

ment of India had been compelled by the Secretary of State to reduce the duty on Lancashire woven cotton goods from 5 to $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and to impose a countervailing excise duty of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on woven cotton fabrics manufactured in Indian mills. And over and over again were the doctrines preached that the peasantry¹ were crushed by the land revenue demand, and that the country was exploited by foreign capital) I shall refer more fully to the latter accusation later on.

The death of Queen Victoria profoundly affected public sentiment, for her messages to India on great occasions had taught Indians to regard her as their own Sovereign. At the time of the 1903 Durbar, which celebrated the accession of King Edward, the political barometer seemed steady.

The ceremonies were splendid; the speech of the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, disclosed no presentiment of the difficulties and trials which were to come with an early morrow.

"Princes and people," he said, "if we turn our eyes for a moment to the future, a great development appears with little doubt to lie before this country. There is no Indian problem, be it of population, or education, or labour, or subsistence, which it is not within the power of statesmanship to solve. The solution of many is even now proceeding before our eyes. If the combined Armies of Great Britain and India can secure combined peace upon our borders; if unity prevails within them, between princes and people, between European and Indian, and between rulers and ruled, and if the seasons fail not in their bounty, then nothing can arrest the march of progress, the India of the future will, under Providence, not be an India of diminishing plenty, of empty prospect, or of justifiable discontent; but one of expanding industry, of

¹ The end of the last century was marked by bad agricultural seasons and the rapid spread of plague with disastrous economic consequences.

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awakened faculties, of increasing prosperity, and of more widely distributed comfort and wealth. I have faith in the conscience and the purpose of my own country, and I believe in the almost illimitable capacities of this. But under no conditions can this future be realised than the unchallenged supremacy of the paramount power, and under no controlling authority is this capable of being maintained than that of the British Crown."

Yet, in fact, this Durbar marked the end of the comparatively restful and untroubled era which had lasted for forty years. It was an era of successful and unchallenged government, of increasing and widening education, of growing commerce, of an improving land revenue system, of all-round progress. Yet, among the still scanty Western educated classes, discontent slumbered lightly under a surface that was usually smooth. Peculiar economic conditions were producing an increasing number of youths for whom life seemed hard and difficult, in spite of English education; the ideas and customs of ages had been shaken; political gatherings were beginning to surpass fairs and caste-meetings in social interest. There was a desire for change, an impatience of the present, a growing doctrine that the old times were better than the new. In one part of India this doctrine had been openly preached; and there and elsewhere (advantage was taken of famines, of plague, of poverty, of lack of occupation, of the chequered incidents of the Boer War, to depreciate British efficiency and British rule. Already, in Bombay, the circulation of such ideas had received a special stimulus from peculiar circumstances, and murder had resulted.) Coming years were to prove that if an edge could be given to such latent discontent, the Poona incidents would not stand alone. But the ruling princes, the

territorial and rural classes, the military castes, the masses, were tranquil and unchanged; the outside of affairs was calm; and Lord Curzon proceeded with characteristic determination and enthusiasm to grapple with the great problem of Indian education.

The results of the orders passed on the reports of the Indian Education and Public Services Commissions appointed by Lords Ripon and Dufferin had been in some measure disastrous to secondary education, especially in Bengal, where an excessive devolution of control to non-official agency had resulted in a serious lowering of standards. The Calcutta University Syndicate, which presided over English education in that province, and regulated the standards of the examinations which lay before the thronging candidates for Government service, had exercised little control over secondary schools, leaving them largely to local committees. These committees consisted mainly of men of small ideas, who thought only of providing sufficient teaching to meet examination requirements. Moral influences and training of character they comparatively disregarded; and, cutting down the cost of buildings, and salaries of schoolmasters, to the lowest possible levels, they provided the cheapest instruction that they could contrive.¹ Vainly did the Government empha-

¹ The following passages from a speech by the Hindu head master of a high school in a prominent city of the United Provinces show clearly the pitfalls which beset popular education in India:

"This school owes its expansion more to the Government and the Government officials than to the general public, unless fees are regarded as a public contribution.

"I make these remarks not because we fail to acknowledge the help received from the public, but to emphasise the fact that the cause of the education of our nation's children occupies only a secondary place in the minds of the rich men and other people. We have yet to realise the full responsibility of educating our children. Many parents seem to feel absolved from all responsibility after sending their children to school,

sise its view that it was "of little use to spend money on schools where the teachers were either inefficient or unable to maintain discipline or a healthy moral tone." No serious attempt was made to alter things, and grave abuses became increasingly apparent throughout the whole Indian school and university system. Lord Curzon determined to insist on thorough reforms. He threw all his energies into the task, appealing earnestly for non-official co-operation, and emphasising the importance of the interests at stake. The education which is the necessary preliminary to all professional and industrial work was obviously a great national

without inquiring whether the school concerned is a recognised institution or not. In this place there have sprung up a number of schools from which the sanctity that should be attached to an educational institution is entirely absent, and of which money-making seems to be the primary aim. The gullible parents are ready to pay exorbitant fees, and those also in advance for many months, when they are promised that their boys would be put up three or four classes above the one for which they were really fit. It must be acknowledged that this state of affairs calls for the necessity of opening more schools of an approved type. But I have to complain even against the parent whose sons read in a recognised school, for he, too, is alive to his responsibility only when a seat has to be secured for them—not an easy endeavour in these days—or perhaps when they fail to obtain promotion. Only lately I had an occasion to address a circular letter to the guardians of such students as failed in two subjects at the first periodical examination, with a view to conferring with them regarding the progress of their wards, but not more than two per cent. cared to respond.

"When such is the apathy of the parents, the indifference at home must be great indeed. Far be it from me to attribute want of affection to the parents for their children, but this affection is more in evidence when you see the little one at school patronising the sweetmeat vendor than in properly regulating their life at home. The teacher hopes that his work would be supplemented with adequate supervision at home, but the parents expect that a few hours at school should make their sons paragons of all virtues. To my mind one of the problems of education in India is to make the home of the child in proper unison with his school. If this were done, many social, educational, and, I dare say, even political difficulties could be solved, and our boys would not be exposed to dangers, as unfortunately they are now."

concern; it was "the key to employment, the condition of all national advance and prosperity, and the sole stepping-stone for every class of the community to higher things." It was a social and political, even more than an intellectual demand.

The Congress leaders, however, mainly because they suspected that Lord Curzon's secret intention was to check the growing numbers of the restless English-educated classes, strenuously opposed the Viceroy, and succeeded in impressing their ideas on the minds of many persons incapable of appreciating the realities of the situation. In spite of their opposition, Lord Curzon passed a Universities Act of considerable importance; but he left India suddenly, his work came to an abrupt termination, and drastic improvement in secondary education has hung fire in Bengal from that day to this. The Viceroy's efforts had, however, produced restlessness and resentment among the literate classes, and these feelings were widened and deepened by the Partition agitation.

No one has ever seriously denied that the old province of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa was, by reason of its magnitude, an impossible and, because impossible, a sadly neglected charge.

The Supreme Government had been slow to realise that times had altered since 1785, when Warren Hastings, reviewing his eventful administration, wrote that the submissive character of the people of this province, the fewness of their wants, "the abundant sources of subsistence and of trafficable wealth which may be drawn from the natural productions, and from the manufactures, both of established usage and of new institutions, left little to the duty of the magistrate; in effect nothing but attention, protection, and forbearance." No soldiers of the Indian Army had been drawn

from Bengal, and Bengalis had taken no share in the rebellion of 1857. But as prosperity and population increased, as English education spread, administration became more complex, and the character of the educated classes stiffened and altered. The charge of 78,000,000 of people, including the inhabitants of the largest and most Europeanised city in the East, was far too onerous for one provincial administration; and, after considerable deliberation and consultation, Lord Curzon decided to divide the old province and Assam into the new provinces of Western Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, and Eastern Bengal and Assam.

Administratively, this was the best arrangement. It afforded most promise of opening up and developing the rich, difficult, and populous water districts of Eastern Bengal. But it split Bengal proper into two, and gave Muhammadans a decided majority in the Eastern Province. It was, therefore, strongly opposed by the Congress leaders at Calcutta, the centre of Hindu legal, educational, and political activities. They proclaimed that a foreign government wished to insult and efface Bengali nationality. When the partition was carried out, they enlisted ardent support from sympathisers all over India, proclaimed a boycott of European goods, to be effected by the aid of students and schoolboys, and organised a violent agitation on a widespread and elaborate scale. Many of them were moved by a new kind of sentiment. The achievements of Japan had profoundly affected Indian political thought. Their plans took time to develop, and were largely suspended during the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales, which passed off successfully in the cold season of 1905-6. Before the Congress of 1905 met at Benares, Lord Curzon had left India, and the Unionist Ministry in England had been followed

by the representatives of a mammoth Liberal majority. Lord Minto had succeeded to the Viceroyalty, and Mr. John Morley had been appointed Secretary of State for India.

The events which closed the administration of the departing Viceroy were destined to influence profoundly the subsequent course of affairs. No viceroy has ever played a part larger than the part played by Lord Curzon. His influence on all branches of administration was vigorous and beneficial; he placed the arrangements for the security of the North-West frontier on a stable footing; he set an example of industry and devotion which was finely expressed in his memorable parting words.¹

But we can see now that his bold and confident nature led him to underrate the combination between the opposition to the Partition of Bengal and the new spirit which had arisen in India. The loosening of control which was certain to follow on his departure; the number and bitterness of his enemies; their eagerness and the anxiety of those who resented British rule to seize any opportunity of misinterpreting all government measures; the plastic material which lay ready

¹ "Oh that to every Englishman in this country, as he ends his work, might truthfully be applied the phrase: 'Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity.' No man has, I believe, ever served India faithfully of whom that could not be said. Perhaps there are few of us who make anything but a poor approximation to that ideal; but let it be our ideal all the same. To fight for the right, to abhor the imperfect, the unjust, to swerve neither to the right hand nor to the left. . . . Never to let your enthusiasm be soured, or your courage grow dim, but to remember that the Almighty has placed His hand on the greatest of His ploughs in whose furrow the nations of the future are germinating and taking shape, to drive the blade a little forward in your time—that is enough, that is the Englishman's justification in India. It is good enough for his justification while he is here, for his epitaph when he is gone."

to their hands ; all these were factors of so far undiscovered potency. But, when accounts are balanced, posterity will say, with Lord Morley :

“ You never will send to India a Viceroy his superior, if, indeed, his equal, in force of mind, in passionate and devoted interest in all that concerns the well-being of India, with an imagination fired by the grandeur of the political problem that India presents. You never sent a man with more of all these attributes than when you sent Lord Curzon.”

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL MOVEMENTS—SECOND STAGE

THE Twenty-first Congress, held at Benares in December 1905, was attended by 756 delegates, of whom 718 were Hindus, 17 were Muhammadans, and 14 were Sikhs. The tone of the introductory note to the printed record of proceedings is notably aggressive. India was declared to be "distracted, discontented, despondent, the victim of many misfortunes, political and others"; the "cup of national indignation had been filled to overflowing by the Partition designed to break down the political power and influence of the educated opinion of Bengal." The rise of Japan had, however, it was said, produced a great moral impression, and a new epoch had begun in the work of political regeneration and emancipation not only for Bengal, but for all India. The service of the motherland would become "as great and overmastering a passion as in Japan."

The late Mr. Gokhale,¹ a Chitpavan Brahman of great intellectual power, was elected President. He justified the boycott of European goods which had been proclaimed by the leaders of the anti-Partition agitation in Bengal, and declared that the time was sensibly nearer when the bureaucratic monopoly of power could be successfully assailed. He asked for a proportion of one-half elected members in all the Councils, for an extension of Council privileges, and for the

¹ Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born in 1866. He was for long a lecturer in the Fergusson College, Poona, and early became prominent in politics.

appointment of three Indians to the Council of the Secretary of State. He considered that the time was auspicious for these demands. Mr. John Morley was at the India Office, and "our heart hopes and yet trembles as it has never yet hoped and trembled before."

Bitter complaint was made of the treatment of Indians in the British colonies—a grievance of some standing even then—and of the recent educational policy of Lord Curzon's Government. The "pluck and heroism" of the young Bengali anti-Partitionists were commended. They were termed "pillars of the popular movement." Reference was made to the rising sun of Japan.

(In the new province of Eastern Bengal things grew worse during 1906. As purely sentimental appeals were ineffectual to excite sufficient popular sympathy, the leaders of the anti-Partition movement, searching for a national hero, endeavoured to import from Bombay the cult of Sivaji, and appealed to the religion of the multitude by placing their efforts under the patronage of Kali, the goddess of strength and destruction. Another device to which they resorted was borrowed from Europe. Years before a Bengali named Bankim Chandra had written a novel¹ based on incursions by some bands of *Sanyasis*,² fanatical Hindu banditti, who in the year 1772, after a severe famine, had descended on Bengal, their ranks swollen by a crowd of starving peasants, and had obtained temporary successes against some Government levies under British officers. The novel contained a song which was adopted as a *Marseillaise* by the anti-Partitionists, and has since become famous as "*Bande Mataram*"—Hail, Motherland! Its sentiment is expressed in the following lines :

¹ *The Ananda Math*. See Appendix II.

² *Sanyasi* means renouncer, i.e. renouncer of the world and even of caste. The ordinary *Sanyasi* is simply an ascetic.

"We have no mother," sings the leader of the Sanyasis.

"We have no father, no brother, no wife, no child,
no hearth, no home. We acknowledge nothing
save the motherland.

My Motherland I sing; Thou art my head,
Thou art my heart.

My life and soul art Thou, my soul, my worship, and
my art.

Before Thy feet I bow."

From the context in the novel it seems that the Sanyasi's appeal was rather to his mother's land, the land of Mother Kali, than to his motherland.

"Bande Mataram" and other effusions of a more militant character were eagerly taken up by the masses of Hindu youths who thronged the numerous schools and colleges in Bengal under needy discontented teachers. Indeed it was to enlist these facile recruits that the Calcutta leaders addressed their main efforts. "Swadeshi," or indigenous, industrial enterprises were hastily started; a boycott of foreign goods was proclaimed as the best and most effective weapon of retaliation for the Partition, and arrangements were made to carry out this boycott by persuasion, forcible if necessary, through the agency of schoolboys and students. The whole agitation was Hindu, and was strongly resented by the Muhammadans, who form the majority in Eastern Bengal, and had derived substantial and obvious advantages from the new arrangements. But the latter controlled no newspapers of importance, and had few orators to voice their wishes. Their leaders were few, their press was insignificant, and they lacked the previous stimulus which had prepared the Hindu youth of educated Bengal for a passionate agitation.

In 1902 had died the Bengali enthusiast, Swami

Vivekananda, whose words inculcating nationalism and religion had sunk deep into the minds of many of the educated classes, and not long ago might be seen printed as texts on the walls of the rooms of students in Bengal. His real name was Narendro Nath Datta, and he had graduated in the Calcutta University, but, subsequently, became an ascetic. He had visited the Chicago Congress of religions as a missionary of Hinduism. Returning, he preached and lectured in various parts of India, acquiring a number of eager followers. "The nature of his teaching may best be illustrated by quotations from a lecture on "The Work before us," delivered in Madras :

"With all my love for India, and with all my patriotism and veneration for the ancients, I cannot but think that we have to learn many things from the world. We must be always ready to sit at the feet of all to learn great lessons ; for, mark you, every one can teach us great lessons. . . . At the same time we must not forget that we have also to teach a great lesson to the world. We cannot do without the world outside India ; it was our foolishness that we thought we could, and we have paid the penalty by about a thousand years of slavery. That we did not go out to compare things with other nations, did not mark the workings that have been all around us, has been the one great cause of this degradation of the Indian mind. All such foolish ideas that Indians must not go out of India are childish ; they must be knocked on the head ; the more you go out and travel among the nations of the world, the better for you and for your country. If you had done that for hundreds of years past, you would not be here to-day at the feet of every country that wants to rule India. The first manifest effect of life is expansion. You must expand if you want to live. The moment you have ceased to expand, death is upon you, danger is ahead. I went to America and

Europe, to which you so kindly allude; I had to go because that is the first sign of the revival of national life—expansion. . . . Those of you who think that the Hindus have been always confined within the four walls of their country through all ages are entirely mistaken; they have not studied the whole books; they have not studied the history of the race aright. . . . I am an imaginative man, and my idea is the conquest of the whole world by the Hindu race. There have been great conquering races in the world. We also have been great conquerors. The story of our conquest has been described by the great Emperor of India, Asoka, as the conquest of religion and spirituality. Once more the world must be conquered by India. . . . Let foreigners come and flood the land with their armies, never mind. Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality! Aye, as has been declared on this soil, first love must conquer hatred; hatred cannot conquer itself. Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. Armies, when they attempt to conquer armies, only multiply and make brutes of humanity. Spirituality must conquer the West. Slowly they are finding it out that what they want is spirituality to preserve them as nations.”

Force and bitterness were added to ideas inspired by such teaching, when it was possible to represent an administrative measure as designed to thwart national expansion, when numbers of publications were alleging that the British were cunning oppressors.

As in Bengal the Hindu political leaders wanted the boycott, while the Muhammadans did not, relations between the two communities rapidly deteriorated, and attempts to enforce disuse or destruction of European goods led to blows and riots. Hindu agitation steadily intensified in bitterness. The first Lieutenant-Governor of the new eastern province, Sir Bamfylde Fuller, endeavoured to stem the current, but was not

supported by the Supreme Government in certain action which he considered essential, and resigned office. His resignation increased an impression, already current, that the Government feared to use effective preventives. The Indian army then took no recruits from Bengal, and the villages contain no sobering element of pensioned soldiers who are acquainted with the realities of British power. Few of the village people outside Calcutta had seen British troops, and some in the remote water-logged under-administered districts of the eastern province were encouraged by the lawlessness of the agitators and the forbearance of Government to believe that the days of British rule were drawing to an end. Boycott and picketing frequently ended in disturbances in which schoolboys and teachers were prominent.

The Congress of 1906 again justified the boycott, and requested annulment of the Partition. It also formulated a new demand which was intended to, and did, unite for a time those Indian politicians who aspired to a far larger share in the Government and other more violent spirits who were beginning to visualise an end of British rule. The demand was that the system of government obtaining in the self-governing British colonies should be extended to India. As preliminaries, such reforms as simultaneous examinations for the Civil Service and considerably enlarged Legislative Councils should be immediately instituted. In the presidential address of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, after an appeal to the Muhammadans for co-operation, occurred the following words: "Once self-government is attained, there will be prosperity enough for all, but not till then." He thought that union therefore of all the people for their emancipation was an absolute necessity.

"Agitation," he considered, "is the life and soul of the whole political, social, and industrial history of England. The life of England is all agitation. . . . Agitation is the civilised peaceful weapon of moral force, and infinitely preferable to brute physical force, when possible. Agitate, agitate over the whole length and breadth of India, peacefully of course, if we mean really to get justice from John Bull. Satisfy him that we are in earnest. The Bengalis, I am glad, have learnt the lesson and led the march. . . . Agitate means inform. Inform the Indian people what their rights are, and why and how they should obtain them."

Mr. Naoroji ignored the important fact that agitation in homogeneous England does not mean the exacerbation of colour-feeling, of racial jealousy and hatred. In India it is generally carried on by methods which mean this.

As a matter of fact, however, those leaders of the Congress movement who had not become intoxicated with excitement and racial animosity, had before this meeting begun to see that things were going too far. It is probable too that some at least were becoming aware that behind all the whirlwind of passion in Bengal, behind the schools and colleges which were developing into seed-beds of sedition, behind the pamphlets and newspapers which were disseminating hatred and bitterness far and wide, the ground was being prepared for even more serious doings by fanatics inflamed with the purpose of gradually organising a bloody revolt. This the Government was slow to realise. The movement was persistently misunderstood by its friends in England. It had not touched the fighting races or the fighting castes, and the main grievance was sentimental. Few anticipated that it would lead to actual bloodshed.¹ Fewer dreamt that it would bring

¹ A loyal Bengali gentleman once told the author that he was so amazed by the first outrages that he refused to credit them.

forth an unending series of violent crimes, or that, in a country where sons closely adhere to the occupations of their fathers, the sons of clerks, lawyers, and schoolmasters would, under the influence of racial sentiment and vague idealism, abjure the ambitions of their class and drill with daggers and pistols; and indeed it is certain that had more of these young men and boys ever known firm discipline and intelligent supervision, in and out of study hours, they would not have fallen so easy a prey to the plots of unscrupulous revolutionaries.

The mixture of ideas which appealed to such victims is illustrated by a confession which the author has read. It stated that the promptings to which the young revolutionary had succumbed were derived from histories of India and the rise of other nations, newspaper tales of ill-treatment of Indians by Europeans, stories of secret societies in magazines like the *Strand*, "accounts of the present better condition of other countries." He had later begun to doubt the veracity of these accounts. Finally, he joined because the boycott agitation afforded a "grand opportunity."

But although the reasonable members of the Congress of 1906, who had acquired the title of "Moderates," wished to call a halt, they did not as yet separate from their more intemperate and thorough-going colleagues who, pushing recklessly on, were becoming known as Extremists. In March 1907 the Viceroy (Lord Minto) publicly announced that he had sent home a despatch to the Secretary of State proposing administrative reforms on a liberal basis. About the same time serious disturbances occurred in the Punjab. In that province ¹ Arya Samajists are numerous, and the large cities contain many Bengali immigrants. Disturb-

¹ See page 27. The Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College had been opened at Lahore, the centre of the movement.

ances took place; attempts were made to tamper with Sikh and Jat regiments, and two leading Arya Samajists were deported. In the two Bengals things were growing worse. The provinces at large were peaceful, but Revolutionaries were increasing and were preparing to improve on Extremist doctrines. Societies composed mainly of youths belonging to respectable and educated families were studying the use of pistols and explosives. Publications were industriously circulated which, as there is conclusive evidence to show, enormously excited Hindu opinion. 'The most famous of these was the *Yugantar* (*New Era*) newspaper, which from 1906 to July 1907, when its first editor went to prison, poured forth passages exhibiting, as a judge afterwards said, "a burning hatred of the British race." This paper was not finally suppressed till 1908. The mischief caused by it and its kind is incalculable.

In December the Congress met at Surat. Nagpur in the Central Provinces, midway between Bengal and Bombay, had been selected as the meeting-place, but arrangements were altered, as the reception committee was broken up by a gang of Extremists. The pen was seized from the hands of the chairman, and the Moderates were pushed out of a hall and assailed with stones and mud. At Surat again the Extremists tried to impose their will by force on those who differed from them, and the Congress ended in riotous scenes. The chief Moderates on this memorable occasion were Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Surendra Nath Banerjee.¹ The Extremist leaders were Mr. Tilak and Mr. Arabindo Ghose.² Bombay and Bengal led on each side. The Extremists were either "academic" or "physical force," argu-

¹ A well-known educationist and politician prominent in the Partition agitation.

² A journalist educated in England.

mentative or practical. The latter identified themselves with the revolutionary societies which were forming in Bengal and Bombay, and in the former Presidency had already committed several outrages.

On May 3rd, 1908, two English ladies were assassinated at Muzaffarpur in Bihar by a Bengali bomb-thrower, who intended his missile for a British magistrate; and after this horrible event the arrest of a number of young men in a garden in Maniktollah, a suburb of Calcutta, and their subsequent trial ended in the conviction of nineteen out of thirty-six accused, and in the disclosure of an elaborate conspiracy for securing the liberation of India through the "easily aroused and misdirected ardour of youth." It was proved that the convicts had, for over two years, launched on the public a highly inflammatory propaganda; they had collected arms and ammunition; they had studied bombs. The following words of the Sessions Judge show how the licence of the Press had assisted their purpose:

"There can be no doubt that the majority of the witnesses . . . are in sympathy with the accused. I do not say with their motives, but with their objects; and it is only natural that they should be. Their natural desire for independence was not likely to be weakened by the constant vilification in season and out of season of Government measures, not only by the Yellow Press, but by papers which claim to be respectable."

The Maniktollah conspirators were for the most part men of good education. Their leader, Barindra, was born in England. His faith was apparently this. He considered that Hindu manhood was stunted, and Hindu religion and mysticism were losing vitality under foreign rule. To strive without scruple or intermission for the expulsion of the foreigners was therefore a duty which sanctified any means whereby the object

might be achieved. It could be achieved eventually by sedulous diffusion of revolutionary propaganda,¹ by winning over the Indian troops, by sapping the confidence of the people in their foreign rulers, and by a widespread concentration of determined effort. The struggle might be long, but was worth undertaking.

Such were the original leaders and organisers of the Bengal revolutionary movement; but many of their followers were more ordinary men, and some were students and schoolboys, whose initiation had come through the picketing which accompanied the boycott movement. Aided by inflammatory newspapers, the conspirators enormously impressed the youth of Bengal and some sections of the people of Calcutta. The cruel and inhuman nature of successive crimes was ignored in admiration for criminals who had shown that Bengalis could follow plots into action, could risk their lives for a cause. A single instance of this perverted hero-worship may be quoted. One of the conspirators, a graduate of the Dupleix College, Chandernagore, named Kanai Lal Datt, was executed for the murder of an associate who had turned informer. His body was handed over to his relatives and was cremated. The obsequies were accompanied by such fervid and sensational scenes that not long afterwards a Bengali youth falsely confessed to the murder of a police sub-inspector because he desired to have a funeral like Kanai's.

While in Bengal the Maniktollah conspirators were being brought to account, in Bombay Mr. Tilak published articles in the *Kesari* to the effect that the Muzaffarpur murders were the result of oppression and of the refusal of *swaraj* (self-government). The language and spirit of these articles resulted in his prose-

¹ The literature of the movement is fully described in the published Report of the Sedition Committee.

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cution for attempting to bring the British Government into hatred and contempt, and for endeavouring to provoke enmity and hatred between different classes of His Majesty's subjects. He was convicted and sentenced to six years' imprisonment.¹ His admirers instigated rioting for several days in Bombay, and attempted to hold a separate congress in Nagpur, but were prohibited from doing so by the Central Provinces Government. They showed their displeasure by assaulting solitary Europeans, and breaking the windows of a flourishing Indian factory because the factory hands would not join their disorderly demonstrations.

The newspaper, *India*, the organ of the British committee of the Congress, thus commented on the split of 1907 :

"If the young men are throwing in their lot with Mr. Tilak, and have ceased to believe in the promises of Englishmen, Englishmen have only themselves to thank for it. When Mr. Morley came into office two years ago, he had the ball at his feet. The party of Extremists existed, it is true, but it had neither numbers nor influence. A policy of concession and conciliation was needed to disarm them. It was deliberately ignored."

These words, however, do not truly describe the situation. Lord Morley's policy *was* a policy of concession and conciliation. Reforms had been incubating for some time, and the attitude of the Indian and Home Governments toward the Partition agitation and its accompaniments had been remarkably forbearing under exceptional provocation. It is possible that preventive and remedial measures would have been less tardy had not the depth and violence of the movement

¹ See paragraph 8, Chapter I—Report of the (Rowlatt) Sedition Committee.

been only gradually and imperfectly appreciated by the highest authorities. The agitators and their disciples belonged to the peaceable castes; and even persons who were well acquainted with Bengal failed to realise the strength of three influences: the triumph of Japan over Russia; the new nationalism and the carefully instilled racial hatred, as well as the effect of all these factors on the uncritical and altruistic spirit of youth. Such currents were favoured by a growing economic pressure to which I will later recur. They were driven on by calumnies sown broadcast of the most subtle and unscrupulous kind.

The history of revolutionary conspiracy in Bengal and India has recently been investigated by a special Committee, whose report will be noticed fully in a later chapter. It shows that from 1907 until now political crimes, murders, bomb-outrages, robberies, have been committed in Bengal, and that secret revolutionary societies have attracted an unfailing flow of recruits. The poisonous contagion has now and then spread to other provinces and gathered force from other currents, but has borne most fruit in Bengal. Its genesis and progress are detailed in the Sedition Committee's Report.

Before proceeding further with the history of Hindu political movements, it is necessary to give some account of the origin of the Muslim League.

Sir Saiyid Ahmad had died in 1898, shortly after rendering a last valuable service to the British Government. In order to combat pan-Islamic sentiment excited by the Greco-Turkish War, he contributed articles to the *Aligarh Institute Gazette*, denying the pretensions of Sultan Abdul Hamid to the Khalifat (i.e. the temporal and spiritual succession to the Prophet Muhammad),¹ and preaching loyalty to the British

¹ See Appendix III.

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rulers of India even if they were "compelled to pursue an unfriendly policy toward Turkey." A great leader had passed from Muhammadan India and left no successor. Times, too, were changed, and new problems had arisen. The Muhammadans had become uneasy as to the place which they would occupy in the reforms which were under discussion in 1906; and on October 1st of that year their principal leaders, headed by His Highness the Agha Khan, presented an address to the Viceroy gratefully acknowledging the peace, security, and liberty of person and worship conferred by the British Government, and emphasising the fact that one of the most important characteristics of British rule was the deference paid to the views and wishes of all races and religions. The object of the deputation was to present the claims of 62,000,000 of Muhammadans to a fair share in any modified system of representation that might be contemplated, the share to be commensurate with their numbers *and political importance*. Representative institutions of the European type were new to Indians, and, in the absence of the greatest caution, dangerous to their national interests. The deputation deprecated a system of individual enfranchisement, and complained of the monopoly of official influence by one class, pointing out that no Muhammadan Judge sat in any Supreme Court. Continuing, the address urged the need of a Muhammadan university, and insisted on the importance of local boards and municipalities as the basis of all local self-government.

The Viceroy replied that :

"although British ideas must prevail, they must not carry with them an impracticable insistence on the acceptance of political methods. . . . You justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on

your numerical strength, but in respect of the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. I am in accordance with you."

Thus originated the concession to minorities of communal representation. The Muslim League then came gradually into widespread existence. Meetings were held at Dacca in 1906 at the invitation of the late Nawab Salim-ullah Khan, who was making a strong stand for law and order in Eastern Bengal, and at Karachi in 1907 under Sir Adamjee Peerbhoy. The resolutions passed related to adequate Muslim representation in the new Councils, to Muslim places in the public service, and to Muslim loyalty. In March 1908 a meeting was held at Aligarh under the presidency of the Agha Khan.¹ A branch had been started in London under the Honourable Mr. Amir Ali. The principles of the promoters of the League were thus expounded in a letter addressed by the Agha Khan to a meeting of the Deccan branch. He wrote that amid much that was good in India, they saw a growing indiscipline and contempt for authority, a striving after change without perceiving whither change would lead, and the setting up of false and impracticable constitutional ideas. No man who loved his country as the Indian Muslims did could stand idly by and see India drifting irrevocably to disaster. Prosperity and contentment could only be reached by processes of development and evolution working on natural lines. These processes required the existence of a strong, just, and stable Government, a Government securing justice and equal opportunity to all, minorities as well as majorities. It was the duty of all patriots to strengthen British control under which had been effected the amazing progress of a century.

The Muhammadan representations came none too

¹ Chief of the Khoja sect. He holds a position of great authority.

soon, for, on November 2nd, 1908, the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's Proclamation, King Edward VII issued a second Proclamation to the Princes and people of India. It claimed that "the incorporation of many strangely diversified communities and of some 300,000,000 of the human race, under British guidance and control, has proceeded steadfastly and without pause: that difficulties such as attend all human rule had been faced by servants of the British Crown with toil and courage and patience, with deep counsel and a resolution that has never faltered nor shaken." It undertook to repress anarchy and to take continuously steps towards obliterating distinctions of race as the test for access to posts of public authority. It announced that the time had come to "prudently extend the principle of representative institutions." It foreshadowed reforms in "politic satisfaction" of the claims of important classes "representing ideas that have been fostered and encouraged by British rule."

These reforms were announced by Lord Morley on the 17th of the following month. They had been under consideration for two years, and every effort had been made to gauge the trend of public opinion and to consult all interests concerned. The reforms were on a large and generous scale. The Legislative Councils were greatly enlarged. The Provincial Councils were given non-official majorities. So far the nearest approach to the election of non-official members had been nominations by Government upon the recommendations of majorities of the voters on certain public bodies. Now Parliament was asked, "in a very definite way, to introduce election working alongside of nomination with a view to the due representation of the different classes of the community." Any member was to be allowed to divide his Legislative Council on financial

questions, and all such Councils were to be invested with power to discuss matters of public and general importance and to pass recommendations or resolutions to the Executive Government. The Government would deal with such resolutions as they thought fit; but the concession was one of great importance, and has materially influenced the course of political events. Further, the Executive Councils of the Supreme and Subordinate Governments were to receive Indian members. Lord Morley had already appointed two Indians, one Hindu and one Muhammadan, to the Council of the Secretary of State. His reforms were, with slight variations, accepted by both Houses. In explaining them, he took pains to disclaim all intention of inaugurating a system of parliamentary government in India. Such a system he apparently considered unsuited to Indian conditions, and for this reason, while conceding non-official majorities in the Provincial Legislative Councils, he retained the official majority in the Imperial Council. He explained this distinction in the following words:

“ But in the Imperial Council we consider an official majority essential. It may be said that this is a most flagrant logical inconsistency. So it would be on one condition. If I were attempting to set up a parliamentary system in India, or if it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it. I do not believe—it is not of very great consequence what I believe, because the fulfilment of my vaticinations could not come off very soon—in spite of the attempts in Oriental countries at this moment, interesting attempts to which we all wish well, to set up some sort of parliamentary system—it is no ambition of mine at all events to have any share in beginning that opera-

tion in India. If my existence, either officially or corporeally, were to be prolonged twenty times longer than either of them is likely to be, a parliamentary system in India is not at all the goal to which I would for one moment aspire.”¹

It is, however, not surprising that the reforms were regarded by Indian politicians as a decided step toward parliamentary government, for it is difficult to reconcile Lord Morley's words with his establishment of non-official majorities in the provincial Legislative Councils, or with his policy of prudently extending “the principle of representative institutions.” Lord Curzon, in the House of Lords on February 23rd, 1909, criticised the new measure in the following terms :

“I wonder how these changes will, in the last resort, affect the great mass of the people of India, the people who have no vote and have scarcely a voice. Remember that to these people, representative government and electoral institutions are nothing whatever. The good government that appeals to them is the government which protects them from the rapacious money-lender and landlord, from the local vakil, and all the other sharks in human disguise who prey upon these unfortunate people. I have a misgiving that this class will not fare much better under these changes than they do now. At any rate I see no place for them in these enlarged Councils which are to be created, and I am under the strong opinion that as government in India becomes more and more parliamentary—as will be the inevitable result—so it will become less paternal and less beneficent to the poorer classes of the population.”

The reception accorded to these changes by the Congress, now void of Extremists, was enthusiastic.

¹ The difficulties of forming parliamentary electorates in India are clearly set forth in paragraph 263 of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report.

A Bengali deputation to the Viceroy presented an address containing the following passage: "It is a step worthy of the noble traditions of the Government which has given us liberty of thought and of speech, high education, and local self-government." The late Mr. Gokhale, the leader of the Moderates, whose outlook had altered since December 1906, spoke of "the generous and fair nature" of the reforms, and urged that they should be gratefully accepted. Co-operation with Government must take the place of mere criticism of Government. *The attitude of constant antagonism must be abandoned.* Hindus, Muhammadans, and Parsis were mostly a dreamy race, and the Hindus were especially so.

"I admit," he said, "the importance of dreams in shaping our aspirations; but in practical matters we have to be practical men and remember two things. Life is not like writing on a clean slate. We have to take the words existing on the slate and add other words so as to make complete sentences and produce a harmonious meaning. Secondly, whatever you may ask for is not the same thing as that which you will get, or will be qualified to, in practice, maintain if you get."

The Muhammadans, however, asked for representation in excess of their numerical strength, and arrangements were made to meet their wishes in accordance with the undertaking given by Lord Minto and subsequently endorsed by Lord Morley in the House of Lords on February 23rd, 1909.

For this and other reasons the regulations which were framed in India to carry into effect the intentions of the British Parliament failed in some measure to give complete satisfaction to advanced Hindus. Still, on the whole, reasonable Progressives were satisfied; and the Conservative classes, whose interests had been

carefully considered in the regulations, were pleased with the stir and novelty of the new order of things.

The partition of Bengal, however, was still denounced by the Bengali Moderate leaders: and on the stream of anarchic crime the reforms produced no effect. The police had been strengthened in Bengal, and remedial measures had been adopted; but it was plain to all that the seeds so long and widely sown among the youth of the country by deliberate propaganda and poisonous newspapers was still bearing abundant fruit. At Poona, on July 8th, 1909, Mr. Gokhale again urged loyal acquiescence in British rule for two reasons:

“One that, considering the difficulties of the position, Britain had done very well in India, the other that there was no alternative to British rule and could be none for a long time. . . . They could proceed in two directions. first toward an obliteration of distinctions, on the grounds of race, between individual Indians and individual Englishmen, and second by way of advance toward the form of government enjoyed in other parts of the Empire. *The latter was an ideal for which the Indian people had to qualify themselves, for the whole question turned on character and capacity, and they must realise that their main difficulties lay with themselves.*”

Again at Bombay, on October 9th of the same year, in addressing the Students' Brotherhood, he strongly denounced the active participation of students in politics, and the tactics and objects of the Extremists, in the following memorable terms:

“The active participation of students in political agitation really tends to lower the dignity and the responsible character of public life and impair its true effectiveness. It also fills the students themselves with unhealthy excitement, often evoking in them a

bitter partisan spirit which cannot fail to interfere with their studies and prove injurious to their intellectual and moral growth. . . . I venture to think that a stage has been reached in our affairs when it is necessary for us to face resolutely our responsibilities in this matter. Every one knows that during the past few years a new school of political thought has arisen in the country, and that it has exercised a powerful fascination over the minds of young men more or less in all parts of India. A considerable part of what it has preached could not but find ready acceptance on every hand, that love of country should be a ruling principle of our lives; that we should rejoice in making sacrifices for her sake; that we should rely, wherever we could, on our own exertions . . . side by side with this undoubtedly valuable work, the new party gave to the country a great deal of what could only be regarded as unsound political teaching. That teaching was in the first instance directed to the destruction of the very foundations of the old public life of the country. But, once started, it could not be confined to that object, and in course of time it came to be applied generally. Its chief error lies in ignoring all historical considerations and tracing our political troubles to the existence of a foreign Government in the country. Our old public life was based on frank and loyal acceptance of British rule, due to a recognition of the fact that it alone could secure to the country the peace and order which were necessary for slowly evolving a nation out of the heterogeneous elements of which India was composed, and for ensuring to it a steady advance in different directions. The new teaching condemns all faith in the British Government as childish and all hope of real progress under it as vain. . . . Our general lack of political judgment is also responsible for the large measure of acceptance which it ('the new teaching') received. Not many of us care to think for ourselves in political matters, or, for the matter of that, in any public matters. Ready-made opinions are as con-

venient as ready-made clothes and not so noticeable. . . . I think those of our public men who realise the harm which the new teaching has done, have not so far done their duty by the student community of this country. . . . I feel that it is now incumbent on us to speak out freely. As I have said, the self-reliance which is part of the new propaganda cannot but be acceptable to all. It is in regard to the attitude toward the Government which the programme advocates that the need for a protest and a warning arises. . . . When one talks to young men of independence in a country like this, only two ideas are likely to present themselves clearly before their minds. One is how to get rid of the foreigner, and the other is how soon to get rid of him. All else must appear to them as comparatively of minor importance. . . . We have to recognise that British rule, in spite of its inevitable drawbacks as a foreign rule, has been on the whole a great instrument of progress for our people. *Its continuance means the continuance of that peace and order which it alone can maintain in our country, and with which our best interests, among them, those of our growing nationality, are bound up.* . . . Our rulers stand pledged to extend to us equality of treatment with themselves. This equality is to be sought in two fields: equality for individual Indians with individual Englishmen, and equality in regard to the form of government which Englishmen enjoy in other parts of the Empire. The attainment of full equality with Englishmen, if ever it is accomplished, is bound to be a slow and weary affair. But one thing is clear. It is both our right and our duty to press along this road, and further, good faith requires that we should not think of taking any other. Of the twofold equality we have to seek with Englishmen, the first, though difficult of attainment, is not so difficult as the second. For it is possible to find in this country a fair number of Indians who in character and capacity could hold their own against individual Englishmen. But the attainment of a democratic form

of self-government such as obtains in other parts of the Empire must depend upon the average strength in character and capacity of our people taken as a whole, for it is on our average strength that the weight of the edifice of self-government will have to rest. And here it must be regretfully admitted that our average strength to-day is far below the British average. The most important work before us, therefore, is to endeavour to raise this average. There is work enough for the most enthusiastic lover of his country. In fact on every side, whichever way we turn, only one sight meets the eye—that of work to be done—and only one cry is heard—that there are but few faithful workers. The elevation of the depressed classes, who have to be brought up to the level of the rest of our people, universal elementary education, co-operation, improvement of the economic condition of the peasantry, higher education of women, spread of industrial and technical education and building up the industrial strength of the country, promotion of closer relations between the different communities—these are some of the tasks which lie in front of us, and each needs a whole army of devoted missionaries.”

Unfortunately, however, revolutionary teaching and revolutionary crime had passed beyond the stage at which any words of Mr. Gokhale's could avail to arrest them. The masses were unaffected; but violent crime, frequently unpunished, and racial hatred, widely preached, were producing their natural influence on many members of the rising generation of the better educated. As a counterpoise, Mr. Gokhale had founded the “Servants of India” society, the objects of which were “to train national missionaries for the Service of India and to promote by all constitutional means the true interest of the Indian people.” The members of the society were bound to accept the British connection, and to recognise that self-government within the Empire

and a higher life for their countrymen constituted an end which could not be attained without years of patient effort and building up in the country a higher type of character and capacity than was then generally available.

So ominous was the outlook at this time, that the Viceroy took the unusual step of communicating direct with the Ruling Chiefs on the subject of the active unrest prevalent in various parts of India, and invited an exchange of opinions "with a view to mutual co-operation against a common danger." The replies which he received were both sympathetic and suggestive, the majority strongly recommending the necessity of checking the licence of the Indian press, to which they attributed the responsibility for the widening of the gulf between the rulers and the ruled. The Revolutionaries had themselves addressed a menacing pamphlet to the Chiefs. The letters of the latter contributed toward the passing of that long-needed and long-deferred measure, the Indian Press Act, by the newly constituted Imperial Legislative Council in February 1910. The Act imposes no censorship; it practically substitutes forfeiture of security for criminal prosecution, and while conceding a certain amount to executive discretion, it tempers that discretion by making orders of forfeiture appealable to a High Court.

The loyal attitude of the Chiefs was subsequently intensified by the impressions left by the royal visit, and has been of great assistance to the British Government. Lord Morley had commented in Parliament on the importance of "these powerful princes" as standing forces in India, but had not accepted a proposal of Lord Minto's Government for the institution of an advisory Council of Ruling Chiefs and territorial magnates. It is of course arguable that Ruling Chiefs can

have nothing to do with affairs in British India, yet these affairs may most seriously affect their position in their States.

The firm loyalty of the Princes, the personal popularity of the Viceroy, the Reforms and the altered attitude of the purified Congress party, the long-needed Press Act, the breaking up and bringing to trial of two notorious gangs of revolutionary conspirators in Calcutta and Dacca—all combined to make the last year of Lord Minto's rule comparatively peaceful. Soon after his departure Lord Morley left the India Office. They had passed through critical times. They were jointly responsible for measures which temporarily satisfied sober political opinion, and, but for the war, would probably have worked sufficiently well for a considerable period. But in coping with the revolutionary movement, they were slow to realise the virulence of the propaganda and the rapidity with which it was spreading among the schools and colleges of Bengal, fostered by bad conditions and ill-paid seditious teachers, "proclaiming to beguiled youth that outrage was the evidence of patriotism and its reward a martyr's crown."¹ The wide extent of the mischief was at first discredited, and the whole conspiracy obtained a long start.

No Secretary of State ever devoted more anxious or thorough attention to India than did Lord Morley. The distinction of his speeches and writings did much to invest Indian affairs with interest for the ordinary British citizen. But it is evident from them and from his Recollections that he was frequently perplexed by conflict between measures advised from India and his own predilections combined with the ideas of many of his political supporters. It may be said roughly that throughout the period of calm that followed the Mutiny

¹ Speech by Lord Minto in 1908.

up to the last year of Lord Curzon's régime the British principle of governing India had been "Trust the man on the spot." Lord Curzon, during his visit to England at the end of his first term of office, in a public speech laid stress on the importance of this principle. Until then he had no cause to complain of its non-observance. But the reason and manner of his resignation, and the troubles which followed on the partition of Bengal, damaged it severely. It is plain from Lord Morley's writings that he thought that these troubles were largely due to mismanagement by the men on the spot, and that the Viceroy was liable to be too greatly impressed by the atmosphere in which he worked. As a matter of fact, however, both the men on the spot and the Secretary of State were confronted by a novel and complex state of things. The effect of the Russo-Japanese War on Indian political thought, the sudden gathering in of the harvest of years of Western education and increasing contact with an increasingly democratic England, combined with narrowing employment, ill-managed schools, and virulent racial propaganda, to produce in Bengal an unprecedented ferment which affected the rest of India. The bad schools and starved schoolmasters of Bengal were the fruits of official and non-official miscalculations. They resulted from the adoption of recommendations made by an Educational Commission appointed in the early 'eighties. The whole movement, which developed so rapidly, was handled by those in daily contact with it in a spirit of patient courage. The British officials in India were in the trenches. They had to bear the brunt of the attack. They dealt with it as best they could, and reported what they saw. No doubt, being near, they saw through a glass darkly. It was no part of their duty to join in depreciation of or yield to attacks

on the Government which they endeavoured faithfully to serve, nor were they responsible for the strategy that directed their efforts. On the other hand they were not concerned with considerations other than those which were suggested by the difficult conditions which confronted them. In the course of my narrative I am endeavouring to make some of these conditions apparent.

Lord Minto was a gallant, chivalrous gentleman, of the stamp which his own countrymen and Indians alike admire. He was succeeded by Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, who held office for five and a half eventful years. Shortly after his arrival came the Congress of December 1910, presided over by Sir William Wedderburn. This meeting demanded that certain salutary repressive Acts be removed from the Statute book, and protested strongly against the treatment of Indians in British colonies, but concluded without excitement. Three leading Muhammadans of a new school, which was to become prominent later, attended. For the first time an address of welcome was presented to a Viceroy. He was asked to show clemency to all purely political offenders. The academic Extremists were entreated to return to the Congress fold. The partition of Bengal was denounced by a Bengali. The President proposed a conference of Hindus and Muhammadans, in order to effect a *rapprochement* on the burning question of special or communal representation on religious grounds, combined with the corollary question of weighting for Muslim minorities. But the conference never met, though delegates were appointed, because a prominent Hindu politician moved a resolution in the Imperial Legislative Council requesting the abolition of all separate representation of Muhammadans or councils and local boards. He was opposed by Mr. Gokhale and by the Home Member of the Government of India,

who said that the fullest and clearest pledges had been given to the Muhammadans "that they should have separate representation."

The year 1911 was marked by some degree of trouble in Bengal; but everywhere else things were quiet, and people generally waited expectantly for the royal visit, which achieved brilliant success, bringing the gracious and sympathetic personalities of Their Majesties as Sovereigns of India closely home to all classes, striking a keynote of chivalry and loyalty that has reverberated in many hearts throughout the troubles of the past four years. No one who witnessed the enthusiasm displayed by that great gathering could doubt that Great Britain has no reason to be ashamed of her record in India.

✓ The partition of Bengal was altered in a manner that gratified Congress sentiment, but annoyed the Muhammadans, especially those of the six-year-old Eastern Bengal and Assam province, and seriously disturbed Indian belief in the ability of the British Government to adhere to a declared resolution.¹ The Capital was removed from Calcutta to Delhi. In the despatch from the Government of India to the Secretary of State proposing these changes for sanction, occurred a passage which advocated a policy of provincial decentralisation and widening self-government, "until India would at last consist of a number of administrations autonomous in all provincial matters, with the Government of India above them all, possessing power to interfere in cases of misgovernment, but ordinarily restricting their functions to matters of Imperial concern."

When the papers were published, this passage was interpreted by advanced Indians as clearly foreshadowing self-government on colonial lines. This idea, how-

¹ Lord Morley, while disapproving of the partition, regarded it as a "settled fact."

ever, was expressly disclaimed in Parliament by Lord Crewe, then Secretary of State, on June 24th, 1912, in the following words :

“ There is a certain section in India which looks forward to a measure of self-government approaching that which has been granted in the Dominions. I see no future for India on these lines. The experiment of extending a measure of self-government practically free from parliamentary control to a race which is not our own, even though that race enjoys the services of the best men belonging to our race, is one which cannot be tried. It is my duty as Secretary of State to repudiate the idea that the despatch implies anything of the kind as the hope or goal of the policy of Government.

“ At the same time I think it is the duty of the nation, and of the Government for the time being of the nation, to encourage in every possible way the desire of the inhabitants of India to take a further share in the management of their country.”

Again, he said, on June 29th, 1912 :

“ There is nothing whatever in the teachings of history, so far as I know them, or in the present condition of the world which makes such a dream ” (as complete self-government within the British Empire) “ even remotely probable. . . . Is it conceivable that at any time an Indian Empire could exist, on the lines, say, of Australia and New Zealand, with no British officials, and no tie of creed and blood which takes the place of these material bonds ? . . . To me that is a world as imaginary as any Atlantis or any that was ever thought of by the ingenious brain of any imaginative writer. . . . I venture to think that it is only those who think less of service and more of distinction who would lose heart if they braced themselves to set aside this vision altogether and to settle down to closer co-operation with the Western race, to which they can teach much, and from which they can learn much, in

co-operation for the moral and material bettering of the country to which they are so deeply attached and of which we are so proud to be governors."

In spite of this advice the Congress leaders preferred to adhere to their original interpretation of the meaning of the disputed passage, and continued to profess self-government on colonial lines as their goal, striving to accelerate advance by unremitting pressure, sometimes employing analogies which are apt to deceive if applied to cases which are not really parallel.

The year 1912 was further marked by the appointment of a Royal Commission to report on the constitution and conditions of the Public Services, with the main object of investigating the possibilities of admitting Indians in larger numbers to the higher grades. The report of this body was only published in January 1917. Publication had been delayed by the war. Political expectations had greatly risen, and proposals which were, in fact, liberal, were denounced as grossly inadequate.

In the meantime a change had been gradually coming over the spirit and aims of the Muslim League. The war between Italy and Turkey, events in Persia, and, above all, the Balkan war, created considerable sympathy with Turkey and resentment at the apparently passive attitude of the British Government. The sympathy of Indian Muhammadans, especially the Sunnis, with Turkey was prominent as long ago as the time of the Crimean war, and is referred to in the private correspondence of Lord Dalhousie, recently published. It had strengthened with time and improved communications. Above all, it had grown with a pan-Islamic propaganda, which, inculcating the union of Shiah and Sunni under one banner, and preached in Egypt and Persia by Shaikh Jamaluddin Afghani, a

Persian who had resided in Afghanistan, had been subsequently converted, first by Sultan Abdul Hamid and afterwards by the Young Turks, into an appeal to the Faithful to rally round the Ottoman Khalifat.¹

Many Muhammadan politicians disliked our agreement with Russia, and contrasted British inaction during the Balkan war with her championship of Turkey in former days. They saw that while Japan was proving the ability of an Asiatic power to make herself respected, the few remaining Muslim powers, Morocco, Persia, and Turkey, were sinking lower into depths of submission or calamity. And, turning their eyes on their own country, they beheld in Lord Morley's Reforms and the alteration of the partition of Bengal what they regarded as conclusive triumphs for the policy of agitation pursued by the Congress. While these impressions were working on their minds, Congress newspapers were profuse in expressions of sympathy over the misfortunes of Turkey. All these things, working together, produced a remarkable effect. In 1908 the President of the All-India Muhammadan Conference, Mr., now Sir, Saiyid Ali Imam, had declared that the Muslim League and the Congress differed fundamentally.

"Has not," he said, "this ideal of self-government created impatience, because of its impracticability, carrying idealism off its feet and creating extremism? Let the Congress announce that in practical politics loyalty to the British administration is loyalty to India, and that reform in the existing administration is possible only with the maintenance of British control. . . . As long as the leaders of the Indian National Congress will not give us a workable policy like the one indicated above, so long the All-India Muslim League has a sacred duty to perform. That duty is to save the

¹ See Appendix III.

community it represents from the political error of joining in an organisation that in the main, as Lord Morley says, cries for the moon."

Even in January 1910 the Muslim League, under the presidency of the Agha Khan, had expressed gratitude for the consideration showed to the Muhammadans in the Reform arrangements; but a remarkable change was imminent. In August 1912 the majority of leading Muhammadans were unable to come to terms with Government in regard to the conditions under which a Muhammadan university should be established at Aligarh. Later on in the year Indian Muslims despatched a medical Red Crescent Mission to Turkey. In January 1913 the council of the Muslim League decided to recommend a new constitution to their association. The objects were henceforth to be—"the promotion among Indians of loyalty to the British Crown, the protection of the rights of Muhammadans *and, without detriment to the foregoing objects, the attainment of the system of self-government suitable to India.*" These recommendations were accepted by the association at Lucknow on March 22nd, 1913. There it was said that if Sir Edward Grey remained arbiter of Britain's foreign policy, the Muslim status in Asia would be swallowed up by Russia. The adoption of suitable self-government as an ideal was adopted, after a heated discussion, by a large majority. Influential Mussulmans present regarded the proposal as a departure from the fixed policy of the Muhammadans and destructive to their interests as a minority in India. Others thought the aim proposed not high enough, and desired identity with that expressed by the Congress. The Agha Khan was not present at the meetings. But afterwards he commented to the London branch of the League on

the resolutions passed. If, he said, self-government for India meant, as he took it to mean, an ideal involving many decades of effort toward self-improvement, social reform, educational diffusion, and complete amity between the various communities, the ideal must commend itself to thoughtful approval. But if it meant a mere hasty impulse to jump at the apple when only the blossoming stage was over, then the day that witnessed the formulation of the ideal would be a very unfortunate one in the annals of their country.

Not long afterwards he resigned the presidency of the League. The change in the ideals of that body was confirmed at the sessions of December 1913, and was eulogised by the Congress meeting of the same month.

The qualification "self-government of a kind suited to India" appears to mean self-government in which Muhammadans will have a share proportioned to what they consider to be their political rather than their numerical importance. As we shall see later, an attempt has recently been made to define this share.

In the year 1912, revolutionary stores, arms, and documents were discovered in Eastern Bengal; a bomb outrage was attempted in Western Bengal; and, in December, as Lord Hardinge was making his state entry into the new capital, a bomb was thrown which wounded him very seriously and killed one of his attendants. The perpetrator of the outrage was not discovered, although there is little doubt that he was one of an association of Hindu revolutionaries who were brought to justice for a subsequent murder.

Revolutionary effort intensified in Bengal during 1913, and afterwards up to the outbreak of the war. It established a terrorism which largely prevented

witnesses from coming forward to testify to the crimes that were committed. In other provinces things went smoothly, and the business of the new Legislative Councils progressed with satisfactory harmony. The Viceroy had earned remarkable popularity by his firm and courageous bearing under the outrage which so nearly killed him, as well as by his outspoken sympathy with the cause of Indians in South Africa. Thus the outbreak of the Great War found India generally tranquil. Advanced politicians—Hindus and Mussulmans—mainly lawyers and journalists, were drawing near a common platform, and seeking vaguely for representative government on colonial lines. With some this goal was merely a nominal article of faith, but with others it was a genuine objective. On the whole, however, they were satisfied with the recent reforms. But behind them was a small section of revolutionaries, who, sometimes encouraged from abroad, were asserting their presence by intermittent manifestations of subterranean activities of the most sinister kind. Apart entirely from political contentions stood the great majority, the masses of conservative and indifferent opinion, the main body of the territorial aristocracy, the landlords, the military castes, the cultivators, the ordinary trading population. Apart also, though not inattentive, was the European mercantile and non-official community. The ranks of the Nationalists, though slender, were drawn from the better educated and more systematically organised intelligence of the country. They dominated the Indian Press. They had started and spread the idea of a united self-governing India. In the process their views and policy had become increasingly biased by racial feeling, by a lessening faith in British efficiency, and by a growing belief that India, unfettered by foreign ascendancy, could rival the success of Japan. The

notable differences between conditions in India and those in Japan they seldom regarded. For some years their extreme wing had been discredited. Its leaders had temporarily vanished. Its most ardent followers had been absorbed by revolutionary associations.

CHAPTER IV

POLITICS FROM THE OUTBREAK OF THE WAR TO THE END OF 1916

IN August 1914, Lord Hardinge of Penshurst had been Viceroy for three years and nine months. He had achieved remarkable popularity. The country was exceedingly quiet, the sole disturbing features being the frequency of revolutionary crimes in Bengal. The Legislative Councils were working well; the Ruling Chiefs, the commercial, military, and territorial classes, were loyal and contented; relations with Afghanistan and the frontier tribes were good. India was ready to meet the storm which burst so suddenly, and she met it well. The circumstances of the beginning of the great struggle, the cause in which Britain was to fight, touched the warm Indian imagination. Conservative and advanced classes alike rejoiced in the despatch of Indian troops to the Front. The energetic loyalty of the Ruling Chiefs set a splendid example to the whole country. Politicians followed the initiative of one of their leaders, who moved in the Imperial Council that India should be allowed to share in the financial burdens which the war must entail. They responded to the Viceroy's appeal for suspension of domestic controversy.

The position of the Muhammadans soon became exceedingly difficult. To appreciate it properly we must remember what religion is to ordinary Indian Muslims, the depth of their innate fanaticism, and the regard in

which, at times encouraged by us, they have been accustomed to hold the Sultan of Turkey. It is certain, moreover, that pro-Turkish influences were actively at work. When we consider all these things, we must heartily appreciate the general loyalty which Muslims showed to the British Crown. That pan-Islamism should be silent in such circumstances, that it should not cause trouble here and there, was hardly to be anticipated. But, on the whole, Indian Muhammadans have deserved well of the British Government. Their path was smoothed by the declaration, which immediately followed the entry of Turkey into the war, that the Holy Places of Arabia and sacred shrines of Mesopotamia would be immune from attack by Britain and her allies, so long as Indian pilgrims remained unmolested. And the loyal manifesto simultaneously published by the premier Ruling Chief, himself a Sunni Muhammadan,¹ exercised a calming influence.

In the early days of the war there were signs of a willingness on the part of the Press to abandon the time-honoured practice of incessant carping at the Indian Civil Service, but these signs were evanescent. A zealous desire was shown by some Moderates for accommodation with the academic Extremists, and was necessarily accompanied by reluctance to recognise the reality and dangers of the revolutionary movement. As regards, however, the main issue—the war—the heart of the Congress remained sound, both for sentimental and for selfish reasons. The eyes of intelligent Indians were sufficiently open to see that the enemies of England were their enemies.

(Revolutionary activity, however, continued in palpable evidence in spite of repressive measures. Conspiracies at Delhi, Lahore, and elsewhere came to light,

Sunni Muhammadans. See Appendix III.

and efforts were made by plotters to undermine the loyalty of Indian troops. The theft of a large quantity of Mauser pistols and ammunition through the treachery of the clerk of a Calcutta firm of gun makers, the return from America and Canada of large bodies of Sikh emigrants, the combination between some of the more dangerous of these and Bengali plotters, and the danger of a bloody outbreak which was only narrowly averted in February 1915, are all set forth in the recently published report of the Sedition Committee. The same report traces the malignant efforts of Germany to stir up trouble in India. The Government was compelled to have recourse to a special Defence Act for the better security of the country, and Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, controlled a most difficult situation with remarkable energy and success.) Fortunate indeed it was for all that the administration of this province was fully equal to a most serious emergency, for to this circumstance, to the general loyalty of the people, and to the unwearying labours of the much-abused Criminal Investigation Department, it was due that (nowhere in India were the revolutionaries able to effect anything beyond occasional murders or robberies. In Calcutta and Bengal they committed a number of outrages; but their plots to bring about paralysis of authority, widespread terrorism and murder, and finally general rebellion, completely failed.

The Defence Act was, in the words of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report :

“inevitably a drastic measure; it gave to the Governor-General in Council wide rule-making powers with a view to securing the public safety and defence of the country, and also provided for the creation of special tribunals for the quicker trial of certain classes of cases in specially disturbed tracts. It was comparable to

a similar Act passed in the United Kingdom also as a war measure. The Bill was naturally rather a severe trial to the Indian elected members; as loyal citizens they supported its principle; but they made no secret of their aversion to particular provisions, and moved many amendments, against which Government used its official majority without hesitation, as they would have destroyed the efficacy of the Bill. The Act was immediately applied in the Punjab, and later elsewhere as circumstances demanded.")

Early in the year 1915 Mr. Gokhale died: and there can be no doubt that his death was a serious loss to Indian politics. He had shown himself able to adjust idealism to circumstances, and bold enough to preach common sense. At the same time, up to the day of his death, he maintained his widespread influence. His place remained empty.

1915 was a difficult year; but, as far as India generally was concerned, the victory of law and order in its earlier months was decisive. The Congress and Muslim League met in December at Bombay. The Honourable Mr. Sinha,¹ President of the Congress Sessions, spoke with "a feeling of profound pride" that India had not fallen behind other portions of the British Empire, but had stood shoulder to shoulder with them in the hour of her sorest trial. . . . Princes and people alike had vied with one another to prove to the great British nation their gratitude for peace and blessings of civilisation secured to them under its ægis for the last hundred and fifty years and more. He said that a reasoned ideal of the future was required; an ideal which would satisfy the ambitions of the rising generation and arrest anarchism; an ideal which would at the same

¹ A Calcutta barrister of high character and standing, now Lord Sinha, K.C.

time meet with British approval. This ideal was the establishment of democracy pure and simple—"government of the people by the people." The British Government was the best government India had had for ages. But good government could not be a substitute for self-government. Every British official in India must consider himself a trustee "bound to make over his charges to the rightful owners the moment the latter attain to years of discretion." At present India was not fit for self-government. Free from England, and without a real power of resistance, she would be immediately in the thick of another struggle of nations. But when Indians had advanced under the guidance and protection of England so far as to be able not only to manage their own domestic affairs, but to secure internal peace and to prevent external aggression, it would be the interest and duty of England to concede the "fullest autonomy" to India. What this expression, "fullest autonomy," means, it was unnecessary to say. He found it difficult to believe that Indian patriotism would not be reconciled to the ideal of Englishmen and Indians united as fellow-citizens of a common empire. For the attainment of this ideal patience was requisite. Indians must continue to press for admission in larger and larger numbers to the public service and for the progressive nationalisation of the government of the country. Their labours must continue till "really free" institutions are established for the whole of India by gradual evolution and cautious progress.

He concluded with the following exhortation :

"I believe in the doctrine of self-help as much as, probably more than, any of you here. I ask, therefore, that, not content with these oratorical feasts for three days in the year, we should have a continuous

programme of work—work not political in the sense of public meetings, but work in the sense of trying to uplift the low and weak . . . remedying the evils that there are in our daily lives—ignorance, poverty, and disease. It is the people whom we want to be capable of self-government, not merely Indians like ourselves, but the people in the villages, who toil with the sweat of their brow. . . . You have got to work day and night, patiently and strenuously, if you desire to achieve the object which you profess—government of the people, for the people, and by the people.”

A committee was appointed to consider a Home Rule scheme propounded by Mrs. Annie Besant, the chief of the Theosophists, and before the meetings broke up some modifications were made in the rules which were designed to facilitate the return of Mr. Tilak and his party to the Congress fold. Mr. Tilak had been released from prison in 1914, had disclaimed all hostility to the British Government, and had repudiated the acts of violence that had been committed by the revolutionaries.

The speech of the president of the Muslim League emphasised the need for “self-government suitable to the needs and requirements of the country under the aegis of the British Crown,” and concluded with the following sentences :

“It is a sore point with us that the Government of our Caliph should be at war with the Government of our King-Emperor. We should all have been pleased to see our brethren in the Faith fighting side by side with the soldiers of the British Empire. Whatever view one may take of the policy adopted by Islamic countries in the present war, Indian Muslims never desired, nor ever can desire, hostility between the British and Islamic Governments. That hostility should have come about is the greatest misfortune that could possibly have befallen Muslims. I have no desire to

enter into details, but a vast majority of my co-religionists, and, for the matter of that, numerous Englishmen too, attribute it to the past foreign policy of Great Britain, and to the failure of British diplomacy. However that may be, it is the cherished desire of the followers of Islam that when peace comes—and pray God that it may come soon—Muslim countries should be dealt with in such a way that their dignity will not be compromised in the future.”

The League decided to consider Mrs. Besant's Home Rule project; and as during the following year this lady assumed a remarkable lead in Indian politics, it is necessary to review briefly her antecedents.

Mrs. Besant's story up to the year 1890 is related in a published autobiography. Wife of an English clergyman, when quite young, she started independently as a keen radical and atheist pamphleteer and speaker. For years she worked with the late Charles Bradlaugh, and gradually gravitated to socialism. From this cause she was diverted by theosophy, which she learnt from Madame Blavatsky, a Russian, with whom she lived for some time. After that lady's death she went to India, in 1893, in order to work for the Theosophical Society. Mr. Hume, the “Father of the Congress,” had been one of the pioneers of theosophy in India, and all Mrs. Besant's antecedents impelled her to sympathise with revivalist Hindu religion and politics. Her eloquence, energy, and ability made her a valuable adherent, but at first she devoted herself to education. It was due to her that the Central Hindu College was opened in July 1898, in a small house in Benares City, with only a few boys; it was she who induced the Maharaja of Benares to give this struggling institution a fine piece of land and spacious buildings; it was her energy and capacity for organisation that, surmounting

one difficulty after another, brought the College to a position which enabled it to become the nucleus of a new university. But, before this final success, Mrs. Besant had become involved in a strange controversy which occupied considerable public attention. She resigned the presidency of the College, but retained the headship of the Theosophical Society. (She turned to active participation in politics, started two newspapers, and proposed to both the Congress and the Muslim League the initiation of a Home Rule League. The project did not at first find favour with many members of either association; and all that she could obtain was undertakings that it should be taken into consideration.)

Things had gone well during the period from August 1914 to December 1915. Revolutionary effort had been checked and largely suppressed. General politics had maintained a high level. Relations between the various communities had been good. The seasons had been kind and the harvests bountiful. Indian soldiers belonging to the martial castes had done good service at the various fronts. But in Europe the prospect was gloomy, and in Asia the Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force, after winning considerable success, had been compelled to retreat, and was besieged at Kut-el-Amara by a superior Turkish force. It is noteworthy that neither the siege nor its disastrous termination produced any visible effect in India.

Early in the year 1916 Lord Hardinge left India after an eventful and arduous Viceroyalty.¹ His farewell advice to Indian Nationalists was to remember that the development of self-governing institutions had been

¹ He was succeeded by Lord Chelmsford, then serving in the country as a captain in a British territorial regiment. Lord Chelmsford had been Governor first of Queensland and then of New South Wales between the years 1905-13. He had also been a member of the London County Council and School Board.

achieved not by sudden strokes of statesmanship, but by a process of steady and patient evolution which had gradually united and raised all classes of the community.

The year, however, was marked by the inception and rapid growth of a political agitation which was inspired by a call for more precipitate progress. Before, however, describing it, I will glance at a minor matter which disturbed Muhammadan sentiment.

In June it became known in India that the Grand Sharif of Mecca had revolted from the authority of the Sultan of Turkey. The Grand Sharif is chief of the Arabs of the Hedjaz, and belongs to the tribe of the Koreish from which the Prophet himself sprang. For a considerable period the Sultans and Sharifs had acted in harmony, the Sharifs acknowledging the Khalifat of the Sultans in return for general protection and heavy subsidies. In times more remote, however, the Turkish Sultans had not claimed to be Khalifas, and the Hedjaz had not owned their sway. The title of the original Arab Khalifs, who had disappeared, was first assumed by the Sultan of Turkey in 1575.

The reasons for the Sharif's rebellion were stated in a proclamation which he subsequently issued, to have been the proceedings of the Turkish Committee of Union and Progress, their departure from the principles of the *Koran*, their contumelious treatment of the Sultan, their bloody and inhuman outrages on Muslims.

It was natural that the British Government should sympathise with the Sharif. It had become known that the Turks and Germans proposed to make the Hedjaz and Yamen coasts the basis of attacks on British vessels and commerce. The Allies had of course undertaken to respect the safety and sanctity of the Holy Places of Islam in Arabia; but these were now in

¹ See Appendix III.

jeopardy from other sources, and the Hedjaz was in peril of Turco-German military occupation.

The revolt of the Sharif, however, was keenly regretted by some prominent members of the Muslim Indian League. It seemed likely to lead to the desecration of the Holy Places of the Hedjaz, and they resented a telegram which had appeared in a newspaper to the effect that the Calcutta Mussulmans approved of the rebellion. They believed that the Sharif had acted with British encouragement and were unaware of the grave underlying military considerations. They considered the Sharif totally incapable of maintaining independent sovereignty over the ark and shrine of Islam. They convened a public meeting which, on June 27th, passed a resolution condemning the "Arab rebels headed by the Sharif of Mecca and their sympathisers as enemies of Islam." Another resolution repudiated "the suggestion conveyed in a Calcutta telegram that any class of Indian Mussulmans could be delighted with the reported Arab rebellion or could view with any feeling other than alarm and disgust the consequences likely to follow therefrom."

All possible publicity was given to these resolutions; but it was explained to the persons aggrieved that agitation of this kind in such circumstances was working on behalf of the King's enemies and must cease. They readily acquiesced. The movement was mainly confined to the educated and politically advanced Muhammadans. It was not taken up by the religious leaders, and therefore did not spread among the masses of the people. It is probable, however, that these would have been impressed had not preventive action been prompt.

In this year in Bengal increasing murders and robberies, committed for the purpose of extracting

money to be used in financing revolutionary effort, compelled the Government to order a considerable number of internments under the Defence of India Act, with the result that at last anarchical crime received a decisive check.

We now come to important political events connected with the Home Rule movement which had originated in two assumptions (*a*) that there is already such a bond between the politicians and the peoples of India as that which unites the Irish Home Rule leaders with the majority of their fellow-countrymen; (*b*) that the scales between creeds and castes in India will adjust themselves peacefully if the British Government will only leave them alone.) The agitation cannot be clearly understood unless it be described not as an isolated movement, but in connection with certain other events of the year. (It is possible that its promoters were influenced by the course of events in Ireland.)

On April 22nd, 23rd, and 24th the All-India Congress Committee met at Allahabad, and at private meetings passed certain resolutions which were tentative and were to be discussed in consultation with the committee of the Muslim League. These meetings were presided over by a Congress ex-President, and were attended by an ex-President of the Muslim League, by Mrs. Besant, and by other less prominent persons. After the meetings Mrs. Besant, working from the headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar in Madras, with the openly professed object of awakening the country, busily pushed Home Rule propaganda on the platform by orations, and in the Press by two newspapers and many pamphlets.) (The spirit of her harangues is apparent from the following quotations :

“ I quite realise that when people are asleep, and

especially if they are rather heavy, they do not like the tomtom that goes on all the night through, beating and beating and never stopping. I am an Indian tomtom, waking up all the sleepers so that they may wake and work for their Motherland.) That is my task. And they are waking on every side, and the young ones, even more than the old ones, are waking to the possibilities that lie before them. You must remember what India was: you must realise that three thousand years before the time of Christ, India was great in her commerce, great in her trade.

“Is India different from any other country, that she also may not be proud of her wars, her invasions, her conquests, and her defeats, for India has assimilated every conqueror and has made them contribute to the greatness of herself. I know that the English have not been assimilated, but 2,000 or 3,000 years hence they may be. They have been here but a day or two, only for a poor 150 years. What is that in the 5,000 years recognised by European history of Indian greatness, Indian wealth, and Indian culture? You have no need to be ashamed of India's past, no need to be ashamed of being born an Indian. There is no living country in the world with such a past, no country that can look forward to such a future. For the value of the past is that it shows you how to build for the future; the value of the past for you to-day when you are breathing what Mr. Gokhale called an atmosphere of inferiority; the value of the past is to remind you of what you were; the value of the past is to awaken self-respect; the value of the past is to make that feeling of national pride, without which no nation can be, and no national greatness can accrue. So I point to your past, and that is what makes our antagonists more angry.”

Other of her newspaper utterances were considered by the Madras Government to be provocative of racial

feeling, and finally she was called on to give pecuniary security under the Press Act for the better conduct of her publications. She soon forfeited the security and, depositing the larger sum required of her for renewed journalism, appealed to the High Court against the order of forfeiture. Her appeal was dismissed, but in the meantime Mr. Tilak had raised his standard.

In May and June he delivered speeches at Belgaum and Ahmednagar in favour of Home Rule which were considered by the Bombay Government to be likely to bring British rule into hatred and contempt. Substantial security for good behaviour for a period of one year was demanded from him by a District Magistrate, but the order was subsequently cancelled by the Bombay High Court, on the ground that the general tenor of the speeches, which were delivered in vernacular, was not such as to justify the prosecution. The following passages from one speech are illustrative of Mr. Tilak's style :

“ When the people in the nation become educated and begin to know how they should manage their affairs, it is quite natural for them that they themselves should manage the affairs which are managed for them by others. But the amusing thing in this history of politics is that the above law about twenty-one years has no existencce in politics. Though we may perhaps somehow imagine a law enjoining that when you have educated a nation for a hundred years you should give its administration into its hands, it is not possible to enforce it. The people themselves must get this effected. They have a right (to do so). Hence there must be some such arrangement here. Formerly there was some such arrangement to a little extent. Such an arrangement does not exist now. And herein lies the root of all these our demands, the grievances which we have, the want which we feel (and) the inconvenience

which we notice in the administration. And the remedy which is proposed after making inquiries about that root in the above manner is called Home Rule. Its name is '*Swarajya*.' To put it briefly, the demand that the management of our (affairs) should be in our hands is the demand for *Swarajya*.

"Formerly there were our kingdoms in this country. There were administrators. The proof of this is that before the advent of the English Government in this country there was at least some order; there was no disorder everywhere. One man did not kill another. Since there existed such order, how are we to say that the people are not fit (for powers)? At the present time, science has made progress; knowledge has increased; (and) experience has accumulated in one place. Hence we must have more liberty than before, and we must have become fitter. (But) on the contrary (it is said) we are not fit. Whatever might have been the case in former times, this allegation is utterly false. Better say, (it) is not to be given. (*Cheers*.) What I say is, don't apply the words 'not fit' (to us). At least we shall know that this is not really to be given. We shall get it. But why do we not get it? It is indirectly said that we are not fit. It is to teach you that we have come here. This is admitted. But how long will you teach us? (*Laughter*.) For one generation, two generations, or three generations? Is there any end to this? Or must we, just like this, work under you like slaves till the end? (*Cheers*.) Set some limit. You come to teach us. When we appoint a teacher at home for a boy, we ask him within how many days he would teach him, whether in ten, twenty, or twenty-five years."

(Mr. Tilak went on to say that the object of saying that Indians were not fit to carry on the administration was to keep them always in slavery.) It must be noted that such harangues are generally delivered

to town audiences largely composed of lawyers, educationists, and students. A notable feature of this campaign was to attract and enlist the young. The bitter lessons taught by action in Bengal on these lines some years before were disregarded.

The Home Rule propaganda appealed in a marked manner to students and schoolboys. Mrs. Besant formally established her League on September 3rd, 1916. The issue of her paper, *New India*, dated October 11th, gave her prospectus. It asserted that fifty branches had been established in the principal provinces of India (excepting the Punjab); that her papers and pamphlets were being translated into the vernaculars; that the membership was between 2,000 and 3,000; that "Home Rule Day"—September 14th—was enthusiastically celebrated by a number of branches, as well as by a great meeting held at Madras in the Gokhale Hall of the Young Men's Indian Association—an organisation founded by Mrs. Besant.) It stated that the members of the League mostly belonged to Madras and Bombay.

Political excitement intensified among the English-educated classes; and under the Defence of India Act Mrs. Besant was formally forbidden to enter the Bombay Presidency. Later on she was also prohibited from visiting the Central Provinces. She did not, however, relax her activities. Their general object was to spread the doctrine that British rule in India, as then established, was injurious to liberty, and that a strong and effective demand for Home Rule must be organised without delay.¹

¹ On behalf of the Secretary of State for India it was asserted in the House of Commons, on July 25th, 1917, that "the action taken against Mrs. Besant was due to her activities, such as misrepresenting the acts and intentions of Government, and was not due to the ideals professed in their justification."

Before proceeding further with the history of the Home Rule League, I must state that, in October 1916, nineteen elected Indian members of the Imperial Legislative Council submitted a memorandum of proposed reforms to the Supreme Government. The memorandum noted that "the people of India have good reason to be grateful to England for the great progress in her material resources and the widening of her intellectual and political outlook and for the steady, if slow, advances in her national life commencing with the Charter Act of India of 1833." It affirmed the "very limited character" of the Indian element introduced into the administration by the Reforms of 1909. It stated that the Legislative Councils were mere advisory bodies "without any power of effective control over the Government Imperial or Provincial." It stated that the people of India were placed "under great and galling disabilities from which the other members of the British Empire were exempt." These disabilities had reduced them to a state of "utter helplessness." It referred to such grievances as the Arms Act and the system of indentured emigration¹ into certain British Colonies. (It asserted that the loyalty of the country during the war entitled India to a position of comradeship, not subordination,) to "Government that is acceptable to the people because responsible to them." (It suggested specific reforms on Congress lines, and practically declared for parliamentary government in India.)

It is useful to note one argument which was at this time advanced by the more enthusiastic Indian politicians with considerable effect on their countrymen. They pointed to the prospect of federation of the British Empire after the war, and deduced the consequent pro-

¹ Indentured emigration has now been abolished.

bability that unless India strongly asserted herself, she would become the subject not only of Great, but of Greater Britain, of the Colonies "with their declared superiority of white races and their unblushing policies of Government against all coloured races." But the inclusion of representatives of India in the Imperial War Conference largely exploded this alarm.

Except in the case of the Muhammadan aberration already described, the attitude of Indian politicians toward the enemies of Britain remained solid throughout 1916. But their attitude toward the system of British government established in India became increasingly restless under the strenuous and persistent influence of the Home Rule propaganda. Mrs. Besant stood for the president's chair at the December Congress which was to take place in Lucknow and received a considerable number of votes, but was defeated by Mr. Ambika Charan Mazumdar, an ex-schoolmaster from Eastern Bengal, a pleader, and a veteran Congressman. So electric became the political atmosphere, that the Government of the United Provinces addressed a letter to the president and secretary of the Congress Reception Committee calling their attention to the undesirable nature of speeches which had recently been made in other parts of India, and calling on them to do their best to prevent anything of the kind occurring in Lucknow. They were plainly warned that if the law were transgressed, necessary action would be taken. The letter was of course resented, but probably it strengthened the hands of the soberer politicians and contributed toward the peace and quietness which characterised the subsequent Congress proceedings.

In November representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League had met in Calcutta and had decided to accept the Home Rule programme. As to special