

# Sovereignty Of Constituent Assembly Reiterated

## ASSURANCES GIVEN TO EVERY MINORITY

From Our Special Representative

NEW DELHI, December 11.

**T**ODAY'S proceedings of the Constituent Assembly were on a high level, befitting alike the dignity of the House and the nobility of the task on which it has embarked. The assumption of office by the Permanent Chairman, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the only item of business for the day, provided an opportunity to the Assembly to rise to its full stature, and everyone spoke with a consciousness of the greatness of the occasion and the importance of the mission.

In between felicitations to, and expressions of confidence in, the Chairman the speakers made frequent references to the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly. Dr. Rajendra Prasad, as the custodian of the powers of the Assembly, put it very well indeed when he declared that, though it was born with certain limitations which could not be ignored, no outsider could interfere with its proceedings or alter its decisions and that "it is in the power of this Assembly to demolish the limitations which were attached to it at its birth" by framing such a constitution that would guarantee freedom to everyone in the land.

Assurance were also given to every minority that its interests would be fully protected under the constitution to be framed which would be for the freedom and emancipation of the every human being in India.

Of especial political significance were the numerous allusions to the absence of the League and the expressions of hope that it would soon participate in this great task. That the Constituent Assembly means to pursue its task with determination, justice and fair play to all was evident from the Chairman's remark that "our responsibility is all the greater owing to the absence of our brothers of the Muslim League".

### PRESIDENTIAL CHOICE

A series of speeches from representatives of all communities on the worthiness of the presidential choice followed Dr. Prasad's installation. The majority of them were non-Congressmen.

Sir S. Radhakrishnan led the chorus of encomiastic tributes to Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Sir Sarvapalli rose to the full heights of his philosophic eminence when he drew a pen picture of certain basic aspects of Indian culture—comprehension and charity, live and let live and invincibility of gentleness. Of these characteristic qualities of India, he said, Dr. Rajendra Prasad was an embodiment.

Sir N. Gopalaswami Iyengar made a weighty political speech intended to establish the sovereignty of the Constituent Assembly in spite of what His Majesty's Government may have said. Representatives of Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians, Sikhs, Scheduled Castes (not Dr. Ambedkar, who remained silent throughout), zemindars, aborigines and communists, all alike joined in the praise of the Chairman as embodying the spirit of India.

### PLEA TO MR. JINNAH

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu described Dr. Prasad as "the spiritual descendant of Buddha", "the torch bearer of love and liberty" and "the symbol to India's destiny." She struck the right note when she voiced the hope that "my old friend Mahomed Ali Jinnah" would be with them and that Dr. Ambedkar would forget his bitterness and co-operate in building up the constitution of a free India in which no one, prince or peasant, will have a grievance.

Addressing the gathering first in Hindustani and then in English, the permanent Chairman referred to the difficult circumstances in which the Constituent Assembly had come into being, but added that that was so in the case of most countries. He was sure that with honesty of purpose, determination and resolve to do justice to one and all they would succeed in framing a model constitution ensuring to all freedom in all respects and guaranteeing to everyone opportunity to rise to his highest. He assured the gathering that as the work of the Assembly proceeds it would gather strength and momentum sufficient to break down all obstacles. "Nothing is more valuable than freedom to be free", he concluded.