INDIA'S STRUGGLE
FOR
SWARAJ

WITH A FOREWORD

BY

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India's Struggle for Swaraj

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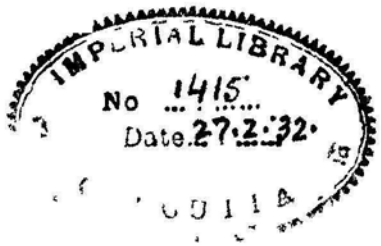

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1930.

AT THE FEET OF THE MOTHER

Bande Mataram

(HAIL, MOTHERLAND)

FOREWORD.

I have known Mr. R. G. Pradhan, the author of this book, intimately, for several years, ever since a happy coincidence brought us together at the Provincial Liberal Conference held in Bombay in 1922. He moved a resolution appealing to the people of India to elevate the condition of the depressed classes, and his speech impressed me so much that I sought his acquaintance; and since then, I have known him closely as a publicist, and watched his career with keen interest and sympathy. He has been an elected member of the Bombay Legislative Council since 1923, and distinguished himself there by his eloquence, balanced judgment, close study of public questions and devotion to public interests. He is an assiduous and careful student of Indian affairs, and of Constitutional Law, history, movements and questions. In this book, he has traced the course of the Indian movement for responsible Government and Dominion status, from its beginning to the recent Viceregal pronouncement declaring that Dominion status is the political and constitutional goal of India. The reader will find ample evidence of his balanced, critical judgment in its pages. His estimate of the various reforms introduced by Parliament from time to time is marked by fairness and much critical acumen. His analysis of the Non-co-operation movement, started by Mahatma Gandhi in 1920, and his comments thereon are penetrating and thoughtful. He has shown that the Indian Nationalist movement is not a mere political movement, but a movement of the soul of Modern India for its fullest self-realization in all

aspects of national and international life. The book is a valuable contribution to an understanding of the forces that have been working in India, since the introduction of British rule, and, more particularly, of the movement for achieving political freedom and equality; and there can be no doubt that Mr. Pradhan has rendered a distinct service to the cause of India—and I may add, to the cause of the British Commonwealth of Nations—by writing it.

India is on the eve of momentous, constitutional changes; and it is quite likely that as a result of the deliberations of the proposed Round Table Conference, the achievement of responsible Government and Dominion status may soon become an accomplished fact: At all events, we all fervently hope so. At this juncture, Mr. Pradhan's book will be found useful by all those who wish to obtain a clear understanding of the struggle for Swaraj, or responsible Government and Dominion status, which India has carried on for the last half a century. The members of the present British Parliament, the first to be elected by the new-born democracy of Great Britain, will soon be called upon to discharge perhaps the greatest responsibility that can rest upon an Imperial democracy; and, they will derive from Mr. Pradhan's book considerable help in deciding in what spirit it will be their duty to approach and consider the political and constitutional problem of India. This much may be said with certainty that, with the satisfactory solution of the two great problems by which the British Parliament is faced at present, the problem of Egypt and the problem of India, the integrity and permanence of the British Commonwealth of Nations will be placed upon firm foundations, and it will become the greatest instrument of promoting the peace, progress, and

happiness of the world. To all those who are keenly interested in such a development of the British Commonwealth of Nations, and in the attainment by India of her legitimate place in that Commonwealth, as an equal partner, I feel great pleasure in recommending Mr. Pradhan's book, "India's Struggle for SWARAJ".

BOMBAY, *Christmas Eve*, 1929. | PHIROZE SETHNA.

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Page	2,	line 10,	'and should be omitted.
„	9	„ 12,	read 'begun' for 'began'
„	44	„ 8,	there should be a comma after "Governor-General"
„	46	„ 14,	'and' should be omitted
„	56	last line,	read 'by' for 'with'
„	59	line 15,	read 'love for' for 'love of
„	85	„ 22,	'For' should be omitted
„	135	„ 16,	read 'trusts' for 'trust
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„	192	„ 26	read 'redress' for 'a redress
„	217	„ 2	'the' should be omitted
„	232	„ 16	read 'their' for 'its'
„	272	line 22,	read 'no-confidence' for 'non confidence'
„	288	„ 12	read 'asked for.'

After Chapter VI the chapters are wrongly numbered. Chapter VIII should be chapter VII and so on.

INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR SWARAJ

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY

THE *regime* of Lord Ripon (1880-84 A.D.) as Governor-General and Viceroy of India will remain memorable in the annals of Modern India. It witnesssed the birth of that sentiment of nationality, which, soon after, found expression in the organisation of the Indian National Congress, and which has since become a potent factor in the evolution of India's destiny The ground had been well prepared for the seed of this sentiment to sprout and grow. Ever since the establishment and consolidation of British rule over the greater part of the country, the very conditions of that rule had made for the evolution of nationality and unity among the Indian people. Not only its evils, but also its benefits, had contributed to bring it about. The first clear manifestation, however, of a national spirit, which proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that nationalism was born in India, took place in the early eighties of the nineteenth century, during the viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, as a result of a proposed legislative measure which was small in itself, but which, as events proved, produced far

reaching consequences. The birth of the Indian national movement was the outcome of the forces and counterforces brought to a head by a legislative measure known as the Ilbert Bill.

The birth of the sense of a common nationality and of national unity, that embraced the whole subcontinent of India, and inspired its population, inhabiting distant provinces, speaking diverse tongues professing different religions, and inheriting varied, and and in some cases antagonistic traditions, was a phenomenon so unique in the long and chequered history of India, as to constitute an event of prodigious importance. It cannot, indeed, be said, that the people of India had been utterly innocent of the sentiment of nationality and of unity before the advent of the British. The sense of territorial unity, of the physical individuality of their mother-country, of their possessing a common motherland, endowed with all the marks of a distinct territorial unit, they had evolved from remote ages. Political unity, as expressed in a common indigenous Government that exercised sway over the whole of the country, they had twice all but completely attained, once, in the third century B. C. under Emperor Asoka, the great Budhist monarch of world-wide fame, and again, in the fourth century A. D., when Samudragupta, in the words of Vincent Smith "carried his victorious arms from the Ganges to the extremity of the peninsula." Cultural unity which gave them a common intellectual life, and bound them together with common social, moral and religious ideals, had been their great

distinguishing mark, centuries before that unity was broken through, by the onrush of a foreign element that not only deprived them of their political independence, but having established itself on the soil, sought to impose upon them its own religion and culture.

But, though the sentiment of nationality and of unity had always been more or less present, it was, in the nature of things, impossible, that, in the many centuries that preceded the establishment of British rule, it should have received such general expression, and attained such breadth and intensity, as mark it to-day. The material, moral and intellectual conditions which alone could have produced a general national movement extending over the whole country were then lacking. Those conditions were supplied by British rule, and the new forces that came in its train.

What were those new forces which British rule set in motion? The first and foremost was an increasingly organised and efficient system of Government based on the principle of the reign of law, and administered by men who combined in themselves some of the highest qualities of public service as well as of statesmanship. Both the system of administration and the *personnel* who worked it, could not but profoundly impress the mind of India. They represented a type of Government that was in great contrast with the comparatively inefficient methods of administration that obtained immediately before, and after, the break up of the Mughal Empire. And they gave to the awakened

mind of India a new conception of national efficiency. While this process of moral awakening was slowly going on, the introduction of railways, telegraphs, and unified postage, annihilated distance, brought the several provinces and peoples of India more closely together than before, and promoted among them a common understanding of the new conditions of life brought into existence by British rule. But the greatest force to the irresistible working of which India was subjected by British rule, was the introduction of Western education.

After a fierce battle that raged for several years between those who desired to promote the old Oriental learning, and those who, like Lord Macaulay, urged the opening of the rich treasures of European thought and culture to the Indian mind, the Government deliberately decided in favour of the latter. Their decision may have been partly influenced by considerations of administrative necessity. But though their motives in introducing Western education may not have been purely altruistic, the decision itself was such a great epoch-making event that it was bound to produce far-reaching effects upon the evolution of India's destiny. Modern India is, indubitably, the product of Western education. It has now-a-days become a fashion, in reactionary circles, to disparage Western education and to deny the immense good that it has done to this country. The prevailing system of Western education, no doubt, has its defects. But those who see little or no good in Western education, and consider it an unmixed

evil, doing irreparable harm to the country, are either *ignoramuses* or wilfully blind to the real facts as they are. It is impossible to conceive Modern India, such as she is and is becoming, without the powerful and beneficent influence of Western education.

The effects of Western education have been enormous and far-reaching. They have touched almost every sphere and phase of Indian thought and life. They have not, indeed, sensibly affected those basic moral and spiritual conceptions, which form the warp and woof of Indian thought; but even here, Western education has contributed to the removal of those excrescences which overlaid their eternal beauty and grandeur, and impaired their perennial vitality, and also in certain respects, added to their rich content, and modified the direction of their practical working in every-day life. But, in the region of social and political thought, the effects of Western education have been almost revolutionary.

For one thing, Western education has given India a common language in which her educated classes freely exchange their views and ideas. A common language may not be essential to national unity; but it cannot be denied that it is of great help towards its formation and growth. The process of development of the spirit of nationality would have been very slow and difficult but for the common English language, and the common intellectual culture supplied by Western education. It is true, that before the advent of the

British, the Hindus, all over the country, possessed a common culture, though not a common language. The same might be said of the Mahomedans also. But, owing to differences of race, language and religion, and antogonisms of tradition and history, the culture of the Hindus differed from that of the Mahomedans. It was only after the establishment of British rule and the introduction of Western education, when both these and other smaller Indian communities began to drink deep of the fountain of Western literature, Western history, and Western philosophy, that all the educated classes, irrespective of community, class or religion, became imbued with a common culture which itself gave rise, in the ripeness of time, to common views, feelings, aspirations, ideals. And common views, feelings, aspirations, ideals are of the essence of nationality. Those, who refuse to see any good in Western education or to consider it a progressive force, maintain that the latter half of the nineteenth century produced such tremendous world-forces, that even without such education, India would have developed the spirit of nationality and attained the status of a great modern Power. It is extremely difficult and absolutely futile to speculate on what would have happened, if the course of India's history had been different from what it has been. The fact remains that the evolution of Indian nationality has been greatly promoted by the spread of Western education.

But, it is not only indirectly, by means of a common language and common culture, that Western

education has awakened and fostered the spirit of nationality. Directly also, it has produced the same result. It is impossible to receive Western education without imbibing the spirit of nationality. If ancient Hindu culture is synonymous with religious and philosophical idealism, modern Western culture is synonymous with nationalism, the spirit of patriotism, the love of freedom. Nowhere do we find the spirit of nationality, the love of national independence and freedom, the sense of the worth of man as man, the right, the duty, and the joy of self-government, the duty of sacrificing all that one has, for the sake of national honour and greatness, having had such full play as in the annals of the West; nowhere do we find them glorified so much as in the literatures of Western countries, in their speculative treatises no less than in their poetry, their history, their general literature. That every nation has a right to be independent and free, that no nation can be truly free and great which does not consider it its right and duty to govern itself, that personal liberty is the basis of personal character and individual responsibility, that no national effort and sacrifice can be too great in the interests of the mother-land:—these are among the great fundamental principles of Western culture; and they are writ so large in Western literature and history that their vital importance to nation-building and national growth began to be soon, and more and more, realized by those young and plastic Indian minds that were trained in increasing numbers in the univer-

sities. Education, whatever may be its character and label, will be an utterly useless and wasteful process, if it did not succeed in impressing upon the mind its peculiar ideas and principles. The mind is what education makes it, and the Indian would have been a curious human being, if he had failed to learn and assimilate the distinctive noble teachings of Western education. In these days, Indian nationalism has become suspicious of things Western, but time was when even the most advanced nationalists frankly recognised the debt which India owed to Western education. Mr. Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, who, along with Mr. Tilak and Mr. Agarkar, founded the famous Deccan Education Society of Poona, and was one of the few staunchest nationalists of his time, used to compare Western education to the milk of the tigress. He thereby paid homage to the virility of that education, meaning to convey that no one who was Western-educated, could fail to imbibe the priceless virtues of love of independence and freedom, of patriotism, of the spirit of progress and of ceaseless struggle to achieve it. In the Deccan, the first most powerful organ of nationalism has been the *Kesari*, whose remarkable achievements in the field of Indian journalism and whose great contribution to the political awakening of the Marathi-speaking population are now a matter of history. In an article published in 1885, before the establishment of the Indian National Congress, it wrote:—

We are, at present, gradually being inspired by the spirit of patriotism. The birth of patriotism among us is

due to British rule and English education. English education has imparted to us knowledge of ancient and modern history; it has enabled us to know what were the fruits of patriotism among the ancient Greeks and Romans. We have also learned from their histories how, when they lost their patriotism, they were subjected to foreign domination and became ignorant and superstitious. English rule has made us realise the necessity of cultivating patriotism in our national concerns ..... The spirit of patriotism has not as yet permeated all classes. It is only those who have come under the influence of English education and began to realise the defects of British administration that have been inspired by that spirit. Patriotism is not our national quality: it is the product of the influences to which we have been subjected after the introduction of British rule. If patriotism had been a part and parcel of our national character, it would have been found among those who are not Western-educated as well as among those who are. It was a natural quality of the ancient Greeks and Romans; and therefore, in face of foreign aggression, they could sink all their internal differences and present a united front. It was a cardinal article of their faith that there could be no greater title to immortal glory than to sacrifice one's life for the fatherland, and no greater disgrace and humiliation than to bend the knee before the foreign conqueror or to serve him. Our history tells a different tale altogether. Those things which could not thrive on the Greek and the Roman soil on account of the virtue of patriotism innate among the ancient Greeks and Romans ran riot among us, owing to our lack of that virtue. Our present patriotism is thus as yet an exotic; it has naturally not spread among all classes and communities, from the highest to the lowest, from the rich to the poor. Its general diffusion depends, first, upon the spread of English education and, secondly, upon a clear realization of the evils of British rule. English education will have done us great good, even though its only benefit will be to sow the seeds of patriotism on the Indian soil.

Thus, the greatest effect of Western education has been to promote aud foster the spirit of patriotism and the sense of nationality.

Another great effect ot Westen education in the region of political thought deserves to be mentioned. It has not only awakened and developed the spirit of patriotism and nationality, but has radically changed some of the fundamental political conceptions of the Indian people. Here, its action has been almost revolutionary. For centuries past, the Indian mind has been trained in, and accustomed to, the principles and methods of absolute rule, though tempered by high considerations of duty and righteousness. If the king was an autocratic ruler, he was, at the same time, expected to be a good and paternal ruler. But the fact remains that the polity which prevailed in India from remote ages was monarchical, conceptions of constitutional government, of the sovereignty of the people, of self-government, had not dawned upon the people. The rise and growth of these conceptions is due to Western education. Whatever differences of opinion may exist as to other effects of Western education, there can be no doubt whatever, that it has greatly changed the political notions and sentiments of the Indian people. There has been a vast and continuous development of Indian thought in the regions of ethics and philosophy; the achievements of the Indian mind in those regions are even now hardly equalled, much less surpassed by the most recent developments of corresponding European

thought. But it must be frankly admitted, that the development of our political thought was arrested many centuries before the establishment of British rule. The *Sukraniti*, the *Arthashastra* of Chanakya, and other treatises on ancient Indian polity which have of late received great attention from scholars, reveal, no doubt, considerable activity of the Indian mind in the science and the art of Government. They contain much political wisdom, and many noble maxims of policy. They also warrant the inference that if the evolution of India had taken place on lines different from those on which it has actually proceeded, and if the Indian people had applied themselves to politics with the same devotion and intensity as they had done to ethics, religion and metaphysics, the development of Indian political thought would not have been arrested, but would have kept pace *pari passu* with the great achievements of the Indian mind in other spheres of speculation. The fact, however, is that in its evolutionary process, the Indian mind was so much dominated by those experiences which predispose men to religious and metaphysical speculation, that, in course of time, it ceased to pay much attention to politics. The result was that the political thought of India lagged far behind the stage of development which it had reached in the West. The harmony that ought to exist among the different spheres of thought and life was broken. Politics ceased to be a national interest, and became the concern of a few individuals. A gradual but steady deterioration of the political spirit ensued.

not only among the masses, but also among the classes. It may be said without exaggeration, that the political spirit of the people of India had never been at such a low ebb as at the establishment of British rule. Now, Western education has resulted in reviving and developing that spirit. It has made the people realise its great value as an absolutely essential, and highly important, element in a complete and harmonious national life. And, above all, it has revolutionized the political thoughts, notions and sentiments which they had inherited from the past. The conception of the sovereignty of the king has given place to the conception of the sovereignty of the people ; the notion of the divinity of kingship has been relegated to the limbo of exploded myths. Self-government is regarded as the basis and spring of all national health, strength and power, and personal or autocratic rule, considered a great source of evil, and a serious barrier to progress. The principle of the reign of law is now enshrined in the hearts of the people ; the old notion of the arbitrary *fiat or mandate* of the ruler excites nothing but horror. We may or may not have learned other lessons from the West ; there is no doubt whatever that we have learned and assimilated the sovereign political conceptions of modern Western civilisation.

Another effect of Western education, which might, in fact, be considered the most radical and far-reaching of all, was the spirit of national and racial self-introspection which it aroused among the people. We began

earnestly to enquire into the root causes of our fall, of our loss of national independence, of our comparatively backward and unprogressive condition. Time was when India was the most prosperous and powerful country in the world. That such a country should fall a prey to foreign invaders, and sink into a state of decadence and degeneracy, could not but arouse our spirit of self-inquiry ; and Western education with the knowledge it brought to us of the principles and conditions of social and political progress and of Western social and political institutions, made us realize that our fall must largely be attributed to the evils that had crept in in our social and religious life and institutions. The movements for social and religious reform that arose soon after the introduction of Western education were the outcome of this spirit of self-introspection. They aimed at promoting national unity by the abolition of caste, and at purifying our social and religious life in general. The great founders and apostles of those movements saw that the superiority of Western civilization and the secret of its marvellous success lay in the freedom of thought, of speech, and of action which produced and encouraged initiative, promoted the discovery of truth, and fostered the spirit of enterprise that was undaunted by difficulties. We felt that unless we cultivated and developed the same triple freedom, India could not rise again and become a great nation.

In course of time, the new forces generated by British rule and Western education made us realize al-

so the evil effects of that rule. Those effects could have been avoided by timely reform and re-adjustment of the governmental system and the machinery of administration. But all the political reforms hitherto introduced have been marred by two defects, first, their belatedess and, secondly, their inadequacy, They, therefore, failed to prevent or remove those effects. British rule had proved a beneficent force, but its momentum soon exhausted itself. It would seem as if British statesmanship stood aghast at the consequences of its own progressive policy, and feared that a further career of continued and consistent beneficence would produce results that might endanger the British connection itself. The extreme costliness of the administration utterly out of proportion to the means of the people, the growing poverty of the people which made them an easy prey to famine and disease, the racial and imperial *hauteur*, which was indeed unknown to the founders of British rule and those early statesmen and administrators who consolidated and strengthened it, but which came to be displayed in an increasing measure by later generations of Anglo-Indian officials, the utter disregard of Indian views. sentiments and aspirations shown by the Government. the growing burden of taxation, the comparative neglect of nation-building functions, and, in particular, of primary and technical education, the jealous exclusion of the people from higher appointments, the general subordination of Indian interests to those of the ruling race, all these and other evils of British rule

began to be realized with a growing sense of wrong and injustice. The British system of government and administration failed to keep pace with the awakening of the people and their rising aspirations. They longed for playing a worthy role in their own country, but that role was denied to them, owing to the inherent limitations and the supposed exigencies of an imperial foreign rule. Their capacities sought expansion and satisfaction, but they found themselves cribbed, cabined and confined all round. They felt that British rule was good, but not so good as it ought to be. and might be; and above all, they felt that foreign rule, however efficient, beneficent and well-intentioned, had its inevitable limitations.

Such was the state of the Indian mind when the Government of Lord Ripon introduced, in the Imperial Legislative Council, a measure called the Ilbert Bill. Lord Ripon was a sincere Liberal, and had been sent to India by Gladstone who had come into power in 1880. The regime of his predecesssor, Lord Lytton, had proved an utter failure, it had resulted in throwing India down to the verge of bankruptcy, gagging the Vernacular Press, stifling India's aspirations, and producing grave discontent among the people. Lord Ripon had been specially appointed with the object of allaying the discontent and removing the evil effects produced by the policy of Lord Lytton. He sincerely desired to conscientiously perform the high and difficult task entrusted to him. The censorship of the Vernacular Press was removed: local self-government was

encouraged; a general spirit of sympathy and liberalism was infused into the whole administration. The Ilbert Bill which aimed at removing the bar, whereby Indian magistrates could not try European offenders, was in itself such a small measure, that Lord Ripon could never have dreamt that it would be received with any other feeling than that of cordial approval by all the races and communities in India But the fact was that his sympathetic and liberal policy had produced a strong under-current of hostility among European circles, and they started against the Bill an agitation of such unparalleled fury and virulence that the Government yielded to their clamour and threats, and thought it expedient to amend the Bill so as to make it acceptable to the European community. The interests of the Indian people were betrayed, the principles of justice, of righteousness, of liberalism, of racial equality thrown to the wind The Indian people carried on a counter-agitation, but to no purpose, the prestige of the ruling race was vindicated, and right proved impotent before might.

The lesson of the agitation against the Ilbert Bill was not, however, lost on the Indian people. They realised the evils of foreign rule all the more keenly, and there was a general, strong feeling among the *intelligentsia* in every province, that a national movement must be organized with the object of obtaining redress of grievances and raising the political status of India The European agitation against the Ilbert Bill taught them the value of united and organized agitation; and

they began to feel that the time was ripe for organising a national political movement. The forces set in motion by British rule had produced their inevitable results; and the national consciousness, aroused, as never before, by the European agitation against the Ilbert Bill, sought expression in an organised national movement. That was the beginning of the struggle for *Swaraj*.

CHAPTER II.

THE BEGINNING OF THE STRUGGLE.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the first powerful impetus to the organisation of the Indian National movement was given by a high Anglo-Indian official, Mr. A. O. Hume. Mr. Hume held high office as Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce, and during his tenure of office, was so deeply impressed by the economic sufferings of the masses and the grave discontent among the educated classes, that after his retirement in 1882, he devoted himself to the formation of an organisation that would afford a legitimate vent to the seething discontent then rife among the people, and direct it along constitutional channels. He had the wisdom to realize that the *intelligentsia* of a country, however small in number, were, after all, the natural leaders of the people, and that, to attempt to put down their aspirations, instead of wisely guiding, and in an increasing measure, satisfying them, could not but result in grave political danger. He, therefore, took the bold step of placing himself at the head of India's nascent political movement, and though a foreigner and retired bureaucrat, won the confidence and esteem of the Indian people, and became a trusted and powerful exponent of their awakened national self-consciousness. In March 1883, he addressed a circular

letter to the graduates of the Calcutta University, earnestly appealing to them to form an organisation having for its object the promotion of the mental, moral, social and political progress of India. He exhorted them to make a beginning with a small body of only fifty founders to be the mustard seed of future growth. "If," said he "only fifty men, good and true, can be found to join as founders, the thing can be established, and the further development will be comparatively easy". And he concluded with the following stirring appeal:—"You are the salt of the land. And if, amongst you, the *elite*, fifty men cannot be found with sufficient powers of self-sacrifice, sufficient genuine and unselfish, heart-felt, patriotism to take the initiative, and, if needs be, devote the rest of their lives to the cause, then there is no hope for India. Her sons must and will remain mere humble and helpless instruments in the hands of foreign rulers, for 'they would be free, themselves must strike the blow.' And if even the leaders of thought are all either such poor creatures, or selfishly wedded to personal concerns, that they dare not or will not strike a blow for their country's sake, then justly and rightly are they kept down and trampled on; for they deserve nothing better. Every nation secures precisely as good a Government as it merits."

This appeal was made at a psychological moment, and an association called 'the Indian National Union' was formed with Mr. Hume as General Secretary. The policy of the Union was thus defined:—

"The Union is prepared, when necessary, to oppose, by all constitutional methods, all authorities, high or low, here or in England, whose acts or omissions are opposed to those principles of the Government of India laid down for them by the British Parliament and endorsed by the British Sovereign, but it holds the continued affiliation of India to Great Britain, at any rate for a period far exceeding the range of any practical political forecast, to be absolutely essential to the interests of our own national development.

It was decided to hold a conference of the Union at Poona during the Christmas of 1885. The following extracts from the circular, convening the conference, issued by Mr. Hume and Mr. Surendranath Bannerjee, are of considerable interest:—

"The direct object of the conference will be: (1) to enable all the earnest labourers in the cause of the nation to become personally known to each other; (2) to discuss and decide upon the political operations to be undertaken during the ensuing year.

"Indirectly, this conference will form the germ of a native Parliament, and, if properly conducted, will constitute in a few years an unanswerable reply to the assertion that India is still wholly unfit for any form of representative institutions."

An outbreak of cholera at Poona necessitated a change of venue, and the conference was held at Bombay on 27th December 1885. The attendance was small, only seventy-two delegates having been present. But they were among the *elite* of India, and the deficiency of numbers was more than made up by enthusiasm, that ran high throughout the country, due to the

dawn of a new hope and to the consciousness that a movement big with possibilities was being launched into existence. The question of the appropriate name that should be given to the Union was carefully considered, and it was resolved that it should be called "the Indian National Congress". Thus, with the formation of the Indian National Congress on the 27th December 1885, a new era was inaugurated in the history of India, for it was under the auspices of that body and on that memorable date, that India formally entered on a struggle which, though small in its beginning, grew keener aud keener every year, until, in the ripeness of time, it developed into a great movement for the attainment of *Swaraj*, or full responsible Government within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

From the historical point of view, it is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the address delivered by Mr. W. C. Bannerjee as President of the first session of the Indian National Congress, or of the resolutions that were passed in that session. Mr. Bannerjee claimed for the Congress a truly representative character. He admitted that, judged by the standard of the House of Commons, the delegates to the Congress were not representatives of the people, in the sense in which the members of the House were representatives of the constituencies; but, he rightly observed, that if community of sentiments, community of feelings and community of wants entitled any one to speak on behalf of others, then,

assuredly, they might justly claim to be the representatives of the people of India. He defined the aims and objects of the Congress as follows:

(1) The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire.

(2) The eradication, by direct personal friendly intercourse, of all the possible race, creed or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country, and the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in our beloved Lord Ripon's memorable reign.

(3) The authoritative record, after they had been elicited by the fullest discussion of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.

(4) The determination of the lines upon, and the methods by, which, during the next twelve months, it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interest.

The Congress adopted seven resolutions, exclusive of those which were more or less of a formal nature. The military expenditure loomed large then as now, and the Congress condemned it as extravagant. The India Council was considered the greatest obstacle to Indian political reform, and the Congress demanded its abolition as "the necessary preliminary to all other reforms". The desire for a larger share in the administration of the country found expression in a resolution which urged that the competitive Civil Service Examination should be held simultaneously both in England and India. The most important and significant resolution was, however, that regarding

the reform and expansion of the Legislative Councils. It demanded that the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils should be expanded and reformed by the introduction of the elective element, that Legislative Councils created for the North-Western Provinces and the Punjab, and that the members of the Councils should be empowered to interpellate the Executive Government in regard to all branches of the administration and to discuss the Budget, though not to vote on it. It further urged that a standing committee should be constituted to receive and consider any formal protests that might be recorded by the majorities of such Councils against the exercise by the executive of the power which would be vested in it of overruling the decision of such majorities.

The expansion and reform of the Legislative Councils was thus the most important demand put forward by the Congress ; in fact, it formed the principal plank in its programme for many years. In 1880, five years before the establishment of the Indian National Congress, Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji had formulated the same demand in a memorandum submitted to the Secretary of State for India. He had condemned the system of nomination that prevailed at the time as a great farce, and suggested in some detail how the larger towns, at all events, could be given the right of electing representatives to the Legislative Councils. And, in the light of subsequent events, it deserves to be noted that he had even suggested a mode of direct election. The desire for some mea-

sure, however small, of genuine popular representation in the Legislative Councils had become so general and strong that public opinion had come to look upon it as the root of all progress. Mr. W. S. Blunt, in his INDIA UNDER RIPON records a reminiscence which clearly illustrates this state of the public mind. During his stay at Calcutta in 1883-4, he attended a series of Indian meetings at every one of which the view was expressed that no improvement of any sort in the condition of the Indian people was possible, so long as the constitution of the Government of India remained what it was. The general complaint was that the Government was too conservative, too selfish, too alien to the thoughts and needs of India, to effect anything, as thus constituted, and the position was strongly maintained that, just as in England, reformers at the beginning of the 19th century looked first to a reform of Parliament, so, Indian reformers must first look to a reform of the governing body of the country. Thus, public opinion had already been crystallized on the reform of the constitution, such as it was, and it was quite natural, therefore, that the most important demand made by the Congress was the application of the principle of election to the Legislative Councils and the widening of their powers.

Looking back on the early proceedings of the Congress, we are impressed by the extreme moderation of its demands. The organisers and promoters of the Congress were not idealists who had built their habitations away on the horizon; they were practical

reformers imbued with the spirit, principles and methods of mid-Victorian liberalism and bent on winning freedom by gradual steps, broadening from precedent to precedent. They, therefore, took scrupulous care not to pitch their demands too high. Some of them may have cherished in their heart of hearts full-fledged parliamentary self-government as a far-off ideal; but all of them wanted to work on lines of the least resistance, and therefore framed their proposals of reform on such moderate and cautious lines as not to arouse any serious opposition. And, indeed, for the first three years, so long as the activities of the Congress were confined merely to passing resolutions, the attitude of the Government was one of friendly sympathy or, at all events, of kindly neutrality. It is said that the idea of the Congress itself had been suggested to Mr. Hume by Lord Dufferin, the then Governor General of India, and so sincere was his sympathy supposed to be with the movement, that he was consulted as to whether Lord Reay, the then Governor of Bombay, should not be requested to preside over the first session. Considerations of political expediency are said to have prevented him from approving of the proposal. At the second Congress held at Calcutta, he invited the delegates to a garden party at the Government House, and the same consideration was shown to them by the Governor of Madras next year.

But this attitude of Government was short-lived. Finding that the expressions of sympathy in which the

Government indulged were no better than mere platonic sentiments, evincing no real desire to grant the demands of the Congress, Mr. Hume resolved to carry on a vigorous campaign of agitation among the masses, on the model of the Anti-Corn-Law League. Hundreds of public meetings were held, many in country Districts; pamphlets and leaflets were sown broadcast among the people with the object of enlightening them as to their rights as citizens, and as to the demands made by the Congress, and of arousing in them a strong determination to carry on agitation until those demands were conceded. Mr. Hume, in fact, resorted to the only effective method of constitutional action, viz., the stirring of the masses, a thing which was unknown since the days of the Mutiny, and which the Government had never thought of with equanimity. The vigorous propaganda which was thus carried on among the masses, produced such effect upon the Government that they felt themselves compelled to reveal their true attitude with regard to the Congress. The attitude of friendly neutrality gave place to suspicion, intolerance, and open hostility. At the annual St. Andrew's dinner held at Calcutta in November 1887, Lord Dufferin made an attack upon the Congress, which was as disingenuous as it was clever. Knowing, as he did, that the demands of the Congress could not be assailed on the ground of reason, he ridiculed the movement itself as representing only "a microscopic minority of the people" and condescended to the unworthy tactics of misrepresenting its aims

"Some intelligent, loyal, patriotic and well-meaning men," he said "are desirous of taking, I will not say, a further step in advance, but a big jump into the unknown, by the application to India of democratic methods of Government, and the adoption of a parliamentary system which England herself had reached by slow degrees, and through the discipline of many centuries. The ideal authoritatively suggested is the creation of a representative body or bodies in which the official element should be in a minority, which shall have what is called the power of the purse, and which, through this instrumentality, shall be able to bring the British Executive into subjection to their will". Misrepresentation was not the only weapon employed to put down the rising movement of the National Congress. The old Machiavellian policy of *Divide et Impera* was also adopted, and the Mahomedans, who had, as a community, remained aloof from the Congress, were egged on to form an anti-Congress organisation and to oppose the Congress and its demands with overt hostility.

It is difficult, after such a long period of time, to divine the real motives of Lord Dufferin in so grossly misrepresenting the aims of the Congress. He was a statesman of such high ability that it is impossible to believe that he really failed to comprehend the programme of the Congress; he must have realised in his heart of hearts that the demands of the Congress were as moderate and reasonable as they were inevitable. That he was not absolutely opposed to them is clearly

shown by the fact that while, on the one hand, he made a vigorous, though entirely undeserved, attack on the Congress, on the other hand, in the same year, he sent to the Home Government a despatch containing his own proposals of reform which were not far different from those urged by the Congress. The true explanation of this apparently double policy seems to be that, trained as he was in the arts of diplomacy, he was anxious to avoid any impression that he was yielding to the clamour of popular agitation, while advocating his own proposals of reform. Whatever it might be, the official attitude towards the National Congress became one of scarcely disguised hostility after the popular awakening caused by the untiring and vigorous propaganda so ably and unselfishly carried on by "the Father of the Congress," as Mr. Hume came to be lovingly called by his Indian friends and admirers.

It was in an atmosphere of official misunderstanding, suspicion and opposition that the Congress met at Allahabad in 1888. But the spirit of the leaders of the Congress was undaunted, and far from abandoning the demand of the expansion and reform of the councils, they reiterated it with greater emphasis than before. The resolution on the subject was moved by Mr. Telang, a rising politician of great ability who combined in himself the rare qualities of sweetness and light, in a speech which was as remarkable for persuasive eloquence as for close reasoning. The manner and spirit in which he answered the charges brought against

the Congress by Lord Dufferin was almost classic. He said :—

"The various charges which His Lordship makes against the Congress are charges which remind me of a certain definition which was once given of a crab, viz., that a crab is a red fish which walks backwards; and the criticism made upon that was that the definition was perfectly correct, except that the crab was not a fish, that it was not red, and that it did not walk backwards. Now I may say that Lord Dufferin's criticism is perfectly correct; except that we have not asked for democratic methods of Government, we have not asked for Parliamentary institutions which England has got after many centuries of discipline; we have not asked for the power of the purse; and we have not asked that the British Executive should be brought under subjection to us".

The demand for the liberalisation of the constitution, such as it was at the time, was reiterated from year to year with increasing insistence. At the fifth session of the Congress held at Bombay in 1889, a skeleton scheme was drafted, and Mr. Charles Bradlaugh M P., who had come from England specially to attend the Congress, was requested to introduce in Parliament a Bill on the lines of the scheme.

In order to enlist the support of British public opinion for the Bill, the Congress resolved to carry on vigorous propaganda in England itself. Not only was a committee formed there to educate the British electorate and to win the support of at least the more progressive members of Parliament for the cause of Indian constitutional reform, but a strong deputation of the Congress visited England in 1889 for the pur-

pose of pressing upon the consideration of the British public the political reforms which it advocated. A journal called INDIA was also started in London in 1890, to place before the British public the Indian view of Indian affairs. The journal was edited with great ability and played a considerable part in advancing the cause of Indian politcal reform among members of Parliament

Every Government is human, and though it may make a show of opposing a movement of reform, and, if possible, of putting it down, it does not fail to be more or less influenced by it in the long run. The strenuous agitation of the Congress compelled the attention of the Government to the necessity of meeting, at least partially, the demands of the people of India as voiced by their leaders, and of introducing some measure of constitutional reform. Lord Dufferin, in spite of the attitude he outwardly maintained towards the Congress, had the wisdom to realize that the altered conditions of India demanded the reform of the central and the provincial legislatures ; and he appointed a committee to thoroughly investigate and report on the question of constitutional reforms. He also sent, as we have already said, a despatch to the Home Government urging reform, and outlining and explaining the particular measures of reform which he recommended. The question was still under discussion when his term of office was over, but it was taken up by his successor Lord Lansdowne. He consulted the local Governments, who all expressed themselves in

favour of the view that the councils should be enlarged and endowed with increased powers.

While the Government were thus maturing their own proposals of reform, Mr. Bradlaugh, true to the promise he had given to the Congress, introduced in Parliament in the session of 1890, his own bill which was based to a considerable extent on the scheme prepared by the Congress. But his premature death soon after in 1891 terminated all prospects of a more liberal measure being carried in Parliament. The introduction of Mr. Bradlaugh's Bill, however, forced the hands of the Government, and they introduced a Bill of their own which received the royal assent in June 1892. Thus, the struggle for political reform begun in 1885 and, strenuously carried on for several years by the Congress, bore its first fruits in the expansion of the Legislative Councils and increase in their powers under the Indian Councils Act of 1892. Though the Act was not a liberal measure in itself and did not satisfy even the moderate expectations of the people at the time, it clearly illustrated the power and efficacy of a great national movement and vigorous popular agitation.

CHAPTER III.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION TILL THE PASSING OF THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACT, 1892.

Having traced, in the preceding Chapter, the history of the Indian constitutional movement till the enactment of the Indian Councils Act of 1892, we shall, at this stage, briefly review the development of the Indian constitution from its early beginnings to the expansion and reform of the Legislative Councils brought about by that Act.

A careful bird's eye-view of the changes that have been introduced, from time to time, in the system of Government in India under British rule, reveals two main features, one of which has, happily, long since ceased to exist First, the system has been modified and improved, not in accordance with abstract theories of Government, not, indeed, until recently, even in accordance with any definite, considered goal of British policy, but solely, in the light of practical experience, mainly with a view to meeting new conditions and circumstances. The Indian constitution, no less than the British, illustrates the British method of making no radical or revolutionary changes, but of moving slowly and cautiously, and making only such advance as may be deemed necessary in order either to improve the

existing machinery of Government, or to prevent popular discontent from becoming too serious. In the case of India, moreover, the extremely slow pace of progress is further determined by the paramount consideration of maintaining British supremacy, and not exposing it to any risk whatever. The second feature is that, for a long period, the legislative and executive functions of Government were not separated, but concentrated in one and the same body. The Governor-General and his Council were responsible both for administration and legislation, they not only administered the affairs of the country but also made laws. It was only in 1833 that these functions were separated; but even then the division was made in a very rudimentary manner; a fourth member was appointed who formed part of the Council only for the purposes of legislation, and not for those of the Executive Government. Under the Regulating Act of 1773, indeed, the rules, regulations and ordinances made by the Governor-General-in-Council were not valid until duly registered and published in the Supreme Court with its assent and approbation. But this provision for the assent of a judicial body was soon found to be unworkable, it led to violent conflicts between the Government and the Court; and ultimately in 1781, Parliament passed an amending Act which repealed it. The three principal functions of Government are legislation, executive government and administration of justice, and in any sound and normal system of government, they are discharged by different bodies. But until 1833,

the system of Government in British India was marked by the feature that the legislative and executive functions were not separated; the body that formed the executive Government formed also the legislature. The establishment of a legislature, though of a shadowy nature, dates from the Charter Act of 1833 which provided for the appointment to the Governor-General's Council of a Law Member for legislative purposes.

The Charter Act of 1833 is an important landmark in the constitutional development of India under British rule. It not only established a rudimentary legislature which has now developed into the Legislative Assembly, but also brought about the centralisation of Government by vesting the legislative power throughout India in the Governor-General-in-Council. Hitherto, the Presidencies of Madras and Bombay enjoyed full, independent powers of legislation, over which the Governor-General-in-Council exercised no control. Indeed, the control of the Governor-General-in-Council over those Presidencies was limited only to transactions relating to peace or war, and relations with independent Indian Powers. But under the Charter Act of 1833, the legislative power was taken away from them: the Government of India became the sole legislative authority; and all that the Presidency Governments could do was to submit proposals for legislation for the consideration of the Governor-General-in-Council. This legislative centralization was, of course, accompanied by finanical centraliza-

tion"; and it was not until 1861 that the legislative functions were restored to provincial Governments.

The question of introducing representative institutions in India had not altogether escaped the attention of Parliament when the Councils Act of 1833 was passed. The Select Committee of the House of Commons, appointed to consider the renewal of the Company's Charter gave some thought to it, and Mr. James Mill, who was examined as a witness, was specifically asked whether he considered representative Government practicable in India. His answer was that it was utterly out of the question. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the great Hindu social and religious reformer, who was in England at the time, submitted to the Select Committee, a series of memoranda on various aspects of the Indian problem, but he did not deal with the question of representative Government at all. It would seem, the desire for representative Government had not been felt at the time even by the best minds in India. Nevertheless, the fact that Mr. James Mill was examined on the point shows that the idea had occurred to at least some members of the Select Committee. In England, the Reform Bill had just been passed; and, besides, there was a good deal of philosophic discussion of the merits of representative Government. Naturally, therefore, the question of introducing representative Government in India received the attention of some members of the Committee. But the time was not ripe for it, and it does not seem to have been seriously pursued.

But though the Charter Act of 1833 made no improvement whatever in the Indian polity in the direction of repesentative Government, it established the principle of equality between Europeans and Indians in the matter of appointments in the public services. It declared that no native of India nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein, "shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place or office or employment under the Company".

The Court of Directors, in their Despatch to the Government of India, explaining the several provisions of the Act, observed :—

> "The meaning of the enactment we take to be that there shall be no governing caste in British India, that whatever other tests of qualification may be adopted, distinctions of race or religion shall not be of the number, that no subject of the King, whether of Indian, or British or of mixed descent, shall be excluded, either from the posts usually conferred on our uncovenanted servants in India or from the covenanted service itself, provided he be otherwise eligible under the rules, and agreeably to the conditions observed and enacted in the one case as in the other······ ··············Fitness is, henceforth, to be the criterion of eligibility".

The new system soon disclosed its own defects. The provincial Governments never reconciled themselves to a system which deprived them of their legislative functions, and made them mere appendages to a central Government which could possess no adequate knowledge of local circumstances and requirements. The Indian Government, too,

began to realize from actual experience that the task of legislating for the several provinces of India was beset with such difficulty that it was impossible for one single Government to cope with it.

When the question of the renewal of the Company's Charter was again considered in 1852, this effect of the Charter Act of 1833 was pointed out by several witnesses. For instance, Mr. McLeod, a distinguished member of the Indian Civil Service who held the Office of a Law Commissioner, said:—

"The Governor-General with four members of Council, however highly qualified those individuals may be, is not altogether a competent legislature for the great empire which we have in India. It seems to me very desirable that in the legislative Government of India, there should be one or more persons having local knowledge and experience from the minor presidencies, that is entirely wanting in the legislative department as at present constituted. It appears to me that this is one considerable and manifest defect. The Governor-General and Council have not sufficient leisure and previous knowledge to conduct, in addition to their executive and administrative functions, the whole duties of legislation for the Indian Empire. It seems to me that it would be advisable to enlarge the Legislative Council and have representatives of the minor presidencies in it without enlarging the Executive Council or in any way altering its present constitution".

In accordance with this consensus of opinion, the Charter Act of 1853 differentiated the legislative machine more decisively from the Executive, by constituting a distinct legislative Council consisting of the Governor-General, the members of the Executive Council and six new members, two of them being

English Judges of the Calcutta Supreme Court, and the other four, officials, each appointed by the provincial Governments of Bengal, Madras, Bombay and Agra respectively. At the same time, the number of members of the Governor-General's Executive Council was increased to four by the inclusion of the Law Member. Thus, the Legislative Council consisted of ten members exclusive of the Governor-General. The constitution of the Council was, however, entirely official · there was no idea yet of introducing the non-official element, European or Indian , indeed, so far as the Indian non-official element was concerned, it was considered inexpedient to place Indians in the Council.

Though the Legislative Council established by the Charter Act of 1853 was small in number and purely official, it must be regarded as the first real Legislative Council of India. Henceforth, its business was conducted on the lines on which Legislative business is conducted. Discussions were oral, instead of in writing ; bills were referred to select committees instead of being examined by a single member, and the proceedings were conducted in public and published in official reports.

This petty official Council soon proved a source of embarrassment to the Government. The relations between it and the Government were, by no means, cordial. It showed an independence of spirit which the Government did not like. It refused to carry out the orders of the Home Government to legislate regarding the office of the Administrator-General; it

presented an address demanding the communication to it of certain correspondence between the Home Government and the Government of India; above all, it assumed the Parliamentary function of inquiring into grievances and seeking their redress. The complaint against it was that it became a sort of a debating society or petty Parliament, that its methods of work tended to delay and obstruct the transaction of business. The part it played is shown by the criticisms of Sir Lawrence Peel, who said : "It has no jurisdiction in the nature of that of a grand inquest of the nation. Its functions are purely legislative and are limited even in that respect. It is not an Anglo-Indian House of Commons for the redress of grievances, to refuse supplies and so forth".

But before these defects were fully disclosed, the Mutiny of 1857 had broken out, and for a while, the fate of British rule itself in India hung in the balance. The experiences of the Mutiny had a profound effect upon the public mind of England. In 1858, a bill was passed whereby the Government of India was transferred to the Crown. This necessarily involved re-constitution of the Home Government. The affairs of India were henceforth administered by a Secretary of State and a Council called the India Council. On 1st November 1858, Her Majesty Queen Victoria issued a Proclamation to the Princes, Chiefs and the people of India, whereby the transfer of the Government of India to the Crown was publicly announced, and in which the promise of equal treatment in the matter of appoint-

ments, given by the Charter Act of 1853, was reaffirmed, and further promises of entertaining the same responsibilities towards the Indian people as towards other subjects of the Empire and of carrying on the Government for their benefit were made. The Proclamation has lost its importance in the light of subsequent pronouncements and developments of British policy, but for many years, it was regarded as the Charter of Indian rights and liberties. India always rested her claim for just and equal treatment on the noble principles laid down in the Proclamation, and an attempt made by Lord Curzon during his Viceroyalty, to explain away its binding character by calling it 'an impossible charter', evoked a storm of indignation throughout the length and breadth of India.

Hitherto, the Indian element had been deliberately excluded from the councils of the Government of India; we have seen that when the Legislative Council was enlarged in 1855, the general feeling among the British was that the admission of Indians to the Legislature would be inexpedient. Just as, until the Morley-Minto reforms, the admission of Indians to the Executive Council was viewed with disfavour, as likely to lead to untoward political consequences, so, until the angle of vision was changed by the revelations of the Mutiny, the belief had been current that it would be unwise to appoint Indians to the Legislative Council. The change in the attitude of responsible statesmen and administrators towards this important question is well expressed by Sir Bartle Frere in a minute written in 1860 :—

"The addition of the native element, has, I think, become necessary owing to our diminished opportunities of learning through indirect channels what the natives think of our measures, and how the native community will be affected by them. It is useless to speculate on the many causes which have conspired to deprive us of the advantage which our predecessors enjoyed in this respect. Of the fact, there can be no doubt, and no one will, I think, object to the only obvious means of regaining in part the advantages which we have lost, unless he is prepared for the perilous experiment of continuing to legislate for millions of people with few means of knowing, except by a rebellion, whether the laws suit them or not.

"The Durbar of a native Prince is nothing more than a council very similar to that which I have described. To it, under a good ruler, all have access, very considerable license of speech is permitted, and it is in fact the channel from which the ruler learns how his measures are likely to affect his subjects, and may hear of discontent before it becomes disaffection.

"I cannot think that the plan proposed will, even in our presidency towns, lead, as has been apprehended, to needless talking and debate, or convert our Councils into parish vestries. It is a great evil of the present system that Government can scarcely learn how its measures will be received or how they are likely to affect even its European subjects till criticism takes the form of settled and often bitter opposition".

The Mutiny with its extremely painful experiences was a great eye-opener, and responsible statesmen and administrators both in England and India carefully considered the question of the changes that should be introduced in the system of Government in India. There were three schools of thought on the subject. One, which might be called "the Eastern School", held the view that the Government of India should be

carried on, not on Western, but on traditional indigenous lines, and proposed that the old system under which the executive constituted also the legislature should be restored, with this difference, however, that the Government should, from time to time, convene an advisory Council, somewhat in the nature of a Durbar, which the Government should consult, whenever any legislation was to be undertaken, but whose advice they were not bound to follow. The second school, which might be described as 'the Western School', advocated the introduction of representative institutions. The third school favoured the introduction of representative institutions but wanted them to be confined to Europeans only, since, in their opinion, Indians had no experience of, or training in, them. Sir Charles Wood, who introduced in the House of Commons the Legislative measure which became the Indian Councils Act of 1861, thus referred to these different views that prevailed at the time:—

"The notion of legislation which is entertained by a native is that of a chief or Sovereign who makes what laws he pleases. He has little or no idea of any distinction between the executive and legislative functions of Government. A native chief will assemble his nobles around him in the Darbar, where they freely and frankly express their opinions: but having informed himself by their communications, he determines by his own will what shall be done. Among the various proposals which have been made for the Government of India is one that the power of legislation should rest entirely with the executive, but that there should be a consultative body; that is, that the Governor-General should assemble from time to time a considerable number whose opinions he

should hear, but by whose opinions he should not be bound; and that he should himself consider and decide what measures should be adopted. In the last session of Parliament, Lord Ellenborough developed a scheme approaching this in character in the House of Lords; but honourable gentlemen will see in the despatches which have been laid on the table, that Lord Canning considers this impossible, and all the members of his Government as well as the members of the Indian Council concur in the opinion that, in the present state of feeling in India, it is quite impossible to revert to a state of things in which the executive Government alone legislated for the country. The opposite extreme is the desire which is natural to Englishmen wherever they be, that they should have a representative body to make the laws by which they are to be governed. I am sure, however, that every one who considers the condition of India will see that it is utterly impossible to constitute such a body in that country. You cannot possibly assemble at any one place in India persons who shall be the real representatives of the various classes of the native population of the country. It is quite true that when you diminish the area for which legislation is to extend, you diminish the difficulty of such a plan. In Ceylon, which is not more extensive than a large collectorate in India, you have a legislative body consisting partly of Englishmen and partly of natives, and I do not know that the Government has worked unsuccessfully; but with the extended area with which we have to deal in India, it would be physically impossible to constitute such a body.....To talk of a native representation is therefore to talk of that which is simply and utterly impossible. Then comes the question to what extent we can have a representation of the English settlers in India. No doubt, it would not be difficult to obtain a representation of their interests; but I must say that of all the governing or Legislative bodies, none is so dangerous or so mischievous as one which represents a dominant race ruling over an extended native population. All experience teaches us that where a dominant race rules another, the mildest form

of Government is despotism, ……I cannot therefore consent to create a powerful body of such a character".

The constitution of India was considerably modified by the Indian Councils Act of 1861. It restored the function of legislation to provincial Governments, but whereas, before the Act of 1833, no provincial legislation required the previous sanction of the Governor-General under this Act, it was made a condition precedent to such legislation in certain cases, and all Acts passed by the Local Councils required the subsequent assent of the Governor-General besides that of the Governor. It created Legislative Councils for the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras, and empowered the Governor-General to establish a Legislative Council for Bengal. But the most important feature of the Act was the expansion of the Indian Legislative Council and the introduction of the non-official element into that Council, as well as into the Provincial Councils. The Governor-General was empowered to nominate, in addition to the members of the Executive Council, additional members, not less than six nor more than twelve in number, for purposes of legislation, and half of these additional members were to be non-officials. In the Provincial Councils also, the proportion of non-official members was to be one-half out of a minimum of four and a maximum of eight. These provisions for the nomination of non-official members were availed of for the purpose of nominating Indians, and ever since the enactment of the Councils Act of 1861, there has been

no Council without an admixture of the Indian element, however small it might be; but it deserves to be noted, that the Act itself did not specifically provide for the nomination of Indians as additional members, and that for many years, the Indians who were nominated did not represent the growing *Intelligentsia* of the country but were drawn exclusively either from the ranks of chiefs or from the landed aristocracy. "Honourable gentlemen will have noticed," said Sir Charles Wood in his speech in the House of Commons, "the great success which has attended the association with us of the Talukdars of Oudh and of the Sardars in the Punjab in the duties of administering the revenue, and Lord Canning has borne testimony to the admirable manner in which they have performed their duties. I believe greater advantages will result from admitting the Native Chiefs to co-operate with us for legislative purposes, they will no longer feel, as they have hitherto done, that they are excluded from the management of the affairs in their own country, and nothing, I am persuaded, will tend more to conciliate to our rule the minds of natives of high rank."

But though the Councils were reformed so as to include the non-official and also the Indian element, their function was strictly limited to legislation, and they were expressly forbidden to transact any business except the consideration and enactment of legislative measures or to entertain any motion except a motion for leave to introduce a Bill, or having reference to a Bill actually introduced.

No discussion of the Budget, no interpellations or resolutions were allowed. As Herbert Cowell rightly describes them in "The Courts and legislative authorities in India", "the Councils are not deliberative bodies with respect to any subject but that of the immediate legislation before them They cannot inquire into grievances, call for information, or examine the conduct of the executive. The acts of administration cannot be impugned nor can they be properly defended in such assemblies, except with reference to the particular measure under discussion."

The system of Government as modified by the Councils Act of 1861 lasted till 1892, when again it it was reformed by the Act passed in that year. The intervening period of thirty years witnessed three important events which deserve to be mentioned. Legislative decentralization had been restored by the Act of 1861; but it had not been accompanied by financial decentralization, with the result that provincial Governments were seriously handicapped by the necessity of referring to the Indian Government for every item of expenditure. Besides, as there were no sources of revenue which they might regard as their own, either exclusively or partially, they had no incentive to develop those sources or explore new ones, or even to practise economy. In 1870, therefore, the Government of Lord Mayo issued a resolution whereby a scheme of financial decentralization was introduced in the provinces. Certain departments, viz., Jails, Registration, Police,

Education, Medical Services, Printing, Roads, Miscellaneous Public Improvements and Civil Buildings, were made over to Provincial Governments, and a fixed lump sum was assigned to each of them as an Imperial grant for carrying on the administration. They were given the departmental receipts from these sources, but if the grant was found to be inadequate, they must exercise their powers of taxation and find out new sources of revenue. They were permitted to appropriate the grant to the several departments just as they liked, and if any balance remained, it did not lapse, but could be treated as a balance to the credit of the local Government that had managed to keep it. Lord Mayo expected great benefits from this measure of financial decentralization. "The operation of this resolution", Lord Mayo said, "in its full meaning and integrity will afford opportunities for the development of self-government, for strengthening Municipal institutions and for the association of Natives and Europeans to a greater extent than heretofore, in the administration of affairs". The system of financial devolution thus introduced by Lord Mayo was modified and improved by Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon. Heads of revenue were divided into Imperial, provincial, and partly Imperial and partly provincial; the revenue derived from the first was treated exclusively as Imperial, that derived from the second, exclusively as provincial, and that derived from the third was divided between them in definite proportions. The list of provincial subjects was also enlarged so as to include Land Revenue,

Excise, Stamps, Law and Justice, and all other subjects now regarded as provincial. Thus, subjects were divided into Imperial and Provincial, and the administration of the latter was to be carried on from revenues derived from fully or partially provincialised sources. It must, however, be noted that there was no attempt at all to introduce the federal principle in legislation or financial administration.

The second important event was the assumption by Her Majesty the Queen in 1876 of the title "Empress of India". A proclamation was issued, notifying the assumption, and at a grand Durbar held at Delhi, the fact was announced with great *eclat* and solemnity to the Princes and people of India. Lord Salisbury who held the office of the Secretary of State for India at the time cherished grandiose conceptions of Imperial magnificence, and thought that the assumption of the title of Empress of India by Her Majesty the Queen would greatly impress the Oriental mind with its traditional notions of absolute sovereignty, with the unrivalled majesty and prowess of Great Britain. Little did he realise even with his gift of imagination that the event, ceremonial and comparatively small though it was, would produce an undercurrent of national self-humiliation among the people of India. The third and most important event was the encouragement given by Lord Ripon to local self-government. Lord Ripon realized soon after coming to India that the development of local self-government had not kept pace with the growth of education

and public spirit among the people, and that even in the comparatively small sphere of Municipal administration, official guidance and control had aimed more at efficiency than education of the people in the art of local self-government and evoking in them the sense of responsibility. He therefore issued in 1882 a resolution in which he strongly advocated the encouragement and extension of local self-government and emphasized the true cardinal principle that local self-governing institutions were chiefly desirable, not as a means of improvement in administration, but as an instrument of political and popular education. " It is not uncommonly asserted ", he observed in his memorable resolution, " that the people of this country are themselves entirely indifferent to the principle of self-government : that they take but little interest in public matters; and that they prefer to have such affairs managed for them by Government officers. The Governor-General-in-Council does not attach much value to this theory. It represents, no doubt, the point of view which commends itself to many active and well-intentioned District officers ; and the people of India are, there can be equally no doubt, remarkably tolerant of existing facts. But as education advances, there is rapidly growing up all over the country an intelligent class of public-spirited men whom it is not only bad policy, but sheer waste of power, to fail to utilise". There can be no doubt that the measures adopted by Lord Ripon to promote and extend local self-government constituted

an important factor in the awakening of those national sentiments and aspirations which led to the movement for *Swaraj*.

The Act of 1892 not only enlarged the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils, but also extended their functions, and provided for the introduction, though indirectly, of the elective principle. The Governor-General's legislative council was reconstituted as under —

(1) The Governor-General.

(2) Members of the Executive Council.

(3) Six additional members, being nominated officials, besides the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, ex officio.

(4) Six additional members being nominated non-officials.

(5) Five additional members. Out of these five, one was to be elected by the non-official members of each of the four Provincial Councils and the remaining fifth by the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. But their election was not *ipso facto* binding on the Government; all it meant was that they were elected for the purpose of being recommended for nomination, to the Government who might or might not accept the recommendation, though, in practice, it was invariably accepted. The same method of election was adopted in the case of the provincial councils also. The theory of the Act of 1861 was that the legislative Councils were merely

legislative bodies with the sole function of passing laws. This theory was modified by the Act of 1892, to the extent of giving them the right of asking questions and discussing the budget. The budget, however, could not be voted upon, and the right of interpellation was to be exercised under certain conditions. The right of asking supplementary questions or of moving resolutions was still withheld. Nor was any attempt made to create an electorate.

The most important question that attracted attention in connection with the Councils Act of 1892 was the introduction of the elective principle. Mr. Schwann brought an amendment urging the introduction of the elective principle and declaring that without it, no reform of the councils would prove satisfactory to the Indian people or compatible with the good government of India. An interesting debate took place on this question, to which Mr. Gladstone made a notable contribution. Mr. Schwann stressed the point that the non-introduction of the elective principle was a serious defect on account of which the Bill would not be accepted by the Indian people as anything like an instalment of what they desired, of what they required, and of what was necessary for their happiness. Mr. Gladstone ingeniously argued that the Bill, though it did not provide for the elective principle in so many clear words, did not at the same time rule it out and that, therefore, there was, really speaking, very little difference between the Bill and the amendment. He said:—

"The great question we have before us—the question of real and profound interest—is the question of introduction of the elective element into the Government of India. That question overshadows and absorbs everything else; it is a question of vital importance and also at the same time, a question of great difficulty. I am not at all disposed to ask the Governor-General or the Secretary of State at once to produce large and imposing results. What I wish is that their first steps should be of a nature to be genuine, and whatever amount of scope they give to the elective principle, it shall be real."

He also deprecated a division on the Bill and appealed to both Houses to support it unanimously. Mr. Schwann withdrew the amendment, and the Bill was passed in the original form Mr Gladstone's views and exhortation, however, did not fail to produce their natural effect, and though in the rules framed under the Act, the term 'election was scrupulously eschewed, the recommendations made by the bodies to which the right of recommendation had been given, were accepted as a matter of course, and an appreciable proportion of the non-official seats was practically filled by election. Such is the way in which British statesmanship advances on the path of reform!

The Councils Act of 1892 did not satisfy the demands of the Indian National Congress, nevertheless, there can be no doubt that it was the first triumph of India's struggle for *Swaraj*. "It was an attempt" says a keen student of the Indian political movement "between the official view of the Councils as pocket legislatures and the educated Indian view of them as embryo parliaments. It marks a definite parting of

the ways, the first mile-stone on a road leading eventually to political dead-lock and a strangling of executive Government. While no efforts were made to enlarge the boundaries of the educated class, to provide them with any training in responsible government or to lay the foundations of a future electorate to control them, the Act deliberately attempted to dally with the elective idea."

The utter inadequacy of the reforms introduced by the Councils Act became clear in a few years. But a long period of internal growth and awakening was to elapse before the next victory was won in the cause of Indian self-Government.

CHAPTER IV

INTERNAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT.

I

THE period that elapsed between the enactment of the Councils Act of 1892 and the introduction of the Morley-Minto Reforms in 1909 was marked by great internal growth and development. It was a fitting preparation for the next victory in the struggle for SWARAJ. The advantages afforded by the Act were used to the fullest extent by the educated classes The introduction of the elective principle brought into the Legislative Councils men who had occupied the front rank in the public life of the country Sir (then Mr.) P. M. Mehta and Mr. G. K. Gokhale led the small popular party in the Imperial Legislative Council. The Provincial Councils also contained some of the ablest and most popular leaders in the provinces The presence of such men infused a new spirit into the Legislatures. For the first time, the views and aspirations of New India found clear and fearless expression in the Council Chambers. So trenchant were Mr. Mehta's criticisms that the official world soon began to realize that it could no longer ignore with impunity the voice of public opinion. Mr. Gokhale's manner was different; but his advocacy of the cause of India was marked by such fullness of detailed knowledge, such

persuasive eloquence and such sweet reasonableness blended with measured vigour, that he soon became an outstanding figure in Indian politics. In short, the opportunities afforded by the liberalisation of the Councils were so splendidly used that the need for further constitutional reforms became soon apparent.

The Indian National Congress accepted the reforms for what they were worth, but expressed its dissatisfaction with the narrow and illiberal spirit with which they were worked by the Indian and Provincial Governments. Mr. Alfred Webb, in his address as President of the Congress in 1894, said:

"The administrative mutilation of the manifest intentions of Parliament in framing the Indian Councils Act is much to be deplored. I see that complaints have been made in every Province where the enlarged Councils are established, that the distribution of seats for representation of the people is most unsatisfactory, and that while some interests are over-represented, other important interests are not represented at all. This is not in accordance with the expressed views of British statesmen on both sides of the House when the Bill was discussed. We have here a striking instance of the extent to which administration can defeat the intentions of legislation."

There was at this time a feeling that India should be represented directly in British Parliament. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who was elected Member of Parliament in the general election of 1892, urged that "there should be some reasonable direct representation from India in the House of Commons". The same view was expressed by Mr. Gokhale in his evidence before

the Royal Commission on Indian expenditure. He proposed that the Provincial Legislative Councils should return one member each to the Imperial Parliament. "Six men in a House of 670", he said, "would introduce no disturbing factor. while the House will be in the position to ascertain Indian public opinion on the various questions coming up before it, in a constitutional manner. Here again I rely more upon the moral effect of the course proposed than upon any actual results likely to be directly achieved." The National Congress did not, however, press this demand for representation in Parliament. Probably, its leaders decided that the question was not within the range of practical politics

II

The new Councils played but a small part in the further political development of India. The forces that really made for the political progress of India subsequent to the Councils Act of 1892 were other and more vital than the Legislatures with their extremely limited functions and powers The reform of the Councils synchronised with the birth of a new spirit in India. Hitherto, educated classes had been in revolt against the ancient civilization and the old order of things. The spirit of national self-depreciation had been in the air. The defects of their ancient civilization made a deeper impression upon them than its merits. They looked outwards to the West rather than inwards into themselves and the past of their country. They were almost obsessed with the

thought that India would not have fallen but for some inherent and radical defects in her civilisation. Hinduism, Hindu philosophy, ethics, social customs and institutions were all arraigned before the bar of critical reason, and condemned as the root cause of national decadence and fall. The West was idealized and idolized as the acme of social and political perfection, and it was thought that India could have no hope and no future, unless she westernized herself as much and as quickly as possible. Discontent with the existing state of things was rife. But it was the discontent of a mind utterly out of joint, overpowered by a keen sense of uncongenial and unprogressive environments and traditions which were felt to be serious clogs fettering the full and free development of India. This spirit of revolt was the first reaction of India to the tremendous impact of the West, and was quite natural in the then state of the Indian community. But with the efflux of time that dissipated the first impressions, it was transmuted into the spirit of self-conscious nationalism. A truer sense of perspective was awakened, and West and East came to be seen and understood better, both in themselves and in their mutual relations. Henceforth, there were two distinct strains in the Indian National movement of thought. One was that the Indian civlisation was on the whole self-sufficient and self-progressive, that the real need of India was to awaken the sense of national self-respect and self-esteem and to revive her ancient ideals which had fallen into decay; the other, though duly alive to

the real merits of her ancient civilization, was that it was lacking in certain essentials which must be assimilated, and which could only be supplied by the West, and that, therefore, what was necessary for the future progress of the country was, along with the cultivation of national self-respect and self-esteem, to reform the various Indian communities in the light of modern knowledge and modern conditions of national life, and make them thoroughly fit to discharge the new responsibilities which it was impossible to avoid even if they wished to do so.

Several events took place which contributed, each in its own away, to the rise and growth of this spirit of nationalism. At the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893, Hinduism was represented by Swami Vivekananda whose able presentation of its cardinal teachings made a profound impression upon the American mind and removed the impression, then widely prevalent, that Hinduism was nothing but a tissue of falsehoods, errors, superstitions, diabolical practices. Swami Vivekananda was a forceful personality, and his influence upon young India, particularly young Bengal, has been deep, lasting, wholesome. Deeply read in the philosophies and religions of the East and the West, he preached that the essential principles of Hinduism were, not only in perfect harmony with the latest developments of modern scientific thought, but also capable of reforming the prevalent Indian modes of thought and life, and readjusting them to the needs of the unprecedented

situation created by the impact of the West on the East. He appealed to his countrymen to realise those principles and apply them to the solution of the new complex problems of modern India. He had an intense faith in the spiritual mission of India and in her power to fulfil that mission. At the same time, he believed that the full realization of that mission was impossible without political freedom, without congenial political *milieu* ; and he therefore actively encouraged the new political aspirations with which the heart of young India was beating. Though a *Sanyasi*, who had given up all worldly interests, he was yet a patriot, and his heart bled at the idea of the sufferings of his country. His English disciple, Sister Nivedita, speaks thus of his love of India · " Throughout those years ", she says ", in which I saw him almost daily, the thought of India was to him like the air he breathed "

Swami Vivekananda was also a man of action. He thought that India had lost her old balance between the material and spiritual sides of true civilization, that, latterly, she had suffered from the disease of excessive thought, with the result that the strong vigorous life of action had been neglected, and thought itself had become effete and unreal. He therefore impressed upon the people the duty of leading a life, not of mere dreamy contemplation, but of vigorous, social action. He was to Modern India what Wangyangming was to the Chinese under the Ming dynasty in the sixteenth century, or the School of Oyomei to the Japanese on the eve of the Restoration. The funda-

mental principle of Wangyangming and the School of Oyomei was that knowledge was useless, unless realized in action. It was this great and vital principle that Swami Vivekananda impressed upon his countrymen. The rich knowledge, enshrined in the noble teachings of Hinduism, had not, he said, had its full effects, because it had not been expressed in action; nay, what action there was, was not in harmony with that knowledge. And he practised what he preached. No religious teacher worked more for the uplift of the masses, for elevating the status of the pariah, the poor, the down-trodden or for relieving poverty, disease, and distress.

Such a thinker, patriot, reformer and Sanyasi was bound to exercise great influence upon contemporary Indian thought and life. Young India became nationalist and her nationalism realised its true nature, that is, it was informed, illumined, and inspired by a strong consciousness of the past achievements of India, of the glorious part which, in spite of the vicissitudes, aye, the tragic vicissitudes, of her national existence, she had played in human history, and of the high and noble mission which, in the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, she was called upon to play in the modern world. Swami Vivekananda might well be called the father of Modern Indian Nationalism; he largely created it and also embodied in his own life its highest and noblest elements.

The movement started by Swami Vivekananda was helped by the work of the Theosophical Society.

Under the leadership of Mrs. Annie Besant, the Society and its principles and activities began to receive increasing attention from the Indian people. Mrs. Besant glorified the ancient thought of India, and openly proclaimed her faith in the superiority of the whole Hindu system to the vaunted civilisation of the West. Further, some of the social and religious customs, beliefs and institutions which Western-educated Hindus condemned as superstitious and irrational, she interpreted in such a way as to naturally flatter the national vanity of the people. The institution of caste had aroused the greatest dissatisfaction among the educated Hindus. If there was any institution which they detested as being really at the root of their national fall, it was caste; but even that institution was defended by the school of Theosophists led by Mrs. Besant. Many educated Hindus fell under her magic spell, and began to think that, after all, much might be said in favour of the old system of four castes. What could be more rousing than the repeated insistence by this wonderful European lady, that the Eastern civilisation was essentially superior to the Western, and that the national fall of the Hindus was due not to any inferiority of that civilization, but to the fact that they forgot its noble ideals?

With the advent of Swami Vivekananda and Mrs. Besant begins the period of national revival. But there is a difference between the two movements led by them respectively. Swami Vikekananda's movement was a movement both of national revival and reform;

he aimed at reviving Hinduism and Hindu ideals, and also at reforming Hindu Society so as to make it fit to bear the serious responsibilities of modern world life. In Mrs. Besant's movement, at all events, in its early stages, the note of revival was so dominant that it drowned the note of reform. Besides, the spirit of Nationalism which, along with spirituality and happily blending with it, was a master passion with Swami Vivekananda, was lacking in her movement On the other hand, during at least the first period of her movement, when she was developing her scheme of the Central Hindu College at Benares and trying to obtain for it the support of the Government, the political discontent of the educated classes did not receive much sympathy from her, she attributed it to the lack of religious education in the Western system of education introduced in India. Nevertheless, in spite of this difference, these two movements were complementary, and their result was to arouse and foster the spirit ot Nationalism.

While the Indian movement was being thus moulded by this new spirit of Nationalism, events took place in the Bombay Presidency, which, though only provincial in their character, contributed, in their effects, to swell the rising tide of Nationalism. In the province of Bombay and particularly in the Deccan, the spirit of conservative Nationalism found its ablest and most powerful exponent in Mr. Bal Gangadhar Tilak. Mr. Tilak, as the sequel will show, is one of the makers of new India; he has played a most remark

able part in her struggle for SWARAJ. He began life as an educationist, having been one of the founders of the Deccan Education Society at Poona. He first came into prominence in 1891 as a powerful champion of Hindu orthodoxy, by his vehement opposition to the Age of Consent Bill, and as a strong critic of the Government. But, underlying and inspiring all his activities, was the spirit of conservative Nationalism. But before he fully realised his mission and began to work strenuously for its fulfilment, another exponent of Nationalism, Mr. Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar, who died in 1882 at the young age of 32, and with whom Mr. Tilak was associated in founding the Deccan Education Society, had already prepared the soil. Owing to his premature death, Mr. Chiplunkar did not become an all-India figure. But he was a very powerful writer, and for seven years, he preached through his magazine the gospel of Nationalism, and awakened his countrymen to a sense of the high worth of their ancient inheritance. His nationalism was not inspired by hatred of the West and Western civilization: on the contrary, he had the fairness to see their many great qualities, and no other Indian cherished a greater admiration for the virile English literature of which he was a devoted student, and for the vigorous English national character. He appealed to the people not to be carried away by the dazzling superficialities of Western civilization, but to assimilate those qualities of the West which had made England and other Western countries great and

powerful. At the same time, he urged that the prevalent spirit of National self-depreciation was harmful; those, he said, who did not feel pride in the past, could feel no hope for the future. In a way, his task was not so difficult as in other provinces. The Deccan had not been under British rule and Western influences for such a length of time as Bengal and Madras; the Marathas are a practical people with a strong grip on the realities of life, and therefore possessed of a judgment which is seldom prone to extremes; and their traditions of national independence and of stout resistance to the aggressions of foreigners had been comparatively fresh. For all these reasons, the spirit of revolt against the ancient Hindu civilisation, and social and religious order had never spread far and wide in the Deccan.

Mr. Tilak continued the work begun by Vishnu Krishna Chiplunkar, and in course of time, attained the position of the unchallenged leader of conservative nationalism. He opposed the Age of Consent Bill, an extremely moderate piece of social legislation, on the ground that social reform must not be forced by legislation, particularly by a foreign Government; and he led the agitation against it with an ability and vigour that at once marked him out as an outstanding popular leader. He reorganised the Ganapati Festival, gave it a public character, and made it an instrument of popular education in patriotism and nationalism. He strongly and persistently attacked social reformers and the social reform movement, and impressed upon the

people that true social reform must be based on national lines, and not made in a spirit of apish imitation of the customs and institutions of the ruling race. He defended caste and the Hindu social and religious order in general, and condemned the movement for social and religious reform as based on, and being inspired by, false and unsuitable Western ideals and conceptions of society.

In 1888, Mr. Tilak became the sole responsible editor of the KESARI, and, through it, exercised an influence upon the literate classes in the Marathi-speaking Districts, which it is impossible to exaggerate. The KESARI has been to them what the London TIMES has been to the English. In the hands of Mr. Tilak, it became the most powerful and popular organ of conservative nationalism. In matters social and religious, it stood for national revival, not reform, and vehemently opposed all causes and movements that went against the grain of Hindu orthodoxy. In politics, its deepest and strongest note was nationalistic; it mercilessly attacked the alien bureaucracy, and exposed its many sins of commission and omission. It made its ever-widening circle of readers realize the evils of foreign domination and impressed upon them the paramount duty of cultivating patriotism, national self-respect, national unity, the spirit of resistance to wrong and injustice, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. It further taught the people the Western methods of agitation. We have already stated that Mr. Tilak reorganised the Ganapati festival and made it an instrument of

popular education and of the revival of the national spirit. In 1895, he started another patriotic and popular movement for raising a memorial to Shivaji, the great founder of the Maratha Empire, and for instituting a new festival in his honour to be celebrated every year on the anniversary of his birthday. A mass meeting was held at Poona for the purpose of raising funds for the memorial, and attended by all classes of people including representatives of the ancient aristocratic families. The Shivaji festival was inaugurated, and ever since, has become an annual function throughout the Maratha territory. There can be no doubt that the festival has contributed to the revival of nationalism among the Marathas.

Thus, there arose and grew a distinct and strong movement of conservative nationalism; but it did not absorb the whole current of thought and activity. Side by side with it, the older movement, which might be called progressive nationalism, also went on, though it was now freed from its tendency towards excessive national self-depreciation. That movement had been led in Maharashtra, first by Mr. Ranade, a genius with varied activities, who was, in fact, the first to breathe new life into the dry bones of Maharashtra, and later on, found an able and powerful exponent in Mr. Gopal Ganesh Agarkar. Mr. Agarkar and Mr. Tilak worked together for several years in the Deccan Education Society; but later on, serious differences arose between them; and while Mr. Tilak led the movement of national revival and

conservative nationalism, Mr. Agarkar became the leader of the movement of national reform and progressive nationalism. Mr. Agarkar was no less a nationalist than Mr. Tilak; both keenly realised the great and insidious evils of foreign domination. Like Mr. Tilak, he also hated the ignoble spirit of mere blind imitation of the ruling race, nor did he decry the ancient civilization of India or fail to recognise its merits. But he frankly and freely realised its faults and limitations, and maintained that a living civilization was a continuous growth, and that, therefore, the Hindu civilization ought to grow by assimilating all that was good and noble in the Western civilization with which it had come into contact, and, to some extent, into conflict. Above all, he urged that thought ought to be free, and that in case of conflict between reason and authority, the latter must yield empire to the former. He was a powerful writer and edited the KESARI before it passed into the hands of Mr. Tilak in 1888. During the time he was its editor, the KESARI was an organ of progressive nationalism. In 1888, he started another paper, called the SUDHARAK or the Reformer, and until his death in 1895, ably and fearlessly championed the cause of social reform and progressive nationalism. He was a great apostle of liberty and believed that, without its free play, no progress could be made or be lasting. His writings were characterised by the free criticism of life that marked the Greek spirit. They ranged over the whole domain of Hindu Social reform. With rare keenness, insight,

and vigour, they exposed the manifold evils that were eating into the vitals of the Hindu Society, and seriously impaired its efficiency. Every social or socio-religious institution, custom, usage and rite was subjected to the most searching analysis and criticism, and its evils pointed out with remarkable boldness and vigour. The status of woman, equality of the sexes, higher education of women, choice marriage, widow re-marriage, caste, the attitude of the Hindus towards the depressed classes, their funeral rites and ceremonies, their notions of cleanliness and pollution, their modes of dress, all these and many other questions, great and small, connected with Hindu social and religious life, were discussed with a freedon of thought and a fearlessness of criticism which are very rare in the whole domain of Indian literature. And all this Mr. Agarkar did, not as a mere speculative thinker, not as a mere detached observer, but as a practical reformer who ardently desired that his country should be great and command respect from the whole civilised world. In a remarkable passage which aptly illustrates the great heights of thought to which he could soar, he says :

We have as much right to inaugurate new customs and usages as the ancient Rishis ; we enjoy the same favour of God as the ancient Acharyas ; we are endowed with the same, if not greater, faculty of discrimination between right and wrong as they ; our hearts melt with pity for the depressed classes much more than theirs did ; our knowledge of the universe and its cause is greater, not less, than theirs ; hence, we shall observe only those injunctions laid down by them which we deem beneficial and replace those which we think harmful, by others. It is on these lines that

reform must be made; it is useless to quote one sage as against another and try to reconcile them all.

Such was the spirit of Mr. Agarkar, and his influence has been great and lasting. If the cause of social reform has made greater progress in the Deccan than in any other province, it is due largely to his teachings. He represents what may be called the rationalistic and liberal element in the nationalist movement of India. Both that element and the conservative element represented by Mr. Tilak are essential to the steady progress of a society; and, if to-day, the Marathas present on the whole a happy blend of the two, it is due to the action and interaction of both these elements.

III

The political development of India subsequent to the enactment of the Councils Act in 1892, was influenced by external as well as internal events. The first external event of this kind was the War between China and Japan in 1894. Though it was a fratricidal war between one Asiatic nation and another, its significance was fully realized by Indian leaders. They saw, in the victory won by Japan, the dawn of a new era for the whole of Asia. Mr. Tilak, whose views on matters like this might be regarded as thoroughly representative, wrote in the KESARI that the condition of Japan was a clear indication of the revolution that was taking place all over Asia, and it was bound to inspire hope in the minds of all Asiatic peoples. The crushing defeat

inflicted upon China could not but, it was thought, lead to her awakening, and when once China and other Asiatic nations were awakened, the ultimate result would be to check the Imperialistic ambitions of Western powers. Such was the train of thought awakened in the minds of the Indian people by the Japanese victory over China, and naturally it had its share of influence in shaping the future political development of India.

In 1896, India was visited by two calamities, famine and plague. The past experiences of famine had led the Government to consider the question of famine relief on more or less scientific lines, and they had framed a body of rules for giving relief which were embodied in what was called the Famine Code. Mr. Tilak organised a propaganda with the object of teaching the agriculturists their rights under the Code. Mass meetings were held even in villages, and perhaps for the first time in the history of the National Congress, the poor starving peasants were made to realize that their interests and welfare were an object of deep concern with their educated countrymen. The moral effects of a movement like this were beyond exaggeration, and the bureaucracy was not slow to perceive this aspect. They misrepresented and condemned the agitation as a no-rent campaign and prosecutions were instituted against some of the lecturers whom Mr. Tilak had deputed to carry on propaganda in famine-stricken areas. The immediate, practical results of the movement were not great, but its net result was that even

the ignorant and poverty-stricken agriculturists began to feel, though faintly, that they were human beings and had some rights which they were entitled to demand.

In the same year, bubonic plague broke out at Bombay, Poona and other places, and the Government of Bombay adopted very stringent measures which, they hoped, would succeed in stamping it out. British soldiers were employed in the delicate task of enforcing these measures and there were serious complaints that in discharging their duties for which they were, in fact, absolutely ill-qualified, they wounded the religious susceptibilities of the people and even committed gross outrages. A few young men, thirsting for revenge, formed a conspiracy to murder the Collector who was believed to have been responsible for the policy of employing white soldiers on plague duty, and the design was carried out on the day of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, while he and another European officer were returning home from a state banquet at the Government House. The other Officer, Lieut. Ayerst was shot down on the spot, while the Collector, Mr. Rand, suffered serious injuries from which he subsequently died.

The motive for the murders could be easily guessed, but the conspirators themselves eluded detection, in spite of the best detective skill and efforts, for a long time. The Government of Bombay adopted a policy of stern repression and established a reign of terror, particularly in Poona. Concluding that the murders

must have been instigated, directly or indirectly, by writings in the Vernacular press, they instituted prosecutions for sedition against the KESARI, and several other Marathi papers. Mr. Tilak, editor of the KESARI, was arrested at Bombay on 27th July 1897; and on the next day, the Natu brothers, two of the Sardars in the Deccan, were deported under an old rusty regulation enacted soon after the overthrow of the Peshwas in 1818. These two brothers were suspected of anti-British feelings, and the Government thought that they must have been connected with the murders. They therefore raked up an old regulation designed for quite different times and circumstances, and deported them *without trial*.

The prosecution of Mr. Tilak was an important event in the history of the political development of India. Mr. Tilak became a name to conjure with; to the young men who were receiving education in schools and colleges, the citizens of tomorrow, he became *their beau ideal*. The calm and indomitable courage with which he faced the prosecution raised him in the estimation even of his opponents, and endeared him to all classes of his countrymen. Sinister suggestions were made to him that the Government would withdraw the prosection if he tendered an apology. This was the first important political prosecution; a previous prosecution against a Bengali paper in 1891 had been withdrawn on the editor offering an apology. The terrors of the jail had not yet been overcome, and the idea of brave suffering for the mother country, taken root in the