reforms of 1919, and, to quote the report of the Simon Commission, "the best instance of something approaching true (even if not non-communal) parties are the Justice Party in Madras and the National Unionist Party in the Punjab". In the elections to the first reformed legislature under the Act of
1935, the Justice Party showed a decline of strength while the Nationalist Unionist Party gained considerable support and influence from the electorate.

The creed of the Punjab Unionist Party is the attainment of Dominion Status by all constitutional means, the securing of an honourable status for Indians overseas, the establishment of provincial autonomy in the province, the acceptance of the community of economic interests as the true basis of political parties irrespective of caste or creed, and the provision of equal facilities and opportunities for all with special solicitude for the backward classes.

The Unionist Party considered the Reforms Act of 1935 to be most unsatisfactory, but “since it is the law of the land, the Party is determined to get the best possible result out of it”. The Punjab was the first province to produce a majority party “able and willing to shoulder the responsibility of Government under Provincial Autonomy.” In Bengal, there was no single majority party, and a coalition Government was inevitable. But in the Punjab the Unionist Party came out from the election contest in 1937 with a membership of 101 in the Legislative Assembly of 175. The composition of the Unionist Party in the legislature showed that it had Moslems, Hindus and Indian Christians among its members, and there was also one Anglo-Indian and one European. The Hon’ble Major Sardar Sir Sikander Hyat Khan was appointed Chief Minister as the leader of the Unionist Party; he chose, besides himself, three Ministers from his own party and two from outside. The leader of the Unionist Party could easily have initiated a one-party Government for the Punjab, but he did not; he showed a commendable spirit of compromise by taking in two non-Unionist members. Strictly speaking, it was not a single party Ministry, nor was it a coalition Ministry. The two non-Unionist Ministers were included in the Cabinet, “not as the nominees of any Parties but because the Unionist Leader found in them suitable colleagues to have with him in the interest of his
programme". They were not asked to adopt the Unionist label. It involved no pact or bargain with the Khalsa National Party and the National Progressive Party wherefrom the two Ministers were recruited. The Punjab Unionist Party, as such, cannot be swallowed by the Moslem League, although Sir Sikander Hyat Khan was one of the leading lights of the League. "The position of the Punjab Ministry at the end of the first eighteen months of provincial autonomy appeared to be that about 120 members in a total House of 175 had been consistent in accepting the Ministry's whip. These 120 members included about two-fifths of the total number of Hindu members and more than one-half of the Sikh members besides the bulk of the Muslim members and all the Indian Christian, Anglo-Indian and European members in the House. From this point of view the Ministry could well claim to enjoy the confidence of religious minorities in this province to a greater extent than any other provincial Ministry did."¹

Mr. Jinnah and the Moslem League

Mr. Jinnah, an astute politician, has been a living force in Indian politics for a long time. The all-India Moslem League was founded in December 1906 at Dacca; its constitution was framed in December 1907 at Karachi, and ratified in March 1908 at Lucknow. It was a loyalist association organised to press the special demands of Moslems on the attention of Government. It was anxious to demand the steady pursuit of administrative reforms, and unlike the Congress the League did not want the attainment of self-government. Mr. Jinnah did not and could not join such an organisation. Through the efforts of Mr. Jinnah and of some others the Constitution of the Moslem League was amended in 1918, and the attainment of a system of self-government suitable to India through

¹ "A Review of the Administration of the Punjab from April 1, 1937, to September 30, 1938" issued by the Director, Information Bureau, Punjab.
constitutional means was proclaimed as one of the basic objects of the League. It was under the influence of Mr. Jinnah that steps towards national unity and communal co-operation were taken in the form of the Congress-League Pact of 1916. The Pact was divided into five parts: Part I dealt with the constitution and functions of the Provincial Legislative Councils; Part II referred to the constitution of Provincial Executives; Part III related to the composition and powers of the Imperial Legislative Council; part IV dealt with the constitution and powers of the Government of India consisting of the Governor-General and the Executive Council; Part V touched on the future of the Secretary of State and his Council. The Pact became India's National Demand during 1917, and it was pressed on the Montagu Mission touring India in the cold weather of 1917-18.

With the advent of Gandhism in Congress politics, moderate Hindu Congress men began to gather round the Liberal Federation founded in 1918, but Mr. Jinnah and his associates preferred to stick to the Moslem League and make it a purely communal organisation to safeguard Moslem interests and advocate the Moslem cause. Mr. Jinnah appeared as the author of the famous fourteen points which showed that he had changed his political creed and leaned more on the British Government to obtain special political rights and privileges for Moslems. The fourteen points which offer an interesting study of the swing of Mr. Jinnah's mind towards communalism from the influence of Congress ideology are stated below:

1. The future constitution to be federal, the residuary power being vested in the provinces.
2. Uniform measure of autonomy to be granted to all provinces.
3. Adequate and effective representation of minorities without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even equality.
4. In the Central legislature Moslem representation to be not less than one-third.

5. Representation of communal groups by means of separate electorates, provided it shall be open to any community to abandon at any time separate electorates in favour of joint electorates.

6. Any territorial redistribution necessary not in any way to affect the Moslem majority in the Punjab, Bengal and the North-West Frontier province.

7. Full religious liberty to be granted, that is, liberty of belief, worship and observance; propaganda, association and education.

8. No Bill or resolution to be passed in any legislature or elected body if three-fourths of the members of any community in that body oppose it on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community.

9. Sind to be separated from the province of Bombay.

10. Reforms in the North-West Frontier province and Baluchistan to be on the same footing as in other provinces.

11. Moslems to be given in the constitution an adequate share in all the services of the State having due regard to the requirements of efficiency.

12. The constitution to embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Moslem culture.

13. No Cabinet, Central or Provincial, to be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Moslem Ministers.

14. No change to be made in the constitution by the Central legislature except with the concurrence of the States constituting the Indian Federation.

It is interesting to find that the Government of India Act 1935, read together with the Instrument of Instructions, tries to meet nearly all these points except number 8. The other points are, in effect, more or less accepted, and all
this shows the personal triumph of Mr. Jinnah who is not a doctrinaire politician but a vigilant advocate for the cause of his own community. He greatly influences the opinion of the great Moslem community, and as such holds a key position in Indian politics. He knows that the Moslem League represents Moslems functioning in the higher regions of the upper middle classes, and with illiteracy enveloping the Moslem masses the Moslem League can rule for sometime through propaganda conducted on planned lines, although politically it is inclined towards a programme which may not meet with the full approval of the masses.

Mr. Jinnah is frankly apprehensive of a democratic form of government in India. He puts his case thus:1 "Having regard to the thirty-five million of voters, the bulk of whom are totally ignorant, illiterate and untutored, living in centuries-old superstitions of the worst type, thoroughly antagonistic to each other, culturally and socially, the working of this Constitution (that is, the Constitution of 1935) has clearly brought out that it is impossible to work a democratic parliamentary Government in India. It has definitely resulted in a permanent communal majority Government ruling over minorities, exercising its powers and functions and utilising the machinery of Government to establish the domination and supremacy of the majority communal rule over the minorities". In his judgment democracy in India means Hindu Raj, "a position to which Moslems will never submit". In his opinion "Moslem India wants to be free and enjoy liberty to the fullest extent and develop its own political, economic and social and cultural institutions according to its own genius and not to be dominated and crushed while wishing Hindu India well and giving it fullest scope to do likewise".

1 Mr. Jinnah's long statement in "Manchester Guardian," October 1939.
Mr. Jinnah's acceptance of the Pakistan creed, criticism of the parliamentary system and defence of British rule (at least till a communal settlement is arrived at to the satisfaction of the Moslem League) are significant. This change in his attitude and outlook has resulted from the impact of events: Congress dominance in the majority of provincial legislatures, the alleged failure of the Congress Governments to treat Moslems and other minorities fairly and the inability of the Moslem community in the Congress provinces to make its influence felt under the scheme of provincial autonomy.

Before the elections to the provincial legislature under the Act of 1935, Mr. Jinnah showed a commendable spirit of compromise. If we analyse his election speeches and other addresses before the introduction of provincial autonomy, we find him advocating full democratic responsible government for the people of India and supporting the programme of working in co-operation with the other political parties in the legislatures. He was very anxious that Hindus and Moslems should present a united front and work together for the freedom of the motherland. The Moslem League's objective, he pointed out, was the progress and freedom of the motherland, and he wanted to produce by a process of hammering fine steel and to push out of the way those obstructing their march to freedom. He put his case in a very attractive way: "Ours is not a hostile movement. Ours is a movement which carries the olive branch to every sister community. We are willing to co-operate, we are willing to coalesce with any group or groups, provided their ideals, their objects are approximately the same as ours." Mr. Jinnah maintained that "the Moslem League stands for full national self-government for the people of India. Unity and

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1 Mr. Jinnah's statement from Bombay, January 17, 1937.
2 Mr. Jinnah's speech at Nagpur, January 1, 1937.
3 Mr. Jinnah's address at the Calcutta Town Hall on the 20th August 1936.
honourable settlement between Hindus, Moslems and other minorities is the only pivot upon which national self-government for India of three hundred and eighty millions can be constructed and maintained".

He even went so far as to say that "there is a no difference between the ideals of the Moslem League and of the Congress, the idea being complete freedom for India. There could not be any self-respecting Indian who favoured foreign domination or did not desire complete freedom and self-government for his country". His aim in the elections, he asserted, was to send to the legislatures patriots and nationalists, as it would lead more quickly towards unity when the best minds of Hindus and Moslems had hammered out a common policy. His central thesis in those days was that the Moslem religion, culture, language and political existence in the national life of India should be adequately and effectively safeguarded, and that to broaden the freedom of India the problem of minorities must be solved. He denied that there was any communalism in his attempt to make his community strong. That he was not really reactionary could be gathered from the fact that the Congress Opposition in the Central Assembly received valuable support from Mr. Jinnah.

A change soon came over Mr. Jinnah. Under his leadership the all-India Moslem League at its Lahore session on the 23rd of March 1940 adopted a significant resolution urging the following points: (1) the scheme of federation embodied in the Government of India Act 1935 is totally unsuited to and unworkable in the peculiar conditions of the country and is altogether unacceptable to Moslem India; (2) Moslem India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered

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1 Mr. Jinnah’s statement on the 10th April 1937 issued from Bombay.
2 Mr. Jinnah’s speech at a reception in Simla, September 18, 1937.
3 This admission is recorded in a statement issued by Mr. Asaf Ali, Whip of the Congress Assembly Party, on the 23rd January 1937.
de novo and no revised plan would be acceptable to Moslems unless framed with their approval and consent; (3) no constitutional plan would be acceptable to Moslems unless the geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary to ensure that the areas in which Moslems are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute “Independent States” in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign; (4) adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in the units and in the regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; (5) there should be assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary.

The Moslem plan of partitioning the country into separate Hindu and Moslem States received encouragement from the British Government. His Majesty’s Government was naturally convinced that the future constitution of India was not to be dictated by the Government and Parliament of Great Britain, but they remained shut up within the confines of the basic propositions that “a substantial measure of agreement amongst the communities in India is essential if the vision of a united India is to become a reality” and that the British Government would not attempt to impose upon the nine crores of Moslem subjects a form of constitution “under which they would not live peacefully and contentedly”. There was no undertaking given by His Majesty’s Government at any stage that Indians were to be left alone to present a constitution based on united will and co-operation, as they were always reminded of the special obligations and responsibilities of the British which caused suspicion and undermined national unity.
Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, gave encouragement to the Pakistan resolution adopted at the Lahore session of the Moslem League by stating that he appreciated the grounds on which the proposal was based, although he regarded it as constituting something not far short of a counsel of despair. Mr. Amery who succeeded Lord Zetland as Secretary for India emphasised in his public utterances the differences between Moslems and Hindus in religious and social outlook and in historic tradition and culture; he significantly pointed out that "India's future house of freedom has room for many mansions". But in the admitted diversity of India, the unity of administration and of political thought and aspiration could not be ignored, and accordingly there was a sympathetic echo in their statements that the differences in India were not unbridgeable and that underlying these differences there was the fact that India was a self-contained and distinctive region of the world.

It is intriguing to find that Mr. Amery and Mr. Jinnah agree on fundamentals which should form the basis of an end to the Indian constitutional deadlock. Mr. Amery's thesis is as follows: (1) the future constitution of India must be framed by agreement amongst representatives of the principal elements of her national life, and there cannot be any transfer of power to any system of Government in India whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements of the national life; (2) the principle of majority vote cannot be regarded as applicable to the framing of a constitution embracing varied elements or even to its modification; (3) the conditions do not exist in India for the framing of the type of constitution in which parties are the machinery for the expression of differences on specific public issues; (4) the experience of provincial self-government on British parliamentary lines has convinced Moslems and Indian Rulers that they could not

\[1^{\text{Speech in the House of Lords, April 18, 1940.}}
\[2^{\text{Speech in the House of Commons, August 14, 1940.}}
\[3^{\text{Mr. Amery's speech at Manchester, November 19, 1941.}}\]
submit to any Central Government for India in which the executive is directly dependent on parliamentary majority; (5) a free Government has many forms, and it should be framed in consonance with the conditions obtaining in India.

Mr. Jinnah and the Moslem League ask for: (1) in any future policy, negotiations and consultations, Moslems should be treated as a distinct unit; (2) no constitutional advance would be forced on them against their will; (3) Moslems are a separate national and cultural entity entitled to an equal share in the power and authority of Government; (4) the political status of Moslems cannot be determined by mere numbers; (5) the Governments in the provinces and the Centre were to be composed of coalition Cabinets and not homogeneous Cabinets, and the parliamentary majority rule based on the party system after the British model is not suitable to India.

In the Jinnah-Jawaharlal correspondence released in January 1940 the demands put forward by Mr. Jinnah for settlement with the Congress were the following: (a) the Moslem League should be taken as the only authoritative and representative organisation of the Moslems of India; (b) the Congress is to reach an agreement with the Moslem League with regard to minority problems, and subsequently to the agreement the Congress and the Moslem League could evolve an agreed formula for the demand of a declaration by the British Government. Pandit Jawaharlal laid down as the basis for settlement with the Moslem League that the recognition of India’s independence and the right of India to frame her own constitution should be made and that the Moslem League was an important and influential organisation of Moslems and not the only authoritative organisation of Moslems. These two points of view can hardly be reconciled.

The Congress insisted on the demand for a constituent assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage to frame India’s constitution. This was first a cry for the
rally of anti-British forces in the country, but the Moslem League and the Liberal Federation and many other political parties were opposed to the constituent assembly on universal franchise. The Congress toned down its demand to satisfy the Moslem League. A resolution was adopted by the Congress Working Committee at its Allahabad meeting in November 1939 assuring "the accepted minorities" that their rights would be protected and that in the event of some matters relating to minority rights not being mutually agreed to, they could be referred to arbitration. The Congress conceded that the constituent assembly could be elected on the basis of the existing separate electorates if the minorities so desire and that the number of members in the constituent assembly should reflect their numerical strength. Explaining the Congress position in the matter, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress President, observed in a statement in April 1940:

"The Congress does not want to dictate its own terms to others. It admits the fullest right of the minorities to formulate their own safeguards. It has no hesitation in admitting the right of the Moslems to determine their own method of safeguarding their rights and interests through their representatives. It only wants the recognition of a correct and democratic method of approach to the problems. The recognised minorities can send their representatives to the constituent assembly through separate electorates, if they choose to do so. So far as the settlement of their problem is concerned, it would not depend on the vote of the majority."

The Azad Moslem Board

The Azad Moslem Board is the rival organisation to the Moslem League. The Board is dominated by the nationalist Moslems working in close co-operation with the Congress Party. It opposes the Pakistan movement and holds that any proposal which detracts from the federal unity of India is detrimental to the larger interests of the
country. It takes its stand on the principle of self-determination and on the method of deciding India's constitution in a constituent assembly. To the Azad Board "India, with its geographical and political boundaries, is an indivisible whole" and "it is the common homeland of all the citizens who are joint owners of its resources." The Board considers every Moslem an Indian, and, in its opinion, "Moslems owe equal responsibility with other Indians for striving and making sacrifices to achieve the country's independence". The all-India Azad Moslem Conference held at Delhi on the 30th of April 1940 declared unequivocally that "the goal of Indian Moslems is complete independence along with the protection of their religious and communal rights."

When Mr. Jinnah pressed that the Moslem League should be recognised as the only authoritative organisation of Moslems for the opening up of negotiations with the Congress the Azad Moslem Conference passed a significant resolution at its Lahore session on the 7th of November 1939, that if the demand for the recognition of the Moslem League was the only hitch in the way of national unity, the nationalist Moslems had no desire to stand in the way, provided Mr. Jinnah and his associates were prepared to fight the battle of India's freedom shoulder to shoulder with their non-Moslem brethren. The Moslem League could not accept the offer as Mr. Jinnah seems not interested in the establishment of a democratic State in India. The Azad Moslem Conference claimed that the number of Moslem members of the Congress was far greater than the total membership of the Moslem League, and there are other Moslem organisations such as Jamait-ul-Ulema and Majlis-i-Ahrar which are very powerful and work hand in hand with the Congress. The all-India Momin Conference declared that the Moslem League had no right to speak and act in the name and on behalf of the nine crores of Indian Moslems, and the Momins are more with the Congress than with the Moslem League.
The Hindu Mahasabha Party

In Indian politics, the Hindu Mahasabha acts as the counterblast to the Moslem League. In the first elections to the provincial legislatures under the Reforms Act of 1919, the Hindu Mahasabha as a party was not in the field. It may be said that the Hindu Mahasabha has passed through two phases of existence: under the leadership of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya the Hindu Mahasabha was tied to the Congress in respect of political work, but it fought hard to safeguard the rights of Hindus and organise them for the vindication of their culture; under the leadership of Mr. V. D. Savarkar the Hindu Mahasabha drifted away from the Congress, and became organised to secure the ascendancy of Hindu culture and traditions in political and non-political spheres of work. It gained strength amongst the Hindus in proportion as the Moslem League became a frankly reactionary communal organisation. The temperature of communalism stood high in Indian politics. The Mahasabha tried to imitate the Moslem League in organising the Hindus on a political plane different from the Congress, and sought to interfere in the political sphere for the assertion of the supremacy of Hindus in Indian politics. The League and the Mahasabha are the two communal organisations running at a tangent and fighting for a share in political power. To appeal to the Hindus or Moslems as religious communities on political matters is obviously harmful to the cause of nationalism. It shows undoubtedly the mediaeval attitude of mind. The present policy of the Mahasabha favours electoral contests with the Congress; like the Moslem League, it insists that the future constitution of India, to be acceptable, should have previous sanction of the Mahasabha; it requires that any interim constitutional scheme shall be judged by the strength of Hindu representation in the counsels of Government in keeping with the proportion of the Hindu population; it does not look upon Dominion Status as the
ultimate goal but insists upon it as an immediate step towards the final goal of independence.¹

The Mahasabha and the League have not till now taken part in direct action for the furtherance of their political programme, although both of them have occasionally threatened such a course to make their organisations impressive and popular. Both are *bourgeoisie* organisations intent on safeguarding the rights and privileges of the middle classes; both stand for private property rights; both are against launching any agitation against the Rulers of Indian States, rather they favour close co-operation with them; both of them favour the British connection.

The ascendancy of both Hindu Mahasabha and Moslem League is traceable to the Communal Award which fashioned the composition of the legislatures of the country; it strengthens the virus of communalism in Indian politics. The Communal Award was principally opposed by the Hindu Mahasabha on the following grounds:² (1) it is against the principles of democracy and cuts at the very root of Indian nationalism; (2) it retains and extends the evil of separate communal electorates which is fatal to representation upon a national basis; (3) it introduces the system of statutory majority and statutory minority which is a negation of responsible democratic government; (4) it prevents the free formation and grouping of parties in the legislature on the basis of social and economic programmes; (5) it has split up the body politic and the electorate into numerous sections and groups; (6) it is unfair to the Hindus in the provincial legislatures of Bengal, Assam and the Punjab where they have been allotted fewer seats than their population strength entitles them to; (7) it gives Europeans, particularly in Bengal and Assam, excessive weightage of representation at the expense of Hindus.

¹ The resolution of the Working Committee of the all-India Hindu Mahasabha in Bombay, November 1939.
² Resolution of the Calcutta session of the all-India Hindu Mahasabha in December 1939.
Communal riots and communal utterances of the Moslem League leaders strengthened the Hindu Mahasabha movement; they also forced many Congress men to devote their energies to the consolidation of the indivisible unity of India which was denied by the Moslem League stalwarts. Mr. K. M. Munshi who was the Home Minister in the Congress Cabinet of Bombay 1937-39 resigned from the Congress Party in June 1941 to start the Akhand Hindusthan front. The front, in Mr. Munshi's opinion, need not be an organisation; it is only a common platform evolved by different parties which work for the internal security and indivisibility of India. Mr. Munshi resigned from the Congress primarily because he could not agree with Mahatma Gandhi's injunction that Congress men who favoured violent resistance by way of self-defence must go out of the Congress and that Congress men should have nothing to do with gymnasia where training in violent resistance was given. But with Mr. Munshi, organised resistance in self-defence is a paramount duty. On coming out of the Congress he preached the message of Akhand Hindusthan throughout India and obtained good support in the nationalist press.

The War Situation

The War brought about a new political situation in the country. It involved the resignation of the Congress Ministries and suspension of constitutional changes of far-reaching character. The Indian National Congress clung to its demand for the unequivocal declaration of complete independence and asked for, as an immediate step, a provisional National Government at the Centre commanding the confidence of all the elected elements in the Central legislature and securing the closest co-operation of responsible Governments in the provinces. Such a demand was put forward by the Congress Working Committee at its New Delhi session on the 7th of July 1940, and it was endorsed later by the all-India Congress Committee at its
Poona session in 1940. But the all-India Congress Committee at its Bombay meeting on the 15th of September 1940 withdrew the Delhi resolution as “the decision of the British Government shows that they will impose their will upon India.” The Congress refused to extend co-operation to the Government unless on the basis of declaration of complete independence and the installation of a National Cabinet in the Centre as a transitory measure, the future Indian constitution being prepared by a constituent assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise.

The basic demand put forward by Mr. Jinnah on behalf of the Moslem League was that “no commitments will be made with regard to the future constitution of India or any interim settlement with any other party without our approval and consent.” In the scheme announced by the communiqué of Government, 21st of July 1941, Sir Sultan Ahmed was appointed a member of the expanded Governor-General’s Council and Sir Sikander Hyat Khan (Chief Minister, the Punjab), Mr. Fazlul Huq (Chief Minister, Bengal), Sir Muhammad Saadulla (Chief Minister, Assam), the Nawab of Chattari, and Begum Shah Nawaz members of the National Defence Council without reference to or knowledge of the leader and executive of the organisation and contrary to the decision of the Moslem League and its policy. The Working Committee of the Moslem League at its Bombay session in August 1941 called upon the members to resign and authorised Mr. Jinnah to take necessary disciplinary action against those who declined to tender resignations. The Committee criticised the Governor-General for the formation of the Defence Council and the expansion of the Governor-General’s Council behind the back of the leader of the Moslem League. Sir Sultan Ahmed and Begum Shah Nawaz, however, refused to obey the mandate of the Moslem League. The Moslem League is pursuing a policy of non-embarrassment to the Government.

Mr. Jinnah’s letter to His Excellency Lord Linlithgow, dated New Delhi, February 6, 1940.
The Hindu Mahasabha has urged the thesis that the Congress has no right to represent Hindus and that no Hindu-Moslem pact would be binding on Hindus unless approved by the Hindu Mahasabha. The Mahasabha has pushed the demand for a National Government, but it is prepared to co-operate if the formation of the National Government is delayed, and it does not propose any disciplinary action against any of its members joining the Governor-General’s Council or the Defence Council or any other governmental organisation. The Mahasabha moves on the road to co-operation, and in political creed it follows the footsteps of the Liberal Federation, although its political mission is often subordinated to the protection and promotion of the Hindu race, Hindu culture and Hindu civilisation.

The National Liberal Federation extended general support to the plan of constitutional reform adumbrated at the non-Party Conference under the leadership of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The non-Party Conference at its Delhi session in February 1942 urged the immediate adoption of the following scheme of reform: (a) a declaration that India shall no longer be treated as a dependency to be ruled from Whitehall and her constitutional position and powers will be identical with those of the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth; (b) during the period of the war the Governor-General’s Executive Council shall be reconstructed as a truly National Government functioning on the basis of joint and collective responsibility and consisting entirely of non-officials enjoying public confidence, subject to responsibility to the Crown; (c) the right of India to direct representation through persons chosen by the National Government in all Allied War Councils, wherever established, and at the Peace Conference, should be recognised; (d) the National Government should be consulted in all matters precisely on the same footing and to the

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1 Resolution of the Working Committee of the all-India Hindu Mahasabha in May 1938 at Nasik.
same extent as His Majesty’s Government consult the Dominions.

The Position in Bengal

In Bengal, before the elections to the reformed provincial legislatures under the Constitution Act of 1935, the political parties were functioning on lines different from those in the other provinces. Bengal was deeply stirred by the Communal Award. In 1936 Bengal Hindus submitted a memorial to Lord Zetland, Secretary of State for India, for the revision of the Communal Award. The feelings of Hindus in the province against the Award were so deep that even the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee which had long maintained a non-committal attitude on the Communal Award expressed sympathy with the objects of the Town Hall meeting held on the 15th of July 1936 under the presidency of Poet Rabindranath Tagore to request the Secretary of State for India to take action under Section 308 (4) of the Constitution Act of 1935 for the purpose of remedying the wrongs inflicted on the Hindus of Bengal by the Award. The demonstration on the part of Hindus provoked a counter-meeting by Moslems held in the Town Hall on the 2nd August 1936 under the presidency of Sir A. H. Ghuznavi. The Secretary of State for India replied that there could be no alteration of the Award except with the consent of the communities affected. There was an attempt to compose the differences between the all-Bengal Proja Samity and the Bengal Provincial Moslem League. The Proja Samity in Bengal was, in fact, a Moslem organisation, although its nomenclature does not commit the Samity to communal membership. No such agricultural party in any other province contested the elections to the provincial legislatures under the Act of 1935. Before the elections, no settlement between the two Moslem organisations took place. The Krishak Proja Party was closely allied with the Congress Party on ideological grounds. Accordingly, the three political parties
fought the elections in Bengal, viz., the Congress Party, the Krishak Proja Party, and the Provincial Moslem League Party. The Congress Party did not contest any Moslem seat, and this was principally because of ideological affinity with the Krishak Proja Party which was peculiarly a Bengal organisation. The non-Congress Hindus fought on individual tickets, and they formed themselves into a Nationalist Party in the legislature after the elections. Before the formation of the Bengal Cabinet in 1937 there was a coalition of the Krishak Proja Party and the Moslem League Party, but a section of the Krishak Proja Party continued to function as an Opposition Party.

The principal objects of the Nikhil Banga Proja Samity were the following: (1) to press for full responsible government with effective safeguards for Moslems; (2) to protect the political and religious rights of Indian Moslems; (3) to promote friendship and union between Moslems and other communities; (4) to abolish the Permanent Settlement; (5) to amend the Bengal Tenancy Act to vest proprietary rights in the tillers of the soil; (6) to secure the repeal of repressive laws; (7) to work for free and compulsory primary education and removal of agricultural indebtedness; (8) to reduce the heavy cost of administrative machinery; (9) to protect and promote the Urdu language and script with proper safeguards for the development of the vernacular; (10) to take steps for the representation of Moslems and scheduled castes in the services. In this wise there was a long catalogue, and many good things were promised, but the list of aims clearly shows that it is a Moslem organisation and that there is an attempt to cajole extremist opinion in the country on certain economic questions. The Moslem League Parliamentary Board in Bengal also promised many good things, but not the abolition of private landlordism; it principally asked for the

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³ "The promise of abolishing the Permanent Settlement overnight was a moonshine and false promise"—said Mr. Jinnah at a public meeting in Calcutta, January 3, 1937.
establishment of a Board of Secondary Education and amendments of the Calcutta University Act and the Calcutta Municipal Act in the interests of Moslems. But the programme of the League-Proja Coalition which was effected after the elections to form the Bengal Ministry touched principally on the following: instituting an Enquiry Committee for the Permanent Settlement; amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act so as to transfer rights from landlords to ryots with a view to making the latter virtual owners of the land; removal of agricultural indebtedness; control of price of jute; repeal of repressive laws; solution of the problem of unemployment; reduction in the cost of administration; amendment of the Co-operative Societies Act; resuscitation of dead and dying rivers; free and compulsory primary education. This coalition party, in course of time, came under the dominance of the Moslem League organisation, as Mr. Fazlul Huq later adopted the Moslem League creed. The Opposition Krishak Proja Party maintained its existence, and Mr. Fazlul Huq after breaking with the Moslem League Party assumed leadership of the Krishak Proja Party. After the reconstitution of the Bengal Cabinet in December 1941, the Ministerial party came to be known as the Progressive Coalition Party, and Mr. Fazlul Huq issued a whip for the formation of an all-India Progressive Moslem League Party as a rival to the all-India Moslem League Party with the declared objective of “rescuing the Moslem League from the clutches of un-Islamic leaders before it is too late.”

In Bengal, the evil effects of the Communal Award were pronounced. The discussion of public questions was tainted with a communal approach. The communal ratio in the Government services adopted by the Government of Bengal affected the impartial outlook of Government departments. But it is interesting to find that the Bengal legislature passed a resolution advocating the majority of

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1 Mr. Fazlul Huq’s letter to the prominent Moslem Leaguers dated June 21, 1942.
appointments for Moslems with the effective support of the Congress Legislature Party. The decision of the Bengal Cabinet in the matter of service ratio was announced on the 22nd of June 1939 through a press communique. Its terms are recited to show the influence of the Communal Award on the working of party government. The Government of Bengal decided that the policy of future recruitment to the public services of the province would be directed to the attainment and maintenance, as far as possible, of parity in each of those services between the Moslem and non-Moslem communities in the province, and fifteen per cent of appointments by direct recruitment should be reserved for the scheduled castes (such reservation not exceeding thirty per cent of non-Moslem direct appointments). The basic formula can hardly be objected to. It must be realized however that this decision of the provincial Government directly prejudiced the position of the Hindus who on account of their superior educational attainments and larger number amongst the educated classes in Bengal had hitherto occupied a dominant place in the public services. The rider to the basic formula was this: to accelerate the due attainment of parity in case of some services where the number of Moslems is small, any excess over fifty per cent obtained by non-Moslems in the matter of promotions shall be counterbalanced by additional reservation for Moslems over and above fifty per cent in direct appointments to that service until parity in that service is reached, and the same principle of counterbalance by additional reservation will apply to the services where Moslems predominate. All this worked out adversely for Hindus. The communal feeling was so high in the province that even the adoption of “sree and lotus” as the emblem of the University of Calcutta came in for sharp criticism by the Moslems in the Bengal legislature, and the University had to modify the design of the crest. It showed the emergence of new communal forces in Bengal under the protecting wings of the Communal Award.
The Dacca Riots Enquiry Committee, presided over by Mr. Justice McNair of the Calcutta High Court, submitted its report in 1942, and observed that "there was a strong feeling among the Hindus of all classes that their influence was waning, and that they were being deprived unjustly of the fruits to which they were entitled and to which they had for many years been accustomed. The feeling of frustration grew with time." The Enquiry Committee gave the following reasons for the growth of the feeling of frustration amongst Hindus:

(1) Legislative attacks upon Hindus, such as the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Act (the majority of landlords being Hindus), the Bengal Agricultural Debtors' Act and the Bengal Money-Lenders' Act (the majority of creditors being Hindus), the Calcutta Municipal Amendment Act (the strength of Hindu representation being reduced). There was the draft Secondary Education Bill (the influence of the University of Calcutta where Hindus dominate being curtailed). (For correct appreciation of facts it must be stated that the Congress Party in the legislature fully supported the principles underlying these economic measures and generally voted with Government except on one or two minor amendments. It should also be borne in mind that in the Congress majority provinces such as Bihar and the U.P. the Congress Ministries consisting overwhelmingly of Hindu members were responsible for similar if not more advanced economic legislation which affected Hindu vested interests in those provinces).

(2) The reservation of service appointments in favour of Moslems.

(3) Propaganda through meetings. The Bhairab Conference in Pakistan Park, January 1941, where Moslems visualised the establishment of a Moslem hegemony in Bengal caused consternation among Hindus.

(4) The interference of Government in the Dacca District Board elections for the purpose of evicting a
Hindu Chairman and of removing election disputes from the jurisdiction of civil courts.

(5) The charge by the Chief Minister against the Hindus of combining to inflate the census figures of 1941.

(6) The “unjustified interference” by Government in the “Murapara case” where Moslems claimed the right over a spot described as a mosque, situated in the compound of a Hindu house.

(7) The interference of Government in the Kulti disturbance cases.

Frankness requires it to be stated that communal feelings were very often the work of individual leaders. Communal legislation and communal propaganda were conducted by them in their own interests; they were not resorted to in obedience to any urge from the masses. The masses, Hindu and Moslem, could live in amity as they had done for many generations.

The general public in Bengal are not really communally minded. But the party leaders move on communal lines to maintain their leadership, and this is necessary under the terms of the Communal Award. The leaders of the Moslem League think in terms of Moslems only while the leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha who have acquired influence and importance in Bengal carry on their agitation through propaganda purely on communal lines. For instance, the Secondary Education Bill introduced by the Ministry mainly supported by the Moslem League-Coalition Party in Bengal (when Mr. Fazlul Huq was the Chief Minister and Education Minister) provided a common platform for carrying on a country-wide agitation on behalf of the Hindus in the name of Hindu culture which was being threatened with extinction. The Committee appointed by the University of Calcutta to report on the draft Secondary Education Bill opposed the creation of a Board under the control of Government and preferred a Board academic in its character and outlook, “which will
work under the general, but not meticulous, control of the Senate of the University and be in close touch and ready understanding with it.” The Bengal Cabinet wherein the Moslem League dominated resigned in December 1941, and a new one was formed with the support of the non-official Congress Party, led by Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose. In less than six months the new Cabinet brought forward a new Secondary Education Bill creating a Board without disturbing the principle of communal representation and without recognising the control of the University of Calcutta. The all-Bengal agitation that was started was hushed into silence. The Press remained indifferent; the platform ceased to reverberate with protests. All this eloquently makes for the Fascist organisation of parties to establish personal dictatorship, as distinct from democratic emphasis on issues and principles. This is unfortunate, so far as the party system in India is concerned.

The parties in India should discard both scepticism and dogmatism, because “truth is neither completely attainable nor completely unattainable, it is attainable to a certain degree, and that only with difficulty.” Democracy needs a wide diffusion of two qualities: self-reliance of the population, and self-restraint of the ruling party. “Every man and woman in a democracy should be neither a slave nor a rebel, but a citizen, that is, a person who has, and allows to others, a due proportion, but no more, of the governmental mentality.” If the population is submissive and prefers to follow a vigorous leader into dictatorship, it digs the grave of the parties that can meet and discuss in Parliament and follow an agreed formula. In India political parties are degenerating into fanatical factions where “each hypnotised automaton feels that everything most sacred is bound up with the victory of his side, everything most horrible exemplified by the other side.” This fanaticism which is partly emotional and partly intellectual needs to be combated.
CHAPTER VII

THE BACKGROUND OF MOSLEM AWAKENING

Moslems ruled in India for over 700 years before the battle of Plassey. They came to India as invaders but made the country their own. They were absorbed in her population; they introduced a new culture and were also in their turn influenced by the culture and civilization of Hindusthan. Their fury of iconoclasm and of proselytization subsided in time. The Pathans and the Moguls settled down to build mighty empires in India and ruled them for centuries not merely by the sword but also by following the policy of appeasement and the principles of good government. They dealt out justice, equity and fair play to the governed and gave them protection against internal troubles and external invasions. Hindus and Moslems borrowed each other's manners and customs, and at least the upper classes in society developed a new Indo-Saracenic civilization which made an abiding impression on the life of the people and survived Moslem rule in India. Moslems made great contributions to the domain of art and music of the land of their adoption. The Indo-Saracenic architecture is one of the noblest products of Hindu-Moslem contact and reciprocity. It is true that during these seven hundred years of Moslem rule there were many instances of religious intolerance of the worst type which had left bitter memories. But it is to be noted that from the middle of the sixteenth century onwards when the Great Akbar came to the throne the two communities began to live in peace and amity. Akbar's policy of religious tolerance and of friendliness towards Hindus attracted their imagination and gave them a sense of security and equality with Moslems as citizens. The short-sighted policy of some of his successors, however,
alienated them and directly contributed to the raking up of the feelings of enmity and suspicion which were removed by Akbar's policy of the remission of the jizya and the tax on Hindu pilgrims, the grant of permission to Hindus to build new temples and to repair the old ones and the employment of a large number of Hindus in positions of trust and responsibility as commanders of the army, revenue officers and even as provincial governors. The early Moslem invasions of India under Muhammad of Ghuzni and Muhammad Ghori might have been prompted by religious motives; the accounts of aggressions by Chengiz Khan and Timur might abound with horrors of religious persecutions, and destruction and desecration of many a sacred shrine of Hindus; but there were instances in Moslem rule to show that Hindus were allowed to carry on the worship of their Gods and Goddesses in the very heart of Delhi and in its neighbouring areas such as Muttra and Brindaban; there were royal grants to Brahmins for educational purposes; there was undisturbed enjoyment of lands endowed by Hindu Kings or Chiefs for religious or charitable objects.

In fact, with the efflux of time Hindus and Moslems became so reconciled to each other that the Moslem Kings and the Hindu Rajas freely recruited their soldiers from both communities; and their combined army under generals of either community often went out to oppose common enemies of the Empire. The court of the great Moguls became an epitome of Hindu and Moslem culture in which soldiers, statesmen, scholars and musicians of both communities occupied honourable positions. Even Aurangzeb who deviated so much from the policy of religious toleration of Akbar and Jehangir depended on the help of Rajput generals like Maharaja Yasavanta Singh and Raja Jai Singh for the extension of his possessions and the maintenance of his supremacy in the distant parts of the Empire. In the Deccan the Adil Shahi and the Kutub Shahi Kings of Bijapur, Golconda and Ahmednagar also
freely employed Marathas as soldiers and revenue officers. Akbar's policy of religious toleration bore fruitful results and converted the brave Rajputs from the determined enemies to the devoted allies of the Moguls. This policy reached its perfection in Prince Dara Shiko's laudable attempt to bring about a cultural blending between Hindus and Moslems with the help of a number of Sufi scholars and the study of Hindu philosophy and religious literature. As great patrons of learning Moslem rulers encouraged Hindi, Bengali and Marathi literature. Birbal, one of the jewels of Akbar's court, enriched Hindi literature by his writings. Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanani, one of Akbar's Ministers, was a prolific writer of Hindi poems, which are still recited in Northern India. Akbar got the great Hindu epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, translated into Persian. The Bhagabat Geeta, the Yoga Vasistha and other Sanskrit works were translated into Persian by the orders of Prince Dara Shiko. The Bengali language owes its literary status largely to the encouragement and patronage of some of the Moslem Kings of Gour. Coming in contact with Hindi which has Sanskrit as its basis Urdu (which was originally a camp language and used to be spoken by the Moslem soldiers, most of whom came from outside India and were equally ignorant of Sanskrit or Persian or Hindi) soon developed to be the language of the cultured classes in India, Hindu and Moslem, and became a fine literary medium.

Meeting of Rama and Rahim

Speaking of the mutual influence of Hinduism and Islam the authors of The Communal Triangle say: 'Clashes were there, but the waters of life were rounding them and the "blooming buzzing confusion" was getting a new integration. Men arose on all sides who could think in terms commensurate with the new environment. The tendency was so universal that even the intellectual
renaissance that preceded the rise of the Maratha Power did not escape its influence.\(^1\)

The austerity of the monotheistic creed of Moslems was distinctly impressed upon the minds of the prophets, Kabir, Nanak and others. The worshippers of Dattatraya or the incarnation of the Hindu Trinity often clothed their God in the garb of a Moslem faqir. The same influence was at work with greater effect on the popular mind in Maharashtra, where preachers, both Brahmin and non-Brahmin, were calling the people to identify Rama with Rahim, and ensure their freedom from the bonds of formal ritualism and caste distinctions, and unite in common love of man and faith in God.\(^2\)

The debt was not one-sided. Islam penetrated into Hindu thought in a variety of ways. Even if we ignore the influence of Islamic thought on the development of the philosophies of Shankar and Ramanuja, we can hardly minimise the ideological ferment that the meeting of Rama and Rahim created, and it sought numerous and persistent outlets. Kabir and Nanak, Tukaram and Chaitanya, they all testify to the creative power of the co-mingling of the two religious thoughts. Thus, on the philosophical heights of mysticism, where man wrestles with the problem of his relation to the universe, the Hindu and the Moslem met on common ground. The impulse of that meeting spread to the broad masses of Indian humanity and made them a single people.\(^3\)

It is necessary to mention all this to show how the two communities stood with reference to each other in the pre-British period. The communal tension to-day, whether spontaneous or partly inspired, is undoubtedly a source of great worry to those who want Indians to be

\(^1\) "The Communal Triangle in India" by Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, p. 15.
\(^2\) Ramade: Rise of the Maratha Power, pp. 50-51.
\(^3\) "The Communal Triangle in India" by Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, pp. 15-16.
united into one nation and are anxious to see India occupying her legitimate position amongst the free countries of the world. It is not possible to appreciate the difficulties that stand in the way of her constitutional advancement or hamper the working of parliamentary democracy in India without sympathetic understanding of the viewpoints and political ideologies of these two great communities constituting the Indian nation. The Congress has always claimed to speak on behalf of the entire nation, but this claim has of late been challenged by the Moslem League. In order, therefore, to appreciate fully the problems that confront the Indian politicians as well as the British nation as rulers of India, it is desirable to study the history of the origin and development of the great political organisation of the Moslems and to make a dispassionate analysis of its proposals on behalf of that community. These problems are inseparably connected with the working of the Indian political constitution, and on their solution will depend largely the political future of this country.

The Mogul System

The Mogul system of administration, well established and elaborate as it was, required the help of a large number of officers, both civil and military, forming a great hierarchy, who ruled the country on behalf of the Great Mogul. The vast majority of these officers were Moslems holding actual or nominal rank in the army consisting mostly of Moslem soldiers recruited to the service of the Empire either from the various Islamic tribes settled in India or from across the North-Western frontiers of the country. This system of army recruitment and of distribution of civil and military offices provided great opportunities to adventurous and ambitious Moslems who came to India in search of fortune. Through meritorious services to the rulers these officers could often rise from humble beginnings to positions of great trust and responsibility. Their attachment
was more personal to an Emperor, or to a Prince, or to a nobleman occupying high office and enjoying confidence of the ruler, than to the cause of the Mogul Empire in Hindusthan. The system however filled the court and the country with influential Moslems who for generations had occupied responsible offices under Government, wielded considerable power and secured for themselves large jagirs or royal grants for their own living and for maintenance of the army under their command. These officers and nobles had in their turn a large number, both Hindus and Moslems, attached to them, and they became important units in the bigger order of Moslem officialdom and nobility. They supported, served, intrigued against or opposed the reigning Monarchs according to their own interest, convenience, or circumstances in which they were placed at a particular moment. They formed the bulk of the Moslem nobility and gentry in the country. They encouraged art and literature, maintained madrassahs and maktabs, endowed mosques and other religious and charitable institutions according to the rules of Islam. As patrons of art and literature these families supported a large number of Arabic and Persian scholars and helped religious preachers of their own community with liberal grants. The primary source of the wealth, influence and prestige of these Moslem families was Government service, imperial grants, and the ranks they occupied in the courts either of the Emperor at Delhi or of his viceroys in different parts of the Empire. Thus, unlike the British officers, these Moslem officers under Mogul rule occupied a more permanent position in the State, and had a hereditary stake in the country, a status in society and an obligation to the people. With the fall and disintegration of the Mogul Empire, to which the intrigue and mutual rivalry of some of the leading nobles directly contributed, these Moslems also suffered in fortune and influence. A handful of them did succeed in carving out principalities for themselves but most of them having lost their official position gradually
passed into oblivion. But it took many years before they were actually obliterated from the country or became merged in the masses.

**British Ascendancy and Influence**

The battle of Plassey brought about the downfall of the last independent Nawab of Bengal. Mirzaaffar, the central figure in the conspiracy against the House of Alivardi Khan, was placed on the masnad of Murshidabad with the help of British arms and played the puppet Nawab for a brief period. Mir Kasim who was installed in the place of Mirzaaffar by the same agency did not prove friendly to the British and was removed to make room for old Mirzaaffar again. With the granting of the Dewani to the British by Emperor Shaha Alam in 1765 the revenue administration of the province passed into the hands of the East India Company and their agents. The police administration was, however, left to the descendants of Mirzaaffar for a few years more till the Nawab was gradually divested of all his powers and administrative duties and was reduced to the position of an annuitant. The Sadar Dewani Adalat and the mint were soon after transferred to Calcutta, and thus the entire administration of the province came gradually under the control of the British and was anglicised. The final blow to the old system was dealt when Persian ceased to be the court language, and English was substituted in its place. British jurisprudence and British procedure were then introduced in the courts of law in place of the system and principles of law sanctioned by the Sariat. This threw out of employment a large number of Moslems who having lost the avenues of military employment had been depending entirely on judicial and revenue work under the East India Company for their living. Knowledge of Arabic and Persian no longer qualified the one for employment into Government service or as an educationist. The system of education also underwent
rapid transformation. The Government of Warren Hastings encouraged and provided for the teaching of oriental languages such as Sanskrit and Persian, but it did not make any arrangement for the imparting of religious instruction. Education under the British Government was completely secularised. This definitely discouraged Moslems from taking advantage of the new system of education. They preferred to continue their own system and to stick to their own educational institutions, most of which were attached to mosques and were supported from private funds or lands granted by the Moslem Government of the country or landlords who wanted to encourage education. There were a large number of ainas or grants for encouraging and supporting Moslem educationists who freed from the cares of earning their living could devote themselves to the vocation of teaching and carry on their duties of imparting education peacefully. These grants were mostly revenue-free or paid only a nominal amount as rent or revenue. The East India Company with certain exceptions resumed these lands without any consideration of their effect on the social, educational, religious and economic life of the community. The whole procedure was a summary one, and it was difficult, and in the majority of cases impossible, to prove by production of the original orders whether a particular grant was valid or not. This led to the confiscation of a large number of grants affecting seriously a considerable section in society, and resulted in the closing down of many madrashas and maktabs and other charitable institutions. The resumption proceedings brought about financial ruin to a section of the community who had hitherto enjoyed affluence or at least financial independence and occupied useful positions in society.

Sir William Hunter in his book The Indian Mussalmans says: "At an outlay of £800,000 upon the Resumption proceedings an additional revenue of £300,000 a year was permanently gained by the State, representing a capital at five per cent of six millions sterling. A large part of this
sum was derived from lands held rent-free by Mussalmans or by Mahomedan foundations. The panic and hatred which ensued have stamped themselves for ever on the rural records. Hundreds of ancient families were ruined, and the educational system of the Mussalmans who were almost entirely maintained by rent-free grants received its death blow. The scholastic classes of the Mahomedans emerged from the eighteen years (1828-1846) of harrying absolutely ruined... Since then the profession of a man of learning, a dignified and lucrative calling under native rulers, has ceased to exist."

Germs of Moslem Discontent

Moslems as a class preferred to stick to their old system of education and did not take advantage of the Western education and culture introduced by the new rulers of the country. The new system of education proved antagonistic to the traditions of Moslems, and they preferred to stand aloof. Their attitude was one of sullen discontent rather than of active hostility to the British. Mr. E. C. Bailey, Secretary to the Home Department of the Government of India, writing on this subject says: "Is it any subject of wonder that they (Moslems) have 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?" This attitude of Moslems, however justified, did no good to them. They failed to recognise that the Mogul Empire had ceased to exist nearly three quarters of a century before the East India Company began to interfere with the educational system of the country and that in the meantime the Marathas and the Sikhs were ruling practically the whole of the area that once comprised

1 "The Indian Mussalmans" by W. W. Hunter, pp. 185-186.
the Empire of Aurangzeb. The descendants of the Great Mogul were at the mercy either of some Moslem nobles or of captives of the Maratha chiefs in the Mogul palace at Delhi till one of them was rescued from that position in 1803 by the British General, Lord Lake. Moslems should have realised the fact that there was little or no prospect of the Moslem Empire being revived with all its cultural patronage and facilities for the followers of Islam. But they failed to do so. Their pride as the ex-ruling race and conquerors of India stood in their way. The result was that they gradually sank into poverty and oblivion. Sir William Hunter says: "They complain that they who but yesterday were the conquerors and governors of the land can find no subsistence in it to-day."¹ He adds: "It is not that they have ceased to retain the entire State patronage, but they are gradually being excluded from it altogether. It is not that they must now take an equal chance with the Hindus in the race of life but that at least in Bengal they have ceased to have a chance at all. In fact, it is a people with a great tradition and without a career"² He further adds: "A hundred and seventy five years ago it was almost impossible for a well born Mussalman in Bengal to become poor; at present it is impossible for him to continue rich."³

In describing the miserable condition of the descendants of these Moslem nobles the same author says: "At Murshidabad a Mahomedan Court still plays its farce of mimic State, and in every district the descendant of some line of Princes sullenly and proudly eats his heart out among roofless palaces and weed-chocked tanks . . . Their ruined mansions swarm with grown-up sons and daughters, with grand-children and nephews and nieces, and not one of the hungry crowd has a chance of doing any thing for himself in life. They drag a listless existence in patched

¹ "The Indian Mussalmans" by W. W. Hunter, p. 152.
² Ibid., p. 153.
³ Ibid., p. 158.
up verandahs or leaky out-houses, sinking deeper and deeper into hopeless abyss of debt, till the neighbouring Hindu money-lender fixes a quarrel on them, and then in a moment a host of mortgages foreclose, and the ancient Moslem family is suddenly swallowed up and disappears for ever.1 This picture is true regarding the miserable plight of the hundreds of Moslem families all over India. Families that once supplied the State with eminent administrators, soldiers and scholars, and used to be looked upon with pride and veneration, became now objects of pity and found themselves completely uprooted from the soil on which they had thrived so well for generations. Moslems as a community, and especially those who were well born and had seen better days, could not look to the progress of the British Raj in India with a friendly eye. They were too weak and disorganised to raise the banner of rebellion against their new masters, nor probably did they harbour any such desire, but neither they nor the British Government could forget that Moslems were the rulers of India only two generations before and that the descendant of the Great Mogul, though shorn of all power, influence and territorial possessions, still continues to occupy the fort of Shajahan at Delhi; the people of Hindusthan, Hindus and Moslems, felt unconsciously inclined to sympathise with this fallen greatness and show him all consideration that was due to his imperial lineage. This was the genesis of mutual misunderstanding and suspicion between the British administrators in this country and the Moslems. Both parties suffered from a sort of complex, and their mutual relations were influenced accordingly. Commenting on the British policy towards the Moslems in the pre-Mutiny period Professor Mohammad Noman, the author of *Muslim India*, says: "Indian Moslems rightly believed that the British were inspired by a spirit of revenge and fear against the Moslems whom they wanted to keep down in order to

1 Ibid., p. 155.
strengthen their hold on the country. Lord Ellenborough, the Governor-General in 1842, had adopted a policy of oppression and intimidation, all focussed against the Muslims."

Then came the Revolution of 1857. It started as a mutiny of the Hindu and Moslem soldiers in Northern India but ended as a general conflagration in which thousands of the civil population joined, some as active participant but the majority as passive sympathisers. The disturbance was put down by the British, and it was followed by a terrible reprisal against those who took part in the movement or were supposed to have any complicity in it, active or passive. But Moslems as a community suffered most. "In the stirring days of 1857", observe the authors of *The Communal Triangle in India*, "the Indian Muslims played a very prominent part. The rebellion however did not succeed, and the strong hand of the victorious British fell heavily upon Muslim nationalists. The pre-Mutiny policy of suppressing the Muslims was now carried out with such thoroughness that at the end of it we find the Muslims of India, a proud and brave people, reduced to the position of illiterate masses with their spirit broken and their pride humbled to the dust." 

Sir Theodore Morrison says: "In 1857 came the catastrophe of the Mutiny, for which the English believed wrongly that the Muslims were mainly responsible; the phantom of the Moghul Emperor was abolished, the noble families which had followed his fallen fortunes were ruined or dispersed, and Delhi ceased to be a Moslem city. All over India Muslim civilisation was in evident decay. The Moulvis, the religious leaders of the people, from a mistaken loyalty to Islam, forbade their followers under pain or eternal damnation from acquiring the language of the Firinghis (Franks, i.e., Europeans). The Moslems were thereby

1 "Muslim India" by Mohammad Noman, pp. 28-29.
2 "The Communal Triangle in India" by Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, p. 21.
excluded from all the liberal professions. For the public services a knowledge of English had now become indispensable; law, medicine, and engineering had been revolutionised by the introduction of European ideas and could only be studied to any purpose in English text books. While Bengalis, Hindus, Madrasis, and Marathas, inspired by the arts and science of Europe, were experiencing an intellectual and moral renaissance, the Moslems all over India were falling into a state of material indigence and intellectual decay."

Sir Syed Ahmad’s Contributions

This was the state of the Moslems at the close of the Mutiny. They were disorganised, demoralised and sunk in poverty. They were unprepared to adapt themselves to the new order that had emerged out of the revolution and ill-equipped to take advantage of the educational and economic facilities offered by the post-Mutiny policy of the British administration in India under the Crown. At this juncture Syed Ahmad Khan appeared as their saviour. It was through his help and under his leadership that Moslems for the first time woke up from their slumber, and the dry bones of the community came to life again. He tried to dissuade them from taking part in the rebellion as far as he could, and it was he who in his well known pamphlet, The Causes of the Indian Revolt, gave the ideology of the rebellion, pointed out in forceful language and with unanswerable logic how this revolt was born of a feeling of exasperation and ignorance on the part of the people of this country, and described Government’s failure to know what was passing through the public mind, and what were the grievances of the people. During the Mutiny he rendered valuable services to the British, suffered at the hands of the mutineers for helping Government and saving the lives of several Britons; so his loyalty to them was proved

*Quoted from “Muslim India” by Mohammad Noman, pp. 31-32.*
beyond doubt. But his loyalty to his country and to the cause of his unfortunate community was still greater. He was actuated by a high sense of duty to the Moslems and of patriotism to his motherland, that prompted him on the one hand to advise the Moslems to shake off their conservatism regarding education, to take advantage of the Western system of education in order to qualify themselves for Government services and learned professions and on the other hand to plead strongly the claim of his countrymen to be associated with the administration of their country in a representative system of government. But he never approved of the idea of introducing in India the Western system of democracy which in his opinion was unsuited to the genius of the people, their composition and traditions. Though he advocated strongly Hindu-Moslem unity and described the two communities as the two eyes of a beautiful maid—India, Syed Ahmad Khan never supported the proposal of introduction of representative institutions in this country exactly on the British model which involved the rule of the majority, that is of the Hindus. Sir Syed Ahmad's views on representative government in India can best be gathered from his observations on the Central Provinces Local Self-Government Bill in 1883: "I am convinced that no part of India has yet arrived at the stage when the system of representation can be adopted, in its fullest scope, even in regard to local affairs. The principle of self-government by means of representative institutions is, perhaps, the greatest and noblest lesson which the beneficence of England will teach India. But, in borrowing from England the system of representative institutions, it is of the greatest importance to remember those socio-political matters in which India is distinguishable from England. The present socio-political condition of India is the outcome of the history of centuries of despotism and misrule, of the dominance of race over race, of religion over religion. Traditions and feelings of the people and their present economic and
political condition are in a vast measure influenced and regulated by the history of the past; the humanizing effects of British rule have not yet demolished the remembrance of the days of strife and discord which preceded the peace brought to India by British supremacy. India, a continent in itself, is inhabited by vast populations of different races and different creeds; the rigour of religious institutions has kept even neighbours apart, the system of caste is still dominant and powerful. In one and the same district the population may consist of various creeds and various nationalities; and whilst one section of the population commands wealth and commerce, the other may possess learning and influence. One section may be numerically larger than the other, and the standard of enlightenment which one section of the community has reached may be far higher than that attained by the rest of the population. One community may be fully alive to the importance of securing representation on the local boards and district councils, whilst the other may be wholly indifferent to such matters. Under these circumstances, it is hardly possible to deny that the introduction of representative institutions in India will be attended with considerable difficulty and socio-political risks. The system of representation by election means the representation of the views and interests of the majority of the population and, in countries where the population is composed of one race and one creed, it is no doubt the best system that can be adopted. But, my lord, in a country like India, where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of the various races, where religious distinctions are still violent, where education in its modern sense has not made an equal or proportionate progress among all the sections of the population, I am convinced that the introduction of the principle of election, pure and simple, for representation of various interests on the local boards and district councils, would be attended with evils of greater significance than purely economic considerations. So long as differences of
race and creed, and distinctions of caste form an important element in the socio-political life of India, and influence her inhabitants in matters connected with the administration and welfare of the country at large, the system of election, pure and simple, cannot be safely adopted. The larger community would totally override the interests of the smaller community, and the ignorant public would hold Government responsible for introducing measures which might make the differences of race and creed more violent than ever.”

Sir Syed Ahmad with the instinct of a born leader and the foresight of a statesman realised before others did the imperative need for furthering the educational facilities of the Moslem community and for inducing them to take advantage of those facilities with a view to qualifying them to take their proper place in the new order of things in India. He felt that Moslems had suffered much in excess of their complicity in the Indian Mutiny; it would therefore be unwise and undesirable for them to join any political movement against Government. This would, thought Sir Syed Ahmad, rouse further suspicion of Government against Moslems and afford Government another opportunity for oppression. “Agitation among the Muslims meant the raising of a rebellion and Sir Syed Ahmad was not prepared to run the risk.”

Anxious to secure peaceful progress of Moslems, to rehabilitate their character and to clear all misunderstandings from the mind of Government, Sir Syed Ahmad refused Moslem co-operation to the newly formed Congress organisation. He disapproved of its policy which, according to him, was tending towards extremism and an attack on Government. He advised Moslems not to join the Congress and formed a different organisation called the Patriotic Association. Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea in his reminiscences A Nation in Making says: “The Mahamedan

* Quoted from “Muslim India” by Mohammad Noman, pp. 34-36
community under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmad had held aloof from the Congress. They were working under the auspices of the Patriotic Association in direct opposition to the national movement. Our critics regarded the National Congress as a Hindu Congress, and the opposition papers described it as such. We were straining every nerve to secure the co-operation of our Mahammedan fellow-countrymen in this great national work.”¹ Thus the separatist tendency in Moslem public opinion was in evidence from the early days of the political movement in India. It cannot be denied that Sir Syed Ahmad was actuated by a sincere desire to safeguard the interests of the members of his own community and to protect them against further indignity and oppression. His apprehensions were genuine. He also wanted to provide against the rule of the majority in a purely democratic system. What he said sixty years ago is being practically repeated by the Moslem leaders and Moslem political parties and organisations to-day. This feeling was no doubt regrettable, and it stood in the way of fusion of the two communities into one nation. But as the most outstanding leader of his community Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was most competent to judge their needs, to interpret their views on important issues and to give expression to them on behalf of the Moslems of India.

In order to widen the educational facilities of Moslems and to impart training to Moslem students in the atmosphere of Islamic culture without ignoring the modern conditions and requirements of life, the M. A. O. College at Aligarh was founded at the instance of Sir Syed Ahmad and mainly through his help. This institution has developed into a Moslem University, and at present it plays an important part in the educational, political and cultural life of Moslem India. It has became the centre of Moslem educational renaissance and the nursery of Moslem political leaders with their new ideas and theories about the

¹ “A Nation in Making” by Sir Surendra Nath Banerjea, p. 108.
position and claims of the community in the Indian body politic.

There is no doubt that the establishment of the M. A. O. College at Aligarh and later of the Aligarh Moslem University made the community rapidly self-conscious. Within a generation it came to realise the position to which it had been reduced in less than 75 years. Members of the Moslem community began to feel that once they held sway over the major portion of India, but they had now sunk into ignorance and poverty, and the majority of them were not merely unemployed but also unemployable because of their lack of education and training. This roused them from stupor. They were determined to take their legitimate position in India's national life. Unfortunately, however, this awakening of Moslems led almost simultaneously to the rousing of their communal consciousness.

Moslems genuinely suffered from a sense of injustice and of gradual displacement from the position of vantage in all spheres of life. Educated Moslems began to cherish a strong sense of resentment. Aligarh as the seat of Moslem education, under the guidance of European principals and professors, became the centre of the movement for the safeguarding of Moslem interests, rights and privileges. The Hindi-Urdu controversy towards the beginning of the present century was the first manifestation of the movement. The proposal to substitute Nagri script for Persian in Government offices greatly upset the Moslems. In this they apprehended the substitution of more Hindus for Moslems in the public services and a further encroachment on Moslem culture. The proposal on the other hand was enthusiastically supported by the Hindu community; this incensed the communal tension. It is already noticed that in the wake of the nationalist movement there came simultaneously a religious revival all over the country. The movement appeared in different forms in different parts of India. It may be fittingly described as the religious manifestation
of national consciousness and an attempt on the part of educated India to appreciate its own culture with a view to restoring the self-respect of the people and training them through religious education and discipline to self-assertion against foreign domination, both political and cultural. The movement was mainly a Hindu one. The respect for the Vedas and the Bhagabat Geeta, the revival of some of the religious rites and ceremonies of the Hindus, the preservation of cows, *suddhi* or reconversion to Hinduism of those Hindus who had embraced Islam—these were some of the teachings and the outcome of the new Hindu religious movement which in the hands of political leaders like Dayananda, Tilak, Saradhananda and Madan Mohan Malaviya assumed a great political significance and became a creative force. Some aspects of the movement such as objection to the slaughter of cows, and demonstrations in honour of the memories of Hindu national heroes like Prithviraj, Rana Pratap and Shivaji became soaked with political significance of a communal character, and even in the early days of the Congress movement they proved a handicap to national solidarity and in later years became a powerful factor in the creation of schism in our national life and in the perpetuation of the same. With the increase of our political consciousness also increased the communal tendency.

**The Movement for Separate Electorates**

It has been already stated that the communal feeling crystallised during the Bengal Partition agitation in 1906, and it found expression in the claim of the Moslem community for separate electorates in the Morley-Minto Reforms and in the formation of the Moslem League in 1906 by a resolution moved at the all-India Moslem Conference held at Dacca. The object of the Moslem League was outlined in the resolution proposing the formation of the League, and it ran as follows:—“Resolved that this meeting
composed of Mussalmans from all parts of India assembled at Dacca decides that a Political Association be formed, styled all-India Moslem League, for the furtherance of the following objects:

(a) To promote, among the Musalmans of India, feelings of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of Government with regard to any of the measures.

(b) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India and to respectfully represent their needs and aspirations to the Government.

(c) To prevent the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other afore-mentioned objects of the League.

It is a curious coincidence that both the Indian National Congress and the all-India Moslem League started their career with the good wishes of the representatives of the British Government in India. Lord Dufferin wanted the Congress to play Her Majesty's Opposition, so as to help Government to ascertain correctly the views of the governed or rather of the politically minded section amongst them, regarding Government's legislative and administrative measures. The Government of Lord Minto similarly encouraged and welcomed the formation of the Moslem League as a counterblast to the Congress, which had become too critical of Government measures, insistent on the claim of self-government for the Indian people, was constituted of persons who had been publicly advocating the boycott of British goods as a political weapon, and had on its roll members who were alleged to have sympathy with the extremist movement in politics.

In reply to the Address presented by the Moslem Deputation to Lord Minto urging the introduction of separate electorates for the community in the legislature

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2 Quoted from "Muslim India" by Mohammad Noman, p. 78.
under the Reforms Act of 1909 as well as in all local bodies, the Viceroy said: "You point out that in many cases electoral bodies, as now constituted, cannot be expected to return a Mahomedan candidate and that if by any chance they did so, it would only be at the sacrifice of such a candidate's views to those of a majority opposed to his own community, whom he would in a way represent, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it had rendered to the Empire. I am entirely in accord with you."

Moslems as a community had never identified themselves with the Congress, although some prominent individuals were always associated with it. The Moslem League gradually drifted away from the Congress, and the most prominent leaders of the community found their natural moorings in the more congenial atmosphere of the League. This attitude of the Moslems has to be studied in the background of the policy of divide et impera of the British Government. The British welcomed this separatist tendency of the Indian Moslems and did not view with approval any move to the strengthening of a united front. It cannot be denied that the policy of the rulers of the country greatly influenced the outlook of the Moslem leaders and often prevented them from viewing the national problems in their proper perspective. But it would be unfair to place the entire responsibility on the British Government or on the Moslem community. The gradual estrangement of Moslems from the Congress was largely due to a feeling of their inability to influence successfully the policy of the Congress because of the numerical inferiority of educated Moslems in that organisation. Moslems had misgivings that as they form less than one-fifth of the total population of India, their interests would not be adequately safeguarded in a purely democratic constitution on the British model which was aimed at and advocated by the
Congress. This distrust of and resentment against Hindus often received encouragement from the British administrators. The estrangement of Moslems from the Congress movement is also partially attributable to the absence of sympathy with Moslem public opinion about important political issues in the leaders of the Congress who being mostly Hindus often approached the problems from their own points of view. Identification of the Congress with the Bengal Anti-Partition movement may be cited as an important instance of the failure to appreciate properly Moslem opinion which was still not very vocal.

The deputation about separate electorates which was suspected as "a command performance" waited on the Viceroy on the 1st of October 1906; that very evening Lord Minto received a letter from an official on the subject. In that letter it was said: "I must send Your Excellency a line to say that a very, very big thing has happened to-day. A work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of sixty-two millions of people from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition."  

Whatever the immediate justification might have been of the introduction of separate electorates for the Moslems it must be recognised that separate representation has, instead of bridging the gulf between the two communities, gradually widened it and done the greatest harm to the cause of Indian nationalism. It has rendered the working of parliamentary democracy difficult and joint responsibility of Ministers almost a nullity. They have to approach even important issues from the point of view of the community to which they belong rather than from that of the country or the nation. This has greatly added to the complexity of our political problems making their solution more difficult than ever. The demand for separate electorates gradually

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1 "India: Minto and Morley 1905-1910" by Mary, Countess of Minto, pp. 47-48.
gained greater momentum and it had to be formally recognised and accepted even by the Congress in 1916 in order to enable that body and the Moslem League to put forward a joint scheme of Constitutional Reforms. Separate electorates have now proved to be a dominant feature of the Indian Constitution, however much one may regret it.

**Moslems and the League**

Like the Congress the all-India Moslem League too was at its inception an organisation conceived, formed and controlled by persons belonging to the upper classes and the upper middle classes. During the first period its aims and objects were to promote amongst the Moslems of India a feeling of loyalty to the British Government and to remove any misconception that might arise as to the intention of Government with regard to any of their measures. The idea of the organisation was to protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Moslems of India through representation of their case to Government. The object of securing self-government for India was not yet in its programme nor did the League claim within its fold the Moslem masses. It was mainly an organisation to give expression to the views of the educated Moslems on questions of general interest to the community. But the time spirit was at work, and the Moslem League could not escape its influence in spite of the fact that its leaders were all pro-British and were inclined to preach loyalty to Government amongst its members. The Moslem community depended on British support and governmental assurance regarding the advancement of their communal interests and protection against infringement of their rights and privileges. But the first rude shock they experienced was the annulment of the Partition of Bengal which was repeatedly announced as a settled fact but was ultimately unsettled to the great disappointment and disillusionment of the Moslems of Eastern Bengal in particular and of those of India in general. They realised for the first time
the futility of depending entirely on the promises, assurances and patronage of a foreign Government in disregard of the need for a common stand and united front. The Moslem League had for a limited period only confined its aims and objects to the propagation of loyalty to the British Raj amongst Moslems and protection of their special interests regarding appointments to the public services and certain educational facilities; but it soon came under the influence of young Moslems with nationalistic outlook and began to talk of self-government for India. The Balkan war in 1912 and Great Britain’s indifference to the interests of Turkey were interpreted by the young nationalist Moslems as a clever move to get rid of the sick man of Europe. This roused the indignation of Indian Moslems, and the young Moslem student community all over the country including that of Aligarh was rudely disturbed. They publicly showed their sympathy with Turkey and collected funds to help her. A medical mission was sent to Constantinople under Dr. M. A. Ansari. The Ulemas who had already begun to take interest in the Indian Moslem political movement came forward to help the propagation of pan-Islamism and gave a great impetus to the pro-Turkish movement in the interest of the Khalifa, the religious head of the entire Islamic world. The Moslem Press in India, under the influence and leadership of men like Maulana Mohammad Ali, the editor of the Comrade, and his brother Maulana Shaukat Ali, the editor of the Urdu newspaper Hamdard, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the editor of Al Hilal, preached co-operation of the followers of Islam with Turkey in her distress and incidentally criticised the attitude of the British towards the Moslems both in India and abroad. “These mighty currents swept through the League and refreshed waters.”

In 1914 came the great European War. Some of the young Moslems who had pro-Turkish leanings soon developed and displayed a pro-German attitude. “They dreamt of independence and planned their daring schemes.” They
sent their emissaries to Kabul to meet and discuss their plan with the German and Turkish ambassadors and also to enlist the support of the Amir of Afghanistan against the British. Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hasan of Deoband, who planned the conspiracy, "dreamt of an independent Republic of India with Raja Mahendra Pratap as its first President." The Maulana and his colleagues were arrested and interned, and so were Maulana Mohammad Ali, Saukat Ali, Azad, and Hasrat Mohani. "The Indian Mussalmans were awakened from their fifty year old slumber." The League could not escape the influence of this awakening. Its outlook became more national, and it gradually came under the influence and control of leaders like Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. Mazarul Haque, Raja Saheb of Mahamudabad and others who were intimately associated with the Congress movement. H. H. Aga Khan severed his connection with the League at this stage. In 1913 the object of the League was amended to the "attainment, under the aegis of the British Crown, of self-government suited to India." The League also began to show inclination for greater co-operation with other communities in India, abandoning its previous exclusive attitude. The following resolution was adopted at its Lucknow session held in 1913:

"That the all-India Moslem League places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities and hopes that the leaders of both sides will periodically meet together to find a modus operandi for joint and concerted action on all questions of public good."

In 1913 Sir Ibrahim Rahimatoola in his presidential address to the League said: "Every one must recognise that no form of self-government is possible in India unless the two principal communities the Hindus and the

1 "The Communal Triangle in India" by Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, p. 33.
Muslims, are closely and conscientiously united. What can be a nobler aim, a loftier goal than to endeavour to secure India united? Once we become sincerely and genuinely united, there is no force in the world which can keep us from our heritage. Without such union the Indian will have to wait indefinitely for the realisation of their fondest hope. Instead of having differences and dissensions amongst ourselves at the present time on matters of remote realisation, I would earnestly appeal to all true sons of India to concentrate all their talents on the consummation of ensuring a united India; then we might well leave the future to take care of itself, full of hope and confidence."

Though the League changed its creed and supported the introduction of self-government for India under the aegis of the British Crown, it did not fall in line with the views of the Congress, viz., colonial form of self-government for India.

The subsequent history of the Moslem political movement as represented by the Moslem League from 1915 to 1918, and by the Khilafat movement between 1921 and 1926, of the attitude of the Moslem leaders regarding the Royal Commission on the Indian Constitutional Reform in 1929, and at the Round Table Conferences in London between 1930 and 1932, the revival of the League under Mr. Jinnah in 1937-38, the reaction of the formation and working of the Congress Ministries in the Hindu majority provinces leading to a demand for Pakistan, the refusal of the League to join the proposed National Government at the Centre during the war, the attitude of the Moslem League to the Cripps proposals—all these have been referred to in appropriate chapters, and their repetition here seems unnecessary to complete the historical analysis of the political awakening of Moslem India. The Congress and the League are now the two most powerful organisations representing between them practically the majority of the politically conscious.

1 "Muslim India" by Mohammad Noman, p. 131.
section of the Indian population. Independence is their motto, and in their own way these two bodies have been under their respective leaders trying to achieve the same goal through different methods. Though talking of complete independence the Indian National Congress is desirous of shaping the constitutional machinery of self-governing India on the British parliamentary model; it is also anxious to maintain the unity of India as a political unit without refusing adequate safe-guards and protection to the principal minority community, the Moslems. The Moslem League, on the other hand, though equally keen on securing freedom from foreign domination, does not want to shape the Indian Constitution entirely on the British model because that entails a majority rule which the League is not prepared to countenance maintaining the theory that the Moslems are a separate nation and not a mere community. Reluctance on the part of Moslems to live under a non-Moslem Government is not merely a political creed but is said to be an article of faith, and this was the inspiration of the Wahabi movement in India in the sixties of the last century. The old ideal has now been given a new orientation in the Pakistan movement. The League is not prepared to recognise that cultural or political unity is essential for India to attain her full stature as an independent country. The expression Pakistan in its present context has not been defined up till now, and political India has no clear notion of its implications. It is, therefore, difficult to make any forecast regarding the effect of Pakistan on India as an independent country. But unlike the Congress leaders the protagonists of the Pakistan scheme may not be obliged to confine the limits of independent India within the Indian frontiers, and there may be a natural inclination on their part to extend the boundaries of Pakistan and join up with other Moslem countries outside India.
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