

Viceroy's Council and that one should be a Mahomedan. Well, as I told them, and as I now tell your Lordships, I see no chance whatever of meeting their views in that way to any extent at all.

To go back to the point of the registers, some may be shocked at the idea of a religious register at all, of a register framed on the principle of religious belief. We may wish, we do wish—certainly I do—that it were otherwise. We hope that time, with careful and impartial statesmanship, will make things otherwise. Only let us not forget that the difference between Mahomedanism and Hinduism is not a mere difference of articles of religious faith. It is a difference in life, in tradition, in history, in all the social things as well as articles of belief that constitute a community. Do not let us forget what makes it interesting and even exciting. Do not let us forget that, in talking of Hindus and Mahomedans, we are dealing with and brought face to face with vast historic issues, dealing with some of the very mightiest forces that through all the centuries and ages have moulded the fortunes of great States and the destinies of countless millions of mankind. Thoughts of that kind are what give to Indian politics and to Indian work extraordinary fascination, and at the same time impose the weight of no ordinary burden. [Emphases added]

On 29 March 1909, Maneckjee Byramjee Dadabhoy pointed out the serious concerns that would arise with the creation of communal electorates in a multi-religious society such as Bharat in the proceedings of the Governor General's Imperial Legislative Council:⁹⁷

The introduction of the principle of class representation on the basis of the fancied importance of Mahomedans has at once taken away the chief merit of the Scheme, and given umbrage to the great non-Moslem communities of India. My Lord, I am not a Hindu; I am under no personal obligations to the Hindu; I do not hold his brief; I bear no animosity to the Mahomedan. My remarks are grounded only upon my conceptions of the political necessities of the situation. *And I shall be wanting in duty if I do not say that I fail to see the justice and the wisdom of Lord Morley's concessions to Mahomedan demands. Religion is widely apart from politics, and once the religious element is eliminated from the discussion, I do not understand how Hindu interests are opposed to Mahomedan interests in politics. I shall be glad to know what these so-called Mahomedan interests are. I cannot conceive them. It is a mistake to suppose that the bulk of the Indian Mahomedans are separated from their Hindu congeners by any sharp cleavage of race and tradition. In their present backward state they cannot have better representatives than Hindus. Where there are deserving Mahomedans they have as good a chance as Hindus. In Municipalities, Local Boards, District Boards and the Legislative Councils, Hindus and Mahomedans have so far worked hand in hand and shoulder to shoulder in cordial co-operation; there has never been any complaint on the score of ineffective representation, and never any demand for separate election. Even*