Copies of this paper may be obtained from the Rev. W. Paton, acting Secretary of the National Missionary Council, 5 Russell Street, CALCUTTA.
There were many who had looked forward to the eighth meeting of the National Missionary Council with eager hope, and I for one can say that my hopes have not been belied. In especial there were two convictions which had been borne in upon us.

In the first place we felt that as the result of the past nine years of work a strong feeling of mutual trust and understanding had been created which made co-operation in various branches of Christian work possible, but if the visions which we had seen were to take shape as concrete realities more work and expert knowledge were necessary than under present circumstances were available. The scheme which is outlined by Mr. Oldham will show how we hope to meet this need, and I think it is only necessary to point to the splendid results which his work first as Secretary of the Conference of British Missionary Societies and later as Secretary of the International Missionary Council has achieved, to convince all Missionaries and Christian leaders that if we can find men of his type—of wide sympathies, clear thought, and deep spirituality—we may look for like results in our own narrower field.

In the second place we felt that the time had come when Councils originally started with a membership drawn from the various missionary societies working in the country, should reconsider their constitutions in the light of changed conditions. The number of representatives of the Indian Church included in them had been for one reason or another comparatively small, and the western viewpoint had inevitably been that which largely prevailed. This was obviously undesirable, and we looked for some means by which Indian opinion might find due expression and exercise its rightful influence in determining mission policies. Those who read this pamphlet will be able to judge how far the suggested alterations in the constitution of Provincial and National Councils will achieve this end and will recognise that the change in title is the necessary corollary to the enlarged constituency which it is hoped they may effectively serve.

What was done at Poona was the result, I believe, more of prayer than of argument, and in this endeavour to communicate to all Christian workers the results of our Conference I would ask them to read Mr. Oldham’s note in that spirit of prayer which seeks above all things to learn God’s will and to find grace to cooperate in its fulfilment.

Foss Calcutta.

(President of the National Missionary Council).

18th January 1922.
EXPLANATORY STATEMENT.

By J. H. Oldham.

The National Missionary Council at its meeting in Poona took decisions of such far-reaching character and of such importance to the Christian movement throughout India that it was judged desirable to issue at once a statement which would explain to those who were not present at the meeting at Poona the nature of these decisions and the reasons for them. The action taken, if it is to serve the cause of Christ in India, must have the intelligent support of the Indian Church and of the missionary body throughout India, as I believe it will have when it is fully understood. A printed statement is a poor substitute for the frank interchange of view and united consideration and prayer, which were the privilege of those who were at the meeting of the National Missionary Council. But in our prayers at Poona we definitely asked that we might be enabled to explain to those who were not there the action which the Council took, and believing that our prayer was not offered in vain I shall do my best to discharge the task laid upon me.

The first thing that many who were present would I believe wish to say is that the outstanding fact about the meeting at Poona was the sense that we were under the hand of God. From the first we were conscious of the immense difficulties and perplexities of the questions which would engage our attention, and of our entire dependence upon God's help and guidance if our deliberations were to lead to any worthy result. The thing we were seeking was not new organisation, but new vision, new inspiration and new life, and we knew that there was only one source from which these great gifts could come. A meeting was held on Sunday afternoon which was devoted entirely to prayer, and the heart of the prayers which we then offered was that if any new thing was born at Poona it might be born not of the will of man, but of God. There were at the beginning most divergent views in the Council, and when, after days of deliberation and prayer, conclusions were reached which were unanimous, everyone present voting in their favour, we could not doubt that we had been led to a common mind by the Holy Spirit.

The conclusions were reached not only after prayer, but after the fullest deliberation and much hard thinking. The whole of the Wednesday on which the Council met and the following Thursday morning were given to the presentation and discussion of the subjects dealt with in this statement. The matter was then referred to a special committee, which met on Thursday, after the business of the Council had finished, and on Friday and Saturday afternoons, the business of the Council being suspended on these days to allow the special committee to meet. The report of the special committee was considered at the morning session.
on Saturday, and again at the morning session on Monday. It will thus be seen that the subject received the fullest possible consideration, and the decision, when it was reached, was, as has already been said, unanimous.

It may perhaps be well to give the names of the members of the special committee, to show how wide a range of experience, and what widely different points of view, were represented on it.

The Right Rev. the Bishop in Tinnevelly, Chairman.
Rev. H. Anderson, Secretary of the English Baptist Mission in India.
Right Rev. the Bishop of Bombay.
Rev. J. R. Chitamber, President of Reid College, Lucknow.
Rev. J. E. Cummings, American Baptist Mission, Burma.
Miss Maya Das, Young Women's Christian Association.
Rev. J. C. R. Ewing, Secretary of the American Presbyterian Missions in India.
Bishop F. B. Fisher, Methodist Episcopal Church.
Miss E. A. Gordon, United Free Church of Scotland Mission, Poona.
Rev. G. Howells Ph. D. Principal of Serampore College.
Rev. J. H. Maclean, United Free Church of Scotland Mission Conjeeveram.
Rev. N. Macnicol D. Litt. United Free Church of Scotland Mission, Poona.
Rev. Yohan Masih, Canadian Presbyterian Mission, Indore.
The Most Reverend the Metropolitan.
Rai Bahadur A. C. Mukerji, Benares.
Professor S. C. Mukerji, Serampore College.
Rev. B. A. Nag, Baptist Mission, Calcutta.
K. T. Paul Esq., Young Men's Christian Association.
P. O. Philip, National Missionary Society.
Bishop J. W. Robinson, Methodist Episcopal Church.
Rev. A. E. Armstrong, Secretary of the Foreign Missions Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Toronto.
J. H. Oldham, Secretary of the International Missionary Council.
James M. Speers, Vice-President of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America and Treasurer of the International Missionary Council.

It is doubtful, however, whether even after careful deliberation the Council would have felt justified in taking the action it did, if the subjects before it had not already been fully considered by a majority of the Representative Councils of Missions. In the preceding two months they had been fully debated by the Representative Councils in Bombay, Madras, Bengal and Assam, Bihar and Orissa, and Mid-India, and by the Telugu Missions Conference. At all of these meetings a whole day, and in some instances two days, had been given to the consideration, of this subject, and all had passed unanimous resolutions, heartily welcoming any action the National Missionary Council might see its way to take in regard to the proposals before it. Since all the Provincial Councils which had had the opportunity of considering the matter, had notwithstanding the widely differing conditions
in the different provinces, reached after deliberation a common conclusion, it seemed reasonable to presume that the Provincial Councils which had not yet had that opportunity, and the still wider body of missionary workers who were not members of Provincial Councils, would, if the same facts were before them, reach a similar conclusion.

**NATURE OF THE PROPOSALS.**

(a) The proposals which came before the provincial Representative Councils of Missions and the National Missionary Council arose in the first instance out of the report of the Commission on Village Education. The first recommendation of that Commission was that the National Missionary Council should appoint a group of educational advisors to make available to missionary workers throughout India the best knowledge, experience and counsel that can be had in regard to the problems of rural education. The Commission put this first among their recommendations because they entertained little hope of sufficiently rapid progress being made in the carrying out of their other recommendations, such as the establishment of vocational middle schools, the development of the village school as a community centre, and the training of teachers, unless it was the main business of somebody to see that such progress was made.

In discussing this question of educational advisors during the past two months at the meetings of the Provincial Councils of Missions, and with individual missionary workers throughout India, I have found that where there is difference of view, it is due very largely to divergent conceptions of what these advisors will do. There is a natural and intelligible distrust of the expert, and people quite rightly resent the idea of anyone coming from outside to tell them how to do their own job. If that were what were intended the proposal would be accepted by no one. What is proposed is something entirely different. It is to bring help to men and women who are dealing with one of the most difficult problems in the world. They are at present without aids which ought to be at their command. They are largely isolated, with little leisure to read widely or to keep in touch with educational developments outside their own work. Their work would be greatly enriched if they could turn to someone who, freed from other duties, was able to keep abreast of the best educational literature, and to keep in touch with leading educators in Europe and America, and with educational experiments that are being made in different parts of India. The task of the advisors will be not to impose a policy of their own, which would be fatal to their usefulness, but to help missionary workers in the villages to solve their own problems by supplying an element which is at present lacking, namely a knowledge of what others engaged in similar work are doing and thinking both in India and other lands. I have during the past two months talked with a large number of workers in villages in different parts of India, and many of them, including some whose names are widely known for the quality
and thoroughness of their work in the villages, have told me
that what I have attempted to describe is the thing that more
than anything else they want. If the National Missionary
Council had failed to take the action which it did a number of
the best missionary workers in India would have been greatly
disappointed and disheartened.

(b) In the course of the discussions at the provincial
councils however, and in particular at the meeting of
the National Missionary Council, a second need emerged which,
in the minds of some at least, seemed to be even larger and more
pressing than that of advice in the problems of rural education.
This is the need of some more effective means of stimulating
thinking on the many difficult and urgent missionary problems in
India at the present time, and of enabling the Christian forces
to arrive at a common mind. It may be said that this is precisely
what the Provincial and National Missionary Councils are intend-
ed to do. But experience has shown that there are few ways in
which valuable time and money may more easily be spent to no
purpose than in what passes under the name of missionary co-
operation. It is an unjustifiable waste of the time of busy people
to bring them together to discuss business which has not been
prepared in advance. It is not to be expected that a considerable
company of people, approaching a subject from very diverse
standpoints, should within an hour or two, or even in a day's dis-
cussion, arrive at a common mind unless the facts relevant to the
discussion have been collected in advance, and the questions to
be considered carefully formulated. It is equally a waste of time
to engage in such discussions, if no one is available with sufficient
leisure to see that the conclusions reached do not remain a dead
letter, but lead to practical results.

There was a genuine body of conviction in the Provincial
Councils and in the National Missionary Council that their wo-
k would be made much more effective and fruitful if men were
available who could give their whole time to helping these bodies
to deal thoroughly with the matters which claim their attention.

Having studied the work of the Provincial and National Mis-
sionary councils in the light of our experience of international
missionary co-operation at the home base, I am personally
convinced that this view is sound. The experience of ten years
has convinced the home boards that there are certain questions
of vital importance to missionary work which, because they are
of wider concern than that of any individual society, can only
be dealt with in common consultation. Everyone who has had
experience of co-operation at the home base would I think agree
that; it would be impossible, just because of the importance,
complexity and difficulty of these questions, to deal with them
satisfactorily unless some persons were specially set apart to
prepare the business for joint consideration by representatives of
the different boards, and to give effect to the conclusions arrived
at by these united bodies.
It cannot be made too clear that in proposing the appointment of special officers it is not intended that those so appointed should think out policies and bring them to the churches and missions for their acceptance. What is contemplated is something quite different. The truth which is sought cannot be found by a few minds working in isolation, but only through the contribution of many minds, each contributing its individual and distinctive experience. But the great gain of this common view, which, in the nature of things is far richer than any purely individual view, will not come by chance. It will be won only if high value is set upon it, and it is made someone's main business to stimulate and co-ordinate thought, and to keep those who are thinking in touch with one another.

Readers will miss altogether what was in the mind of the Council if they think of the plan as an attempt to create new organization. An increase of machinery is perhaps the last thing that India needs, and it would have had no interest for the Council. It was not in this direction that their thoughts turned. They recognised that, as the resolution states, the primary and fundamental object of missionary work is the evangelization of India and the establishment of the kingdom of God. They realized, further, that in the accomplishment of this aim the Christian forces are greatly weakened by their isolation and fragmentariness. St. Paul would have hoped and expected little from the work of isolated individuals, or from that isolated missions. An essential element in his teaching was the great truth of the body of Christ, and he was constantly impressing on those to whom his epistles were addressed that they were members of one another and dependent on one another. The insight, apprehension and experience of each of us is confined within narrow limits, and it is only in fellowship with others that our outlook is enlarged and our minds enriched, and that we can grow into the fulness of the stature of Christ. What the National Missionary Council sought was an increase in this fellowship in thought and study, which cannot fail to bring about a great enrichment of the life and work of the Church of Christ in India. They tried to find a plan by which the Christian fellowship represented in the Provincial Councils of Missions and the National Missionary Council might be made deeper, more real and more effectual, and extended to a wider constituency.

(c) Thirdly, the Council recognized the importance of helping to form Christian public opinion and to bring it to bear on the moral and social problems of the day. Human life has within the last few generations become immeasurably more complex. Under modern conditions a large part of a man's life is expressed not as an individual in relation with other individuals but in relations in which as a member of a group he is set over against other groups. Unless these relations, as well as those which are purely individual, are brought into obedience to Christ, a large part of human life is withdrawn from his rule. But to apply the principles of Christ to the large and complex problems of
social and national life is a task of enormous difficulty, and if the attempt is made with insufficient knowledge there is a grave danger of Christian principles being degraded through identification with policies which prove on examination to be ill-considered and ill-advised. If the Christian Church therefore is to bear witness to Christ in the sphere of national as well as of private life, and to deal with moral issues which arise in this sphere, provision must be made for thorough study of the facts and for clear and strong thinking regarding the application of Christian principles to the questions at issue. Unless this task is undertaken Christian opinion must either remain silent when it ought fearlessly to speak, or else run the risk of bringing discredit on the Christian name.

(c) Fourthly, it is common ground that the demands of the present situation in India can be met only through larger cooperation of the Christian forces and better co-ordination of their work. The Council recognized that the great obstacle to progress in this direction is that there is in many instances no one with sufficient leisure to bring about the desired results. If there is to be cooperation on the scale that is needed, someone must be set apart to confer with all the bodies concerned and to work out a scheme which will really meet the requirements of each body that might participate, and to take the necessary steps to get the plan carried into effect. Without this the existing weakness through lack of co-ordination and the present dissipation of energy are likely to continue.

To meet these varied needs the National Missionary Council resolved, if the necessary funds can be provided, to appoint a group of five officers to serve the National Missionary Council and the Provincial Councils in the matters to which reference has been made.

Possible Objections.

In the course of the discussions both in Provincial Councils and at Poona it became evident that there were certain fears and difficulties in the minds of a good many people, which disappeared when the plan was fully understood. It may be well to refer to some of these here, as they may be in the minds of those who have not had the advantage of hearing the whole subject discussed.

The fear has been expressed lest what is proposed should result in the setting up of some supra-church or supra-mission authority. If this had been the effect of the formation of the Foreign Missions Conferences in America and in Great Britain, and of the International Missionary Council, the home boards would not have tolerated the existence of these bodies. As a matter of fact these organizations have at the present time in a high degree the confidence of the boards, and this is due to the fact that missionary co-operation has from the first been built up on the basis that the only bodies entitled to determine missionary
policy are the Churches and Missions. It is the intention of the National Missionary Council that the same fundamental principle should be the basis of missionary co-operation in India. The fear which has been expressed is quite natural. But one has only to look at the names of the members of the special committee given on a preceding page, to realize that those who constituted it would not have moved a step if they had thought that there was any real ground for such fear. The safeguard lies in the fact that anyone who is appointed an officer of the National Missionary Council, if he has the smallest understanding of the job that has been given to him, must realize that if he were to commit any Church or Mission to any course contrary to its deliberate will and judgment, he would at once, and justly, forfeit its confidence; and that since missionary co-operation is based upon mutual confidence, and nothing else, to destroy or weaken confidence must necessarily wreck the whole work of missionary co-operation in which he is engaged. As has already been said, the officers are not going to attempt to impose their policies on the Churches and Missions, but to assist the Churches and Missions in working out together a common policy and to help to give effect to that policy after, and not before, it expresses the real mind and desire of the Churches and Missions themselves.

It has been suggested that in committing themselves to a step of this kind, the Churches and Missions surrender something of their freedom and thereby incur a certain loss. This I believe to be quite the opposite of the truth, and with this judgment I believe that the home boards, in the light of their experience of missionary co-operation, would agree. Co-operation does not mean loss but gain. The mind of a group is much richer than the mind of any individual member of it, and when that common mind has been found it becomes the possession of each member of the group. The boards at home have found that in their fellowship with one another they have become better fitted to do their own work. So in the degree that Churches, Missions and individual missionary workers are effectually brought into relations with one another the work of each will become more fruitful.

Again, it has been urged that the advice that is helpful to others is that of men and women who are actually doing things and not that of those who have been detached from practical work. This is undoubtedly true. But it is not proposed to appoint officers who are to be in themselves the repositories of all wisdom. If they are the right men, they will know that their work is to make available for others the wisdom which is to be found among all the best and most experienced workers throughout India. What is wrong at present is that this great common fund of experience and knowledge is not being used as it ought to be. It is only in a very limited degree that there can be any really vital communication of experience through print. Those who are tied to administrative work cannot come into touch with one another, or with those whom their experience might help, with
sufficient frequency to make possible that mutual enrichment of experience which might mean so much to all. The officers will be a vital link between workers who are now isolated to their own loss and to that of the missionary body as a whole. Through the establishment of this link, it may be hoped, the Christian forces in India, whose parts are now too much separated and working in unfruitful isolation, may be more and more welded into a living body whose members mutually strengthen one another.

Some of those who hesitate about the proposals under discussion do so because they feel doubts about the value of the work of the Provincial Councils of missions and the National Missionary Council. A great deal of time seems to them to be consumed in meetings and conferences without adequate visible results. This is not the case. The Councils have accomplished a number of valuable pieces of work in addition to the far greater service of bringing people together and creating the spirit of fellowship and mutual understanding which alone makes the present move possible. But the surest way of disarming such criticism as exists is to "deliver the goods" in larger quantity and of superior quality; and this can only be done if the Councils have at their command those who have the necessary time to help them to deal effectively with matters which are the common concern of the Churches and Missions which they represent.

It may seem at first sight to many a very big step to appoint as many as five officers. But the National Missionary Council, after full deliberation, came to the conclusion that no smaller number would meet the need. To appoint only one, or even two men, to be in touch with the Churches and Missions throughout the whole of India, would mean that practically the whole of their time would be absorbed in maintaining the necessary contacts and in correspondence. The danger would be that they would simply make the wheels go round and accomplish nothing. If the large and important questions in which missionaries need help, and in which the Churches and Missions desire to act together are to be seriously taken in hand, there must be a staff adequate for the purpose. It must be remembered that the services of the officers are intended to be at the disposal of the Provincial Councils as well as of the National Missionary Council. The desire has been expressed in some quarters that Provincial Councils should have whole-time or half-time secretaries. To provide each Provincial Council with a whole-time secretary would be a much larger and more expensive undertaking than the plan proposed by the National Missionary Council. While the officers appointed by the National Missionary Council cannot fulfil all the functions of a secretary of a Provincial Council, they can help these Councils to deal effectively with many of the important questions engaging their attention, and the plan proposed places at the disposal of Provincial Councils a much larger variety of gift and experience than one could expect to find in any one single individual.
THE PROPOSED OFFICERS.

It has been clear in all discussions of the subject that everything turns on the personnel of the officers. If they lack the power to win and retain the confidence of the Indian Churches and of the missionary body whom they are to serve, or if they come short in the qualifications required for their work, the plan must fail. The special committee which was appointed at Poona realized the full responsibility resting upon it in the choice of those whom it would ask to fill these important posts, and to this question it gave earnest, prolonged and prayerful consideration.

The man to whom the thoughts of the committee first instinctively turned was Hai Bahadur A. C. Mukerji. He is the Executive Officer of the Municipal Council of Benares, a member of the National Missionary Council, and a man who enjoys the regard and affection of all who are privileged to know him. It was felt that his association with the plan would in an exceptional degree inspire that general confidence which is essential to its success. Hai Bahadur Mukerji did not see his way to set aside the claims upon him of his public duties, but in response to the request of the Council he very generously offered to place his services at the disposal of the Council during the period of his approaching furlough of two years.

The thoughts of the committee turned next to the Rev. W. Paton, who, following on a recent visit of a year's duration to India, has just come out as the student secretary of the Young Men's Christian Association. He has been for ten years the missionary secretary of the Student Christian Movement in Great Britain, and has more than anyone else been responsible for maintaining and increasing the missionary spirit in British colleges. He has won the confidence of the missionary societies in Great Britain and the members of the committee who knew him were unanimous in believing that he possesses in a remarkable degree the special gifts required for the work proposed. Even more necessary than any expert knowledge of missionary work and problems is the quality of mind which enables a man to understand and sympathize with those of very diverse points of view, and to gather up the contributions of these different minds in a view that expresses the common mind of all. Among all my friends in different countries I find it difficult to think of anyone who has this special gift in a higher degree than Mr. Paton. He already has the confidence of those who know him; I have not the least doubt that he will quickly gain that of those who have not yet come into contact with him.

The third man to whom the committee resolved to extend an invitation is Dr. S. K. Datta. All who know him are aware that he possesses outstanding qualities of both head and heart.
He has had a remarkable experience of men and affairs, as travelling secretary of the Student Volunteer Movement in Great Britain, as a representative of India on the World Student Christian Federation, as a professor in a Christian college in India, as editor of the *Young Men of India*, as head of the work of the Indian Young Men's Christian Association in France, and as a member of Lord Lytton's committee on Indian students. He has great influence over the younger generation of Indian Christians, on whom the future of the Christian movement in India must largely depend, and the committee were sure that if he were led by God to accept the office, his personality would do much to attract to the service of the Christian cause in India many of those who can most help to advance that cause.

As Dr. Datta is still in England it has not yet been possible to lay before him the invitation of the Council and to know whether he is willing to accept it.

Four needs were set forth above, which might in part at least be met by the appointment of officers by the National Missionary Council. In deciding on the three names which have been mentioned the committee realized that while their gifts and experience would enable them to help in meeting three of these needs, adequate provision had not yet been made for supplying the first need that was mentioned, namely that of specialized knowledge in regard to the problems of village education. It was further the unanimous view that at least one member of the group should be a woman. The Council accordingly resolved that the two remaining places should be filled by one man and one woman having special experience and qualifications for dealing with the problems of village education. In view of the great importance of the appointments the committee felt that before reaching a decision further inquiry was desirable. The Council accordingly intrusted to its Executive Committee the responsibility of making the two additional appointments.

In considering the names of members of the group it should be borne in mind that they are intended to work not as individuals, but as a team. No single individual can be expected to combine in himself all the qualities required for this work. The officers have been chosen because it is believed they will supplement one another, and so make their contribution to the cause of Christ in India not as isolated individuals but as group.

It may be repeated here, since the matter is so important, that the officers will be under the direction of the National Missionary Council, and in matters in which their help is desired, of that of the Provincial Councils; and that they will do nothing which will in any way compromise or commit any Provincial Council or any Church or Mission without first being assured that such action is desired by the bodies concerned.
The proposals have of course been adopted subject to the provision of the necessary funds. If these are not forthcoming it will be impossible to proceed. From what source are funds likely to be obtained?

It would seem to be desirable, and it is, I know, the wish of some of my Indian friends who have considered the matter, that if it should be proved that the plan is really serving in important ways the Christian cause in India, part, and an increasing part, of the burden should be borne by Indian Christians. But in view of existing claims upon the Indian Church it is clearly impossible immediately to obtain from this source any substantial support for a scheme which is still in the air, and which, until it is seen in operation, is difficult to make intelligible to a large and widely scattered constituency.

The natural course would be to ask the home boards in all countries which are carrying on work in India to make themselves jointly responsible for the budget. The only objection to this course is a practical one. I have little doubt that the considerations which have convinced the Provincial Councils who have had the matter before them and the National Missionary Council, that the scheme ought to be tried, would if they were properly presented, prove equally convincing to the home boards. But experience has shown that it takes the better part of two days of discussion and explanation to get the scheme so fully understood as to make people willing to give it their practical support. If someone could visit in turn each of the home boards to put the plan in all its bearings before them, and if each of them were willing to devote an entire day to the consideration of the subject, I should expect them readily to contribute their quota. But this course is impracticable, and it is hardly to be expected that simply on the submission of a written statement and without a full understanding of all that is involved, which can come only through prolonged deliberation, boards would vote the necessary funds.

A way one of the difficulty appears to have been provided by God, whose hand, as it seems to many of us, can be traced in the whole matter. A year ago I met in conference representatives of the mission boards in Canada. I found that their thoughts were turning with sympathy towards India, and that they were considering whether there was any further help which Christian people in Canada might render to this country. I drew their attention to the issues raised by the report of the Commission on Village Education, and to the critical nature of the whole situation in India, and inquired whether if the National Missionary Council at its next meeting, at which I hoped to be present, were to see its way to any concerted move, Canada would be willing to help to make this possible. The suggestion was sympathetically received. I was asked to revisit Toronto, which I was
able to do in March, and again in September. The subject was considered afresh at a conference of secretaries and members of Canadian boards last September. Those who were present, while they could not commit their Churches and boards, nor even for themselves form any judgment regarding a scheme which was not yet before them, expressed their belief that if any specific recommendations embodying the special needs which exist in India at the present time, and setting forth the manner in which help could best be rendered, were to come from representative missionary bodies in India and from representative Indian Christians, these would receive most careful and sympathetic attention from similar bodies in Canada. I was given permission to inform the National Missionary Council of this fact. The Council having received the report with warm appreciation resolved to lay the whole matter before the Canadian boards and ask whether they would be willing, as a National Christian contribution to India, to give substantial help in making the experiment possible. The Canadian boards are not of course committed in any way. The conference in Toronto did nothing more than express a willingness to be approached in regard to a matter of this kind. So far as can be seen there is no other means of providing funds that is immediately practicable. If Christian people in Canada are able to make the experiment possible by providing the necessary funds for a period of three or five years, this will allow time to consider the relation of the Indian Church to the plan. And if, after they have had time for consideration, the mission boards in other countries wish to be allowed to have a share in it Canada would no doubt welcome their co-operation. In the meantime it is of course intended that the general expenses of the National Missionary Council should continue to be met as they are at present, partly by grants from Provincial Councils and partly by grants from the Foreign Mission Conferences of North America and Great Britain.

Constitutional Changes.

I have not yet referred to one of the most important decisions taken at the Poona meetings. A good many members of the Council would have found great difficulty in giving their assent to these proposals if the constitution of the Council were to remain as it is at present. Both Provincial Councils and the National Missionary Council are in the main representative of the mission organizations in India of the foreign mission boards carrying on work in this country. They are not in any adequate degree as yet representative of the Indian Church, though a change in this direction has been made in some of the Provincial Councils. It became the unanimous view of the Council that the only condition on which a forward move could be wisely made was that both the Provincial Councils and the National Missionary Council should become more thoroughly representative of the Indian Church.
The International Missionary Council representing the mission boards of North America, Great Britain, the Continent of Europe, South Africa and Australia, as well as the interdenominational Missionary organizations in the larger mission fields, at its recent meeting at Lake Mohonk, devoted a large part of its time to the consideration of the vitally important question of the relations between the indigenous churches in Asia and Africa and the foreign mission organizations carrying on work in these countries. After two days’ deliberation the Council prepared an important minute in which it was stated that “it has been brought home to the Council in an extended discussion that notwithstanding all the efforts that have been made to carry “out this aim, the Christian movement in a large part of the mission field, and in particular in India and China, labours under “a serious disadvantage on account of the foreign character “which it bears in the eyes of the people.” The National Missionary Council, considering the same subject from its own point of view at its meeting at Poona, was convinced that the Christian cause in India, as in all other countries, can hope to succeed only in the degree that it expresses the mind, genius and way of doing things which are native to the people of the country.

The Council had not power to adopt a new constitution. For this two months’ previous notice would have been necessary. Constitutional change must wait till next year. The Council has however suggested to the Provincial Councils that they should take the necessary steps to become representative of Indian Churches as well as Missions, and to insure that not less than half their membership should be Indian; and has approved of a draft constitution of the National Missionary Council which provides that at least half of its own membership shall be Indian.

It should be made clear that in taking this action the Council is not pronouncing in any way on the relations between Churches and Missions. That is an important question, but it is one which each Christian body has to settle for itself. In this as in every other matter the Council holds by the fundamental principle that the only bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the Churches and Missions.

The National Missionary Council and the Provincial Councils are purely consultative bodies. What the Council is seeking is, as has already been said, through common consultation and with the help of men and women specially set apart to make this possible, new vision, clearer insight and fresh inspiration for the whole Christian movement in India. It is natural and right that in India these things should come chiefly through Indian minds and Indian leadership; while we hold fast at the same time to the ideal of that wider and richer fellowship transcending the limitations of nation and race which Christ meant to be realized in the new and wonderful creation of His Church.
ALL-INDIA CHRISTIAN CONFERENCE.

The Council was of opinion that the questions affecting the advancement of Christ's kingdom in India at the present time are so many and pressing, and the importance of bringing before a wider constituency the plans which may emerge in connexion with the new proposals is so great, that it is desirable to hold at a not distant date an All-India Conference of Indian Christians and of missionaries. The last Missionary Conference in India was held more than twenty years ago. A great Christian Conference is to take place this year in China. It will not be like preceding gatherings, a Conference mainly of Missionaries, but Chinese will be present in numbers at least equal to foreign missionaries. It is believed that through a similar gathering in India, held within the next two or three years, much light might come on the way in which the Church of Christ may make its largest contribution under present conditions to the well-being and Christian good of the people of India.
The National Missionary Council at its meeting at Poona had before it proposals arising in the first instance out of the report on Village Education, which had already been fully considered by the provincial representative Councils in Bombay, Madras, Bengal and Assam, Bihar and Orissa, and Mid-India; and by the Telugu Missions Conference. All the Provincial Councils which had the opportunity of considering the matter had passed unanimous resolutions expressing a desire that the best knowledge, experience and counsel should be made available for those engaged in educational work in India, more particularly in the field of rural education. There seemed to the Council to be at the present time an equally urgent need in India of providing some more effective means of evoking, co-ordinating and expressing thought on difficult and pressing missionary problems, and it was deeply impressed by the evidence submitted to it of the value of the work done and the results achieved in this matter in recent years at the home base by the International Missionary Council, and the Foreign Missions Conferences in North America and Great Britain, and the appreciation by the home boards of the work of these bodies.

The Council having devoted the greater part of its time to the careful, deliberate and prayerful consideration of the whole subject, resolves, provided the necessary resources are available, to appoint a group of five officers to serve the National Missionary Council and the Provincial Councils in the matters referred to in the preceding paragraph.

The Council resolves to approach the National Council of the Young Men’s Christian Association to ask them to release Dr. S. K. Datta and the Rev. W. Paton to serve as two of these officers. The Council realizes the great sacrifice that is demanded from the Young Men’s Christian Association if Dr. S. K. Datta and Mr. W. Paton are set free for this work, but in the interest of the Christian movement in India as a whole they venture to ask the National Council of Young Men’s Christian Associations to make the contribution of those who through their special experience of interdenominational and international work in the Young Men’s Christian Association are peculiarly fitted for the service they are desired to render.

The Council gratefully avails itself of the willingness of Rai Bahadur A. C. Mukerji, in response to the invitation of the Council, to place his services at the disposal of the Council during the period of his approaching furlough, to help in starting the experiment, and cordially invites him to serve as one of the officers for the period named.
The Council instructs the Executive Committee, after due enquiry, to make two further appointments, one man and one woman, having special experience and qualifications for giving help in village education, and to take all other necessary steps to give effect to the resolution of the Council.

The Council received from Mr. Oldham a report of a conference of secretaries and members of Canadian mission boards held in Toronto, at which those present expressed their belief that if any specific recommendations embodying the special needs which exist at the present time, and setting forth the manner in which help could best be rendered, came from the representative missionary bodies in India and from representative Indian Christians, the same would receive most careful and sympathetic consideration by similar bodies in Canada. The Council expresses its warm appreciation of the sympathetic attitude of the Canadian Mission boards, and asks Mr. Oldham to transmit this resolution to the mission boards in Canada, with a view to ascertaining whether Canada would be willing, as a national Christian contribution to India at the present time, to give substantial financial help for a period of three or five years, with a view to making the desired experiment possible.

The Council remits to the Executive Committee the preparation of a budget and the completion of arrangements in accordance with the preceding resolution, and entrusts Mr. Oldham with the responsibility of laying the whole matter before the home boards in Great Britain, the United States, Canada, Australia and the Continent of Europe, and of carrying through the arrangement under the direction of the Executive Committee.

The Council has prepared a new draft constitution in which it has laid down that "the only bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the Churches and Missions," and the Council desires to make clear that in taking the action set forth in the preceding paragraph it is its intention that this principle should be the basis of all its work, and of that of its officers. The confidence of the home boards in the work of the Foreign Missions Conference of North America, the Conference of Missionary Societies in Great Britain, and the International Missionary Council is the result of loyal adherence to this principle and of the fact that the officers of these bodies have not acted ahead of the wishes of the boards, but only in those matters in regard to which there is evidence that the boards themselves desire to take common action. It is the intention of the National Missionary Council that similar regard should be paid in India to the authority and complete autonomy of the Churches and Missions in India, and that they shall not at any time be committed, without their full and deliberate consent, by the National Missionary Council or its officers to any course which may be contrary to their wishes.
In taking the action set forth in this resolution the Council has had continually in view that the primary, fundamental purpose of Missions in India is the evangelization of India and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. The action has been taken in the belief that it will conduce to the furtherance of this fundamental aim by helping towards the solution of the many difficult problems involved in its realization, and by leading to the more effective co-operation of the Christian forces in India in the accomplishment of their central purpose.

With a view to explaining more fully to the Indian Church and the missionary body in India what is proposed, the Council instructs its Executive to prepare a pamphlet for wide circulation among missionary workers in India. The Council further refers to the Executive to consider whether, with a view to obtaining the widest expression of missionary opinion on the problems facing the Christian Church in India at the present time, including the matters dealt with in this resolution, it is desirable to arrange for the holding at a not distant date of an All-India Christian Conference of Indian Christians and Missionaries.

RESOLUTIONS ON CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

1. The National Missionary Council recommends to the Provincial Representative Councils of Missions

(a) That the name be changed to the Christian Council in (name of Province).

(b) That some such provision as the following be inserted in the Constitution:

The Council is established on the basis that the only bodies entitled to determine missionary policy are the Churches and Missions. The functions of the Council are therefore consultative, and it will take action only when it is assured that such action is in accordance with the wishes of the bodies represented in the Council. Where there is divergence of view the Council, if it takes action at all, will do so only on behalf of, and in the name of, those bodies which desire such action to be taken. In no circumstances will the Council commit the Churches or the Missions to any attitude or course of action without their consent.

(c) That immediate steps be taken, where this has not already been done, to make the Council representative of Churches as well as of Missions.
It is suggested that each Council should appoint a small sub-committee to prepare a scheme assigning to each Christian community and the related Mission or Missions representation on the Council corresponding roughly to its strength and influence as judged by (a) the number of communicants or members in full standing (b) the number of Foreign Missionaries and (c) the number and character of its educational institutions. In cases where the Mission organization is distinct from the Church the number of representatives would be divided between the Church and the Mission respectively. It is desirable that the provisions of the scheme should ensure that the number of Indian representatives on the Council should be at least equal to the number of Foreign Missionaries. It is also desirable that the number of women on the Council should be greater than it has been in the past. It is assumed that provision will be made, as at present, for adding a certain number of members by co-option. It is further suggested that the travelling expenses of all their members should be paid by the Provincial Councils, and that the funds needed should be raised by an equitable assessment on the various bodies sending representatives.

(d) That with a view to the development of Missionary co-operation on similar lines throughout India Provincial Councils be requested, before they finally adopt their constitutions, to submit the draft for comment to the National Missionary Council.

2. The Council approves of the following outline constitution of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon, and submits it to the Provincial Councils for their comment, with a view to its adoption by the National Missionary Council at its next meeting.

I. Name.—The Council shall be called the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon.

II. Basis.—The Council is established on the basis that the only bodies entitled to determine Missionary policy are the Churches and Missions.

It is recognised that the successful working of the Council is entirely dependent on the gift from God of the spirit of fellowship, mutual understanding and desire to co-operate.

III. Objects.—The objects of the Council shall be:—

(a) To co-operate with the Provincial Councils in the carrying out of their objects.

(b) To be in communication with the International Missionary Council regarding such matters as require consideration or action from the point of view of the Indian Mission field as a whole.
(e) To take into consideration such other questions affecting the entire Missionary field as may seem to be desirable.

1. To stimulate thinking and investigation on Missionary questions, to enlist in the solution of those questions the best knowledge and experience to be found in India and other countries and to make the results available for all Churches and Missions in India.

2. To help to coordinate the activities of the Provincial Councils and to assist them to cooperate with each other where such cooperation is desirable.

3. Through common consultation to help to form Christian public opinion and bring it to bear on the moral and social problems of the day.

4. To be in communication with the International Missionary Council regarding such matters as call for consideration or action from the point of view of the Indian Mission field as a whole.

5. To make provision for the convening of an All-India Christian Conference when such is in the opinion of the Council desirable.

IV. Membership.—The Council shall be constituted as follows:

1. Four members shall be appointed by each Provincial Christian Council, not less than two of whom shall be Indians. Of the four representatives first appointed, two shall be appointed to hold office for two years and two for a period of four years. All subsequent appointments shall be for four years.

2. The National Council shall have power to co-opt additional members the number of whom shall not exceed one half of the elected representatives. Of these not less than half shall be Indians. Of those first appointed half shall hold office for two years and half for four years, all subsequent appointments to be for a period of four years.

V. Officers.—The National Council shall have power to appoint officers to carry out the functions assigned to it. The Council shall determine the terms and periods of their appointment.
VI. **Executive.**—The Council shall appoint at each regular meeting an Executive Committee of twelve members in addition to such officers as the Council shall appoint as members of the Executive to act for it in intervals between its meetings, with the right to fill vacancies in its own membership.

VII. **Meeting.**—The National Council shall ordinarily meet every second year, but a special meeting of the Council may be called, or the regular meeting postponed, if the Executive, after consulting the Provincial Councils, is satisfied that this is desirable.

VIII. **Committees.**—If questions arise which call for consideration in relation to India as a whole the Council or its Executive may from time to time appoint committees to deal with such matters, such committees to carry out such duties as may be assigned to them until the next meeting of the National Council.

IX. **Amendments.**—The Constitution may be amended by the Council at its annual meeting, provided (1) that notice of the proposed amendments be given in writing to the Secretaries not less than two months before the date fixed for the Annual Meeting, and submitted by them to all the members not less than one month before the same date; and (2) that not fewer than two thirds of those present support the amendment.

3. The Council remits to the Executive to consider the question whether it is desirable that certain provinces, in view of the greater progress and extent in them of the Christian movement, should be allotted a number of representatives greater than four.

4. The Council desires to draw the attention of Provincial Councils to the importance of the inclusion of women among the representatives elected to the National Missionary Council.