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1950
The influence of English constitutional doctrines was direct and clear upon the early Congressmen and "moderates" (Chapters I - II). Their demands were tardily and partially conceded by the Morley-Minto and Montagu-Chelmsford reforms (Chapters VI - VII). The ultimate political ideal of the "moderates", and even of the home rulers (Appendix I), was colonial self-government (Chapter IV - B).

The "extremists", who drew some inspiration from the Irish Sinn Fein movement (Chapter III), and the "terrorists" who followed the violent methods of their Russian namesakes (Chapter V - A), were utterly dissatisfied with the rate of political progress that the "moderate" method of political agitation had secured. Compared to the "moderates", the "extremists" and "terrorists" were more influenced by Hindu religion and culture.

The reaction of religious reformers (Arya Samajists Vivekananda), and leading thinkers (Aurobindo, Gandhi, T. Coomaraswamy, and Har Dayal) to Western ideas is shown in a chapter on "Cultural Nationalism and Western Ideas". Western contact stimulated, in social matters, movements against the undemocratic institution of caste, and, in economic matters, movements in favour of the adoption of modern industrial methods (Chapter IX).

The primary sources utilized for this thesis have been of the following nature: proceedings of Congress, other
conferences, Governor-General's Legislative Council, Parliament; speeches, writings and memoirs; periodicals published in India as well as in Great Britain; and newspapers voicing opposite views, for example, The Beng and The Pioneer Mail.

As Bengal's contribution in ideas on politics and cultural nationalism was particularly important, Bengal sources have been used extensively. Marathi sources could not be used owing to the ignorance of that language.

On political questions, not only the opinions of Indians but also the reactions of Anglo-Indian administrators and publicists, and English politicians have been discussed. But the political ideas of the Muslim Leaguers have practically been left out.
"The influence of Western, particularly English, political ideas on Indian political thought, with special reference to the political ideas of the Indian National Congress (1885-1919)"

by

S.K. Ghosh.

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CHAPTER I

THE CONGRESS DEMAND FOR REPRESENTATIVE INSTITUTIONS

(1885 - 1892)

The first Indian National Congress met at Bombay in December 1885. It is easy to exaggerate the importance of the first Congress. Neither Allan Octavian Hume, its founder, nor the seventy-two delegates who were "pressed and entreated to come" had any conception of what the Congress would ultimately become. The early Congressmen did not envisage that later Congressmen would participate in non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements in order to terminate British rule in India and to establish Swaraj. The early Congressmen were in fact loyal to the British crown and British empire.

It was natural that early Congressmen who were loud in their professions of loyalty and who were never tired of praising British rule, would repeatedly claim that the Congress owed its existence to the British influence in the country. In the third Congress the Chairman of the Reception Committee,

/Raja

3. Benin Pal. The National Congress. p.5; P. Ananda
Raja Sir T. Madhava Rao, declared that the Congress was "the soundest triumph of British administration and a crown of glory to the British nation".

The assemblage of a Congress composed of delegates from various parts of the country was possible because of the newly established network of railways which facilitated rapid and cheap travel. No such Congress could have been convened at any time in the past - either in the days of Vikram during Hindu rule or during the time of Akbar in the Muslim period, said Dadabhai Naoroji in his presentational address at the second Congress. Without the security of person and property, the maintenance of law and order which the British rulers assured to the country, he could not, continued Dadabhai, have come to the Congress without experiencing the greatest anxiety and apprehension about the safety of his kinsmen in his absence.

Apart from a unified system of transport and communication and the maintenance of law and order, what appealed to the Congress leaders most was the Western system of education that had

1. Report of the Third Indian National Congress, p.1. / The Hindoo Patriot, January 9th, 1888. "A Congress", wrote The Indian Mirror on November 14th, 1888, "would not have been possible in the dominion of the Czar, under the Mogul infilt it would have been throttled at its birth". (The Indian Mirror was edited by Narendranath Sen, who was an influential Congress leader).

2. See The Hindoo Patriot, January 9th, 1888: "The National Congress". (The Hindoo Patriot was the newspaper of the Bengal zemindars and upper classes).


had been established in the country. "Western literature", wrote The Tribune in 1887, "has infused a new life into the dead bones of the Indian Nation .......... and the National Congress is the manifestation of a new life in India".

Similarly Surendranath Banerjee declared in his 1895 Congress presidential address that the Congress was the outcome of the educational policy of Macaulay. Western education familiarized Indians with the English language which became the vehicle of communication between the educated classes, irrespective of their geographical distribution. Western education not only created a common vocabulary for all educated Indians, by submitting them to the same intellectual discipline, it also formed and moulded their general ideas about history and political philosophy. Educated India came to believe that though India evolved a high order of civilization in the past, having been the birthplace of great religions, the home of art, literature, and philosophy, she had not shown that great desire for free political institutions which had characterized the peoples

1. "We have", wrote The Tribune on January 7th, 1888, "always held the view that if the English had done nothing beyond establishing the peace and tranquility which now prevails (in) India and disseminating a knowledge of the literature and science of the West, that alone would have justified their conquest and occupation of the country"; See also The Hindoo Patriot December 15th, 1886, and December 19th, 1887.

2. The Tribune, January 5th, 1887. (The Tribune was a nationalist newspaper of Lahore).

peoples of the advanced European countries in modern times.

Congressmen eagerly studied the modern history of Europe and particularly that of England. They came to admire the ideals of liberty, nationality and democracy as developed in England and other European countries and dreamed of realizing those ideals in India. "The National Congress", wrote The Tribune "is the mighty lever which is destined to raise fallen and degraded India to the high level of the self-governing countries of Europe".

The Congress had the double task of developing in the Indian people a genuine appreciation for free institutions and of urging upon the government the necessity of liberalizing the administration. Early Congressmen were determined to follow those methods of peaceful and constitutional agitation which had proved so successful in Britain. Progress was to be harmonized with order, freedom was to grow gradually from

1. Bepin Pal, The National Congress, pp.5-6: "We had", wrote The Tribune on January 4th, 1888, "no popular national or political life .... We have poetry, drama, fiction and all but we have not one single volume of public speeches". See also The Tribune, January 5th, 1887.

2. In his 1895 Congress presidential address Surendranath Banerjea said, "We have been fed upon the strong food of English constitutional freedom ....... We should be unworthy of ourselves and of our preceptors - we should, indeed, be something less than human - if, with .... our warm Oriental sensibilities roused to an unwonted pitch of enthusiasm by the contemplation of these great ideals of public duty, we did not seek to transplant into our own country the spirit of those free institutions which have made England what she is". (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.252). In his 1897 Congress presidential address Sankaran Nair expressed similar opinions. (Idem. pp.320-21


precedent to precedent, and great changes were to be effected in a bloodless manner.

The political regeneration of India was to be achieved with the help and under the protection of Britain. "It is the mission of England", wrote The Hindoo Patriot, "to ... make her (that is, India) fit to govern herself". Congressmen hoped that India would ultimately "participate in full in the rights of British citizenship" and would form an integral and permanent part of the British empire which had "given the rest of the world the models of free institutions".

In the very first Congress W. C. Bonnerji, the President, declared that politically-minded Indians wanted to be governed according to the ideals of government prevalent in Europe. Congressmen wanted to introduce, slowly and gradually, Western representative institutions into India. The great words "Representative Institutions", said Surendranath Banerjea in the third Congress, were written in characters of gold in the banner that the Congress unfurled. "England", said Bishan Narayan Dhar in the same Congress "has moved us from our ancient anchorage. She has cast us adrift, against our will, upon the wide waters of a soothing proletariat, and we turn back to England.

1. The Hindoo Patriot, April 30th, 1888. See also The Tribune, December 28th, 1889.
2. See Surendranath Banerjea's 1895 Congress presidential address (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp.254-55.)
3. Idem. p.4. See also The Tribune, January 5th, 1887.
England, and ask her to grant us that compass of representative institutions by which, amid a thousand storms, she has steered her prosperous course to the safe haven of regulated political freedom.

The creators of representative government in Britain did not, however, conceive them as models which should be copied by others. They regarded them "as something peculiarly British, as an inherited national privilege". Burke advised the French people not to try to introduce the British system into their country but to make the best of their own inherited institutions. The idea that democratic institutions were suited only to Britain and that they did not contain a truth that was universal was challenged by two great events - the American Revolution and the French Revolution. These two revolutions encouraged people to think that democratic institutions were not peculiar monopolies of any one particular nation but were goods whose value increased as they were more widely shared; that democratic institutions were not things that must necessarily be inherited, but were benefits that could also be claimed as a natural right. Democracy, it came to be argued, was not a tradition that had a peculiar validity in a

1. Idem, pp.95-6. In the 1886 Congress Dadabhai Naoroji spoke of "the new light which has been poured upon us, turning us from darkness into light and teaching us the new lesson that kings are made for the people, not people for the kings; and this new lesson we have learned amidst the darkness of Asiatic despotism only by the light of free English institutions". (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp. 7-8.)


3. Ibid.
limited area, on the contrary, it was an ideal that could gradually be realised universally.

In 1890 Gladstone, the Liberal leader, declared that it was the mission of Britain to spread the light and message of democratic institutions throughout the world. This was a complete change from the days of Burke. "It often happens in the counsels of Providence", said Gladstone, "that each nation or some particular nation, is appointed to work out great social, political, or economical problems for the world at large. In the adoption of that system (that is, the system of representative institutions) we long stood alone, but one after another great countries of the world have come in, and the nations sprung from our loins have given further countenance and currency to our example, and now the man would be deemed mad who should denounce the system of popular representation".

With these words Congressmen were in complete agreement. The image of England that the early Congressmen cherished was the England of Simon de Montfort, of Hampden, of Burke, of Mill, the England which was the home of constitutional liberties, and the mother of parliaments and free institutions throughout the earth. Congressmen urged their British rulers to practise the gospel of "political Christianity" that Gladstone preached.

1. Quoted by Pandit Malaviya in the 1890 Congress - (Report of the Sixth Indian National Congress p.18). Malaviya said that any one who was not mad or who had not become degenerated by contact with the worst phases of Oriental thought would refuse to admit the soundness of the representative principle.

2. Ibid, p.18.
"Representative institutions", said Surendranath Banerjee in a lecture at the Oxford Union, "are a consecrated possession which in the counsels of Providence has been entrusted to the English people, to guard that possession, to spread it, and not to make it the property of this or that people, but the heritage of mankind at large". Indians, being British subjects, they had, wrote The Indian Mirror, every right to representative government. Britain had conceded to Canada, Australia, and other colonies representative institutions, why then should she withhold them from India? "What is an Englishman", asked Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya at the second Congress in 1886, "without representative institutions? Why an Englishman at all, a mere sham, a base imitation, and I often wonder as I look round at our nominally English magnates how they have the face to call themselves Englishmen and yet deny us representative institutions and struggle to maintain despotic ones".

From English textbooks Indians learned to appreciate, in theory, the value of representative institutions, hence

2. The Indian Mirror, May 2nd, 1888.
3. See speech of Pandit Malaviya at the 1887 Congress. (The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: His Life and Speeches, p.15.)
England, it was argued, would be subjecting India to a double
injustice if she now, in practice, tried to withhold from
India the great boon of representative institutions the desire
for which England herself had awakened and stimulated among
Indians. Early Congressmen, however, did not doubt the
liberal intentions of the generality of Englishmen. The
Hindoo Patriot maintained that whatever might be the case of
Englishmen who had long resided in India, the average English-
man in Britain loved liberty and appreciated the love of
liberty in others. "The truth is", wrote The Bengalee in a
similar vein in 1889, "that an Englishman cannot but welcome
any proposals for reform in this direction (that is towards
the liberalization of the legislative councils) unless he has
ceased to be an Englishman. He is by instinct and by the
traditions of his race a lover of popular institutions".
The best Englishmen
had sympathized with Italy and Greece in their
struggles for freedom. Though Indians were neither Italian
nor Greeks they were better, argued Surendranath Banerjea,
because they were British subjects. In that capacity they
were entitled to secure very great sympathy from Englishmen in
their demand for wider political rights.

Early Congressmen had excessive faith in the liberal

1. See The Tribune, December 13th, 1888.
2. The Hindoo Patriot, December 24th, 1888.
3. The Bengalee, January 5th, 1889.
instincts of their British rulers. They believed that Britain could not enslave other nations for her own benefit. The Tribune wrote that Indians lived under the rule of a race that was the most freedom-loving race in the world, and referring to British rule Dadabhai Naoroji declared that Indians were attached "to this foreign rule with a deeper loyalty than even to our past native rule", because they believed that England would not attempt in an utterly un-English way to withhold from India the inestimable blessings of representative institutions that she had already conceded to the self-governing colonies. "We have no doubt" wrote The Tribune in 1888, "that in proper time India will be governed by her own Parliament under the guiding hand of England. England can no more refuse self-government to India than deprive the English people of their Parliament".

So great was the faith of Congressmen in representative institutions that in the third Congress Surendranath Banerjea confidently asserted that it was "impossible to think of a domestic grievance or ...... complaint which would not be remedied" if the legislative councils were reformed and made /more

2. The Tribune, January 4th, 1888.
more representative. This statement gave rise to some
criticism. Critics accused Congressmen of cherishing a
most extravagant faith in representative institutions in
conceiving that such institutions could cure all evils, not
only political but also economic and social.

In this connection the lively debate at the second Congress
over a resolution which expressed grave concern over the
poverty of India and suggested that "the introduction of
Representative Institutions will prove one of the most
important practical steps towards the amelioration of the
condition of the people", is illuminating. Ambica Charan
Mazumdar said that the connection between poverty and the
absence of representative institutions appeared to him as
"somewhat remote". The "chief causes which have brought about
the great poverty of India are not all political" and cannot be
removed by mere political changes, declared another speaker.
Various factors which contributed to the poverty of India -
lack of industrialisation, backwardness of agriculture, over-
population, etc. - were enumerated by different speakers.
Even Surendranath Banerjea was not satisfied with the resolution

1. Report of the Third Indian National Congress, p. 84.
2. See the Raja of Bhinga, Democracy Not Suited to India, p. 38
5. Ibid, p. 67.
and, proposed on behalf of the Bengal delegates, that the resolution be so amended as to state that "the wider employment of natives of India, the encouragement of indigenous trade and manufactures, are among the circumstances which, along with the introduction of representative institutions, would palliate the poverty of the masses".

Supporters of the original resolution pointed out that it was not intended to enumerate all the circumstances which contributed to India's poverty. The Congress being a political organization it could point out that an important political reform - the introduction of more representative institutions - though it would not work any direct miracle would help the government to know more fully and therefore remove more easily the economic sufferings of the people. On the basis of these clarifications the resolution in its unamended form was carried by a large majority.

In a pamphlet published by some Congressmen in 1887, Farid-Ud-Din explained to Rambaksh the excellence of representative institutions but warned him not to imagine that representative institutions alone could remove all injustice and oppression. But though Congressmen did not regard

1. Ibid.
2. Idem, pp. 64-8.
3. "A Conversation Between Molvi Farid-Ud-Din, M.A., B.L., Vaquil (Barrister) of the High Court, Practising in the Zilla Court of Hakikatabad, and Rambaksh, one of the Mukaddams (Chief Villager) of Kambakhtpur". The pamphlet was included in Appendix III of the Report of the Third Indian National Congress.
representative institutions as a cure for all evils they greatly valued such institutions. When the Congress was founded in 1885 the notification that called it into being declared that the Congress was intended to form the germ of a native parliament which would prove that Indians were not totally unfitted for representative institutions.

The first Congress passed a resolution urging the reform and expansion of the legislative councils by the admission of a considerable proportion of elected members. But how far was the principle of election or government by representation suited to Indian conditions? The remarks of Chisolm Anstey and of Bartle Frere on this question deserve to be reproduced because Congressmen almost invariably referred to those remarks. "We are apt to forget", said Chisolm Anstey in 1867 at a meeting of the East India Association in London, "when we talk of preparing people in the East by education, and all that sort of thing, for municipal government and parliamentary government, that the East is the parent of municipalities. Local self-government, in the widest acceptation of the term, is as old as the East itself ........ there is no portion of that country from west to east, from north to south, which is not swarming with /municipalities

municipalities; and not only so, but like to our municipalities of old, they are bound together as in a species of network, so that you have readymade to your hand the framework of a great system of representation”. "Anybody who has watched the working of native society", said Bartle Frere in 1871, "will see that its genius is one of representation not, ... representation by election under Reform Acts, but representation generally by castes, and trades, and professions, every class of the community being represented; and that where there is any difficulty, anything to be laid before the Government, anything to be discussed among themselves - a fellow-citizen to be punished, or a fellow-citizen to be rewarded - there is always a public meeting of the caste, the village, or the district, and this is an expression, .... of the genius of the people as unmistakable as that which is arrived at by our Saxon method of gathering together in assemblies of different kinds to vote by tribes or hundreds or by shires”.

In spite of what Chislom Anstey said about there existing "readymade .... the framework of a great system of representation", it must be pointed out that very few of the ancient

1. Pherozeshah Mehta (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.68), Annie Besant (India: Bond or Free? p.55) and other Congressmen quoted this passage.


3. See speech of N.G. Chandavarkar in which he referred to this passage. (Eminent Indians on Indian Politics, ed. C.L. Parekh, p.377); Annie Besant, India: Bond or Free?, pp. 54-5.
ancient local self-governing bodies had survived the centralizing tendencies of British rule. Already during the insecurity that followed the dissolution of the Mughul empire the self-governing village institutions had greatly decayed. During the early years of British rule Munro in Madras and Elphinstone in Bombay tried to preserve what was left of the old judicial village panchayats, but their endeavours were not followed up. The establishment of a unified system of administration, the easy facility of reference to the district law courts, the introduction of new systems of land tenure, and the development of individualistic ideas and sentiments, were some of the factors which, during British rule, were responsible for the decay of the ancient self-governing village institutions.

As early as 1867 W. C. Bonnerji, while admitting that the self-governing village communities had lost much of their ancient power, rightly claimed that the fact that such communities once existed showed that the people possessed instincts of self-government and that it was fair to suppose, until the contrary was proved by experiment, that the people would understand the principles of representative self-government.

The first Congress demanded not only that the legislative councils should be made more representative, but also that the budgets should be referred to the legislative councils for consideration. The English-educated classes, who primarily composed the early Congresses, vividly remembered how the English people extolled Hampden for his refusal to pay ship money, how at every stage of their constitutional history Englishmen showed a zealous solicitude to ensure to their representatives alone the full and final control of the finances of their country, and how a section of them, migrating to America, converted the principle of "no taxation, without representation" into a battle-cry for revolution. The Congress, however, did not think that the principle of "no taxation without representation" could immediately be realized in India. It wanted some voice in the taxation that was imposed by the government but it did not want full and absolute control over the finances of the country.

The first Congress further demanded that the members of the legislative councils should be empowered to interpellate the executive in regard to all branches of the administration.

2. See Dadabhai Naoroji's speech in the 1885 Congress (Idem, p.26), and Bardley Norton's article "The Indian National Congress" in Indian Politics p.19.
3. See Surendranath Banerjee's 1895 Congress presidential address, (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.199.)
In India no member of any of the existing legislative councils had any right to ask a single question of the executive on finance or on any matter of administration, domestic or foreign, but in Britain the members of the parliament enjoyed the right of interpelling the executive on any matter of public concern. In answering the questions of members, the government in Britain had the opportunity of supplying valuable information which removed much misunderstanding and cleared up many matters. In India where the government was alien and the composition of the higher governing body largely foreign, the occasions of misunderstanding between the people and the government were likely to be more frequent than in Britain. Consequently, the right of interpellation was more important in India than even in Britain.

The reform schemes adumbrated by the Congress raised apprehensions that the Congress desired the early establishment of full-blown parliamentary institutions into India. In a speech in 1888 Lord Dufferin, the then Viceroy of India, complained that a section of the educated classes had set up the ideal of "a representative body or bodies in which the official element shall be in a minority, who shall have what is called the power of the purse, and who, through this instrumentality, shall be able to bring the British executive into subjection to their will".

Perhaps Dufferin made these remarks in order to criticise...
what he believed to be the aims of Congressmen. The Indian Mirror commented that Dufferin "attempted to mislead his audience, unintentionally but ignorantly, by saying that the Congress wanted to usurp the reigns of power". The idea of transferring to Indian hands the ultimate power of decision on all Indian questions was rejected by early Congressmen as beyond the range of practical politics. They wanted, as The Bengalee pointed out, "a consultative council and not representative government". True, Congressmen demanded that at least half the members of the legislative councils should be elected but not all elected members were likely to vote against the government, and even if they did, Congressmen conceded that the government should have the right of vetoing all adverse votes. "Now...... if there be one thing more than another that we have tried to make clear", said George Yule in his 1888 Congress presidential address, "it is that the British Executive should continue to be paramount in the Councils".

W. S. Caine, a member of the British parliament who visited

1. The Indian Mirror, December 6th, 1888. See also The Tribune, December 8th, 1888.
2. See Romesh Dutt’s article "Indian Aspirations under British Rule" in Indian Politics, p.56.
3. The Bengalee, December 15th, 1888. See also The Bengalee December 8th, 1888; The Tribune, February 23rd, 1889; Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.76; and Bardley Horton’s article "The Indian National Congress" in Indian Politics, p.24.
5. Ibid. See also The Tribune, January 19th, 1889.
visited the 1883 session of the Congress wrote that the belief of a section of the Liberal party of Britain that a demand for home rule had arisen in India was based on a misapprehension of the real demands of the Congress and that the most ardent Congressmen did not contemplate the early possibility of setting up a responsible parliament in India.

"Let me say on behalf of the Indian National Congress," said Surendranath Banerjee in 1890, "that we do not wish to see installed in our midst anything like a democratic form of government. We do not think India is ripe for it yet; nor do we want Home Rule... We want something much less than an English House of Commons." In his presidential address to the Congress in 1890, Pherozeshah Mehta declared that Congressmen were not so ignorant of history as to demand the immediate and wholesale importation into India of the parliamentary institutions that Britain had evolved through the discipline of centuries.

In a letter to The Pioneer in 1888 Theodore Beck said, "Parliament is what the promoters of this (that is, the Congress movement have as their goal, and the assurance that the only

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2. Eminent Indians on Indian Politics, ed. C.L. Parekh, p.96. See also The Tribune November 9th, 1887; The Indian Spectator, March 10th, 1889: "The Indian Congress"; The Hindoo Patriot, May 13th, 1889: "Mr. W. S. Caine on India"; The Bengalee, April 23rd, 1890.
4. The Pioneer expressed the opinions of an important section of Anglo-Indian officials. The weekly edition of The Pioneer was known as The Pioneer Mail.
object is a reconstitution of the legislative councils is the language of diplomacy". Though Beck was certainly mistaken if he believed that for the immediate present the Congress wanted anything more than the reconstitution of the legislative councils, he was undoubtedly correct in thinking that the establishment of a responsible parliament was the ultimate aim of some Congressmen. "Is English literature so barren, are English institutions so worthless", asked The Tribune, "that they can be read and studied without a love for popular self-government springing up in the heart of a nation?" The paper stated that if in the course of a fifty or a hundred years Indians become fitted to enjoy a fully parliamentary form of government then the British rulers would willingly establish such a form of government in India.

But though parliamentary government was the ultimate political goal of some early Congressmen, what they immediately wanted was not an Indian version of the British House of Commons but something on the lines of the legislative council of the Mysore State which was originally established in 1881. In a pamphlet published in 1891, Rajah, a pro-Congress British Indian subject, after being convinced by a Mysorean of the excellences of the Mysore legislative council, remarked to the

1. See Beck's letter "In What Will It End?" in The Pioneer Mail, May 16th, 1883.
2. The Tribune, June 2nd, 1888.
3. Ibid.
Mysorean thus: "Our councils are not composed of more than ten members each; while your assembly, you say, contains 250 members. Our members in the councils are but government nominees, whereas, you are to enjoy from the next year elective franchise .... Our members have not the powers of interpellation which in a sense your representatives have. Our Government has yet to take a leaf from your book and establish similar assemblies in our Empire". The government in India should increase the number of legislative councillors and carry on legislation after consulting the councillors about the wants and grievances of the people. If only these simple reforms were effected then the permanency of British rule in India could be assured, for though a thousand years might roll by it would be seen that in India the British and the Indians were "commingling with each other as milk and water, and embracing each other as mother and child!"

The Congress demand for elective representative institutions was criticized by Sir Saiyid Ahmed Khan, the Muslim leader. Theodore Beck, who regarded himself a disciple of Saiyid Ahmed in matters political, wrote that Indian Muslim thought resembled the old Tory school of England far more than the

3. Ibid.
5. Theodore Beck, Essays on Indian Topics, p. 111 (Beck was the Principal of the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College of Aligarh).
the Radical and that Indian Muslims were not so enthusiastic about democratic institutions as was generally believed.

Saiyid Ahmed did not believe that representative institutions could be established under foreign rule. It had never been so established in all history. The principles on which an empire was based were different from the principles that sustained a representative system of government. The method of British imperial rule in India could not be democratic, it was bound to be the same as the method that was pursued by "all Kings and Asiatic Empires". The Muslims once established an empire in India, they knew the method of running an empire, whereas the English-educated Bengalis, who were vocal in the Congress, were utterly ignorant of them because they had no such experience. The Muslim emperors did not consult their subject-peoples when they contemplated waging war against any province and conquering it. Why then should the British rulers be required to consult the representatives of the Indian people, before they went to war against Burma? It appears that Saiyid Ahmed did not realize that

1. Idem, p.42. In a paper read in a meeting of the East India Association in 1888, C.W. Whish said that the Muslims were "Conservatives by nature and national bias". (The Journal of the East India Association, 1889, p. 35). In a discussion that followed the reading of the paper Raj Narayan disputed this statement and pointed out that even a few years ago Saiyid Ahmed held liberal political opinions. (Idem, p. 66).


3. Idem, p. 43.

4. Idem, p. 47.

5. Idem, pp. 41, 47.
because Indians paid for those military operations it was most natural that they should feel that they were entitled to have a voice in the determination of the broad outlines of the military policy of the government.

According to Saiyid Ahmed Indians not only had no right to interfere with the military and financial policy of the government, they had also no right to claim that they should be appointed to those posts where matters of foreign policy and state secrets were dealt with. He said that it was a natural law that men confided more in the men of their own race than in those of others, and that Indians could not complain if Englishmen and not Indians were appointed to those posts. It must be pointed out that if Indians, however able, were to be permanently excluded from such posts then it would have meant a violation of the Queen's Proclamation of 1858 which declared that race shall be no disqualification for appointment to government offices.

Congressmen wanted to Indianize the government services and to liberalize the legislative councils. Criticizing the Congress demand for more representative institutions, Saiyid Ahmed said that while representative government could succeed in a homogeneous country like Britain, where there existed a strong national feeling, in India, where the people were not homogeneous but were divided by profound religious and other differences,

2. Saiyid Ahmed Khan The Present State of Indian Politics, pp. 41, 43.
differences, the introduction of representative government, pure and simple, would be productive of much evil, because as the Indian people, unlike the British people, would vote on the basis of religious and not political differences, the majority community, the Hindus, would completely dominate the Indian parliament and establish a government English in name but Hindu in reality. He believed that if the demands of the Congress for more representative institutions were conceded in full, then the Congress, by means of elections and through the legislative councils, would peacefully gain control over the entire internal administration of the country, and that this would mean that by peaceful means alone as great a change in the importance of the different political groups and communities would be effected as was generally secured by means of a civil war, "We also like a civil war", said Saiyid Ahmed, "but ......we like it with arms ......which is in truth the true pen for writing the decree of sovereignty".

Saiyid Ahmed had no doubt that if the British left India then there would ensue a civil war between the Hindus and the Muslims, "It is necessary", he said, "that one of them should conquer the other...... To hope that both could remain equal is to desire the impossible". If the Muslims were to choose

1. Saiyid Ahmed Khan, The Present State of Indian Politics, p.61. See also Saiyid Ahmed's speech in the Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of India, 1885, p.20


between being subjects of the Hindus or of the British then Saiyid Ahmed advised the Muslims to choose the latter alternative, and reminded them that the British like the Muslims were "people of the Book" and informed them of his belief that "God had said that no people of other religions can be friends of Mahomedans except the Christians".

It is to be regretted that in expressing these opinions in 1887-88 Saiyid Ahmed went back on his earlier and more liberal views when he believed that the interests of Hindus and Muslims were not, in essence, conflicting. Seeing that both the communities lived on the same soil, were governed by the same ruler, and suffered or benefitted, more or less, equally by the same economic causes, in 1884 he had declared, "By the word nation I mean Hindus and Mahomedans".

In his speeches in 1887-88 Saiyid Ahmed strongly advised his correligionists not to take any part in the Congress movement. The Hindoo Patriot wrote in 1888 that had the Muslims "been more thoroughly liberalized by Western culture than they are at present they would have, to a man, sympathised with the objects of the Congress". The Hindus took to Western education long

2. The Bengalee, February 16th, 1884. See also the article "Sir Saiyid Ahmed Khan in 1884 and 1897" by a "Bengalee Journalist" in The Tribune, February 1st, 1888.
4. The Hindoo Patriot, October 8th, 1888.
long before the Muslims; it was natural, therefore, that the Congress which aspired after Western political institutions and pursued Western political methods would find its most ardent supporters among the Western-educated Hindus. But though the comparative delay in the spread of Western education among the Muslims was one of the reasons, it was not the sole reason why many Muslims did not support the Congress movement. Saiyid Ahmed, who strongly advised his community to welcome English education, was yet opposed to the Congress and argued that if ultimately a parliamentary form of government was set up in India, as many Congressmen suggested, then the interests of the Muslims would suffer.

To safeguard the interests of the Muslims and other minorities the 1889 Congress wisely adopted a minority clause to the effect that "whenever the Parsis, Christians, Muhammadans or Hindus are in a minority, the total number of Parsis, Christians, Muhammadans or Hindus, as the case may be, /elected

1. In 1860-62 there was only one Muslim to ten Hindus in the English schools in India. (W.W. Hunter, The Indian Mussalmans: Are they Bound in Conscience to Rebel against the Queen? London, 1871, p.178). Though Muslims constituted one-fourth of the population of India, in 1870-71 only one-seventh of the students in the schools were Muslims (F. W. Thomas, The History and Prospects of British Education in India, Cambridge, 1891, p.94). Even in 1882 only 11 per cent of scholars receiving higher education were Muslims. (Ibid).
elected to the Provincial Legislature, shall not, so far as may be possible, bear a less proportion to the total number of members elected thereto, than the total number of Parsis, Christians, Hindus or Muhammadans, as the case may be, in such electoral jurisdiction, bears to its total population".

Though this proposal was a departure from the practice of representation in Britain where persons were elected to the parliament by the majority vote of a particular constituency irrespective of the fact whether the person elected belonged to any particular community, it was defended on the ground that because India, unlike Britain, was not a politically homogeneous country one could not expect that political methods that were successful in Britain would work equally well in the different conditions of India.

Sayyid Ahmed criticized Congressmen not merely for formulating reform proposals on the assumption that Indians were a nation, but also for trying to import a democratic spirit which, he maintained, was totally unsuited to Indian conditions. Congressmen argued that admission to the higher services

1. Report of the Fifth Indian National Congress, p. 14. Munshi Hidayet Rasul sought an amendment suggesting that the number of Hindus and Muslims in the councils should be equal. (Idem. p. 32-33). Wahid Ali, who believed that the Muslims were the "superior race", supported the undemocratic thesis that there should be three times as many Muslims as Hindus in the councils. (Idem., p. 36). Other Muslim delegates exhorted the delegates to regard themselves as Indians first and Hindus and Muslims afterwards. (Idem. pp. 36-37). Ultimately the original minority clause was adopted.

2. See speech of Baxtley Norton (Idem. p. 31)
services or legislative councils should not be restricted to men of high birth but should be allowed to able men of even "insignificant origin". They said that if competitive examinations for the recruitment of the civil servants were held simultaneously in England and in India then one of its beneficial results would be that poor persons, who could not afford the expenses of going to England, would have a chance of appearing for the civil service examinations. One of the reasons why Saiyid Ahmed was opposed to the holding of simultaneous examinations in England and in India was that men of "insignificant origin" would then become civil servants. But in England, Englishmen of "insignificant origin" were recruited for the civil service and The Indian Mirror rightly pointed out that it would be a strange and illogical position if while Englishmen of "insignificant origin" were recruited for the civil service, Indians of "insignificant origin" were excluded from it. But Saiyid Ahmed sought to defend his position by the curious argument that because English civil servants came from a distant country Indians remained ignorant as to whether those civil servants were the sons of dukes or drapers, but that such ignorance could not be maintained about Indian civil servants and that in India men of good family would not consent to being ruled by Indians "of low rank with whose humble origin they were well acquainted".

1. The Indian Mirror, January 17th, 1888.

Saiyid Ahmed further stated that the Viceroy would be specially justified in appointing persons of good family as members of the Governor-General's Legislative Council. "None but a man of good breeding", he declared, "can the Viceroy take as his colleague, treat as his brother, and invite to entertainments at which he may have to dine with Dukes and Earls". The suggestion that those who enjoyed the accidental advantages of rank and birth should be given special preference in the matter of appointment to the Governor-General's Legislative Council was rightly and strongly criticized in the nationalist press. "India", wrote The Indian Spectator, "...does not want a government managed by the native aristocracy. It requires the fittest men it can find".

The Tribune drew attention to the fact that even the landed gentry of Bengal had once suggested as its nominee in the Governor-General's Legislative Council the name of that fine representative of the English-educated class, Krisno Das Pal, even though Pal was born in the "low" teli or oilman caste.

Like Saiyid Ahmed, the Raja of Bhinga, a representative of the landed aristocracy and the author of a work entitled "Democracy

1. Idem. p.4.
2. The Indian Mirror, January 17th, 1888; The Hindoo Patriot, January 23rd, 1888.
3. The Indian Spectator, January 22nd, 1888 (The Indian Spectator was edited by Behramji Malabari, who was an ardent social reformer).
"Democracy Not Suited to India", entertained conservative views on social matters. The Raja believed that it was undesirable "to give men of inferior origin and caste, power over men immensely their superior in birth and social position", and emphatically maintained that the territorial aristocrats wanted to preserve the social distinctions that existed between man and man in India from time immemorial. The territorial aristocrats had no love for democracy in general or the Congress movement in particular. They were conservative and orthodox, they clung to the old established usages. But the light of orthodoxy had waxed dim in the minds of many Congress agitators who, the Raja lamented, were "seeking to introduce into India the strange and complicated institutions of the far West".

In spite of the fact that the territorial aristocrats wanted to preserve the old-established but irrational and harmful caste inequalities, the Raja yet claimed that the landed aristocrats represented the real interests of the people and advised the British rulers to govern India through the landed aristocrats. A little known person by the name of R. C. Saunders suggested that by forming an Indian House of Lords it would be possible to rule India through the

1. On September 26th, 1888 The Pioneer Mail, which voiced the opinions of an important section of Anglo-Indian officials, very favourably reviewed this book.


territorial aristocrats. He computed that the Indian peerage would be composed of 1,280 aristocrats. There would be 230 ruling chiefs of native states, 100 survivors of extinct dynasties and other eminent men, and 950 zemindars of British India. The Indian peerage were to have the right of trial by their own class and they were to have a voice in legislation. It was not clearly specified how real the power of the Indian peerage would be, but probably the Indian House of Lords was designed to be merely a consultative body and it was not intended that it should be invested with the ultimate controlling power over legislation.

Saunders suggested that some of the ambitious and relatively wealthy educated middle class persons could be elevated to the Indian peerage in the manner that some middle class persons in Britain had been incorporated in the British nobility. But what the educated classes wanted was not that a tiny section of their class should be elevated to the peerage, but that they should, as a class, get a proper share in the administration of the country, and the creation of an Indian House of Lords would not have satisfied their legitimate aspirations.

It appears that one of the purposes that Saunders had in mind

1. R. C. Saunders, A Glance at India's Aristocracy: Or should there be a House of Lords for India, pp.4-10. (Saunders was a High Court Solicitor in Calcutta).
mind when he suggested the creation of an Indian House of Lords was that it would have provided a "proper counterpoise" to the Congress movement that was dominated by the English-educated middle class. It is necessary to point out that any policy that was designed largely for the purpose of checking the growing influence of the English-educated class would not have been a wise one, because the English-educated class was exercising a beneficial influence on Indian political and social life and they were much more enlightened than the territorial aristocracy of India. As the Raja of Bhangia himself admitted the majority of the ancient nobility of India had not received the benefits of English education and they found it difficult to keep pace with the tide of progress.

Critics argued that even though it be conceded that the English-educated Congressmen were exercising a beneficial influence in the country, it was yet true that because they constituted a very small section of India's total population their opinions could not be taken as a guide in matters of Indian administration. In 1892 Dufferin characterized the educated classes who were agitating for Western representative institutions.


2. See the Raja's article "The Decay of the Landed Aristocracy in India" in The Nineteenth Century, May, 1892, p.355.

3. On April 28th, 1892, The Pioneer Mail expressed the extreme opinion that because Congressmen and their sympathisers constituted a very small section of India's total population they could not even be taken into account in the system of Indian administration.
institutions, which probably meant Congressmen, as constituting a "microscopic minority" of the population of India. Out of the two hundred millions of people of British India not more than five or six per cent could read or write and less than one per cent had any knowledge of English. Furthermore, the knowledge of most of the literates was only elementary. The number of graduates produced by the universities since 1857 was less than eight thousand. Dufferin argued that it would be unwise to hand over power to a national representative assembly at the bidding of this "microscopic minority" of the English-educated class.

We shall briefly consider the official claim of early Congressmen about their representative character. W. G. Bonnerji, in his presidential address to the first Congress, claimed for the Congress a representative character almost akin to that of the British House of Commons. The Congress by delegates were not selected through formal elections from particular constituencies, but being bound to the people by a community of sentiment and interest those delegates did represent the people, in substance, though not in form. There

1. Lord Dufferin, Speeches Delivered in India, p.239.
3. Ibid. For similar opinions see Colvin's letter to Hume. (A. O. Hume and A. Colvin, Audi Alteram Partem, p.22).
can be no doubt that though the Congress delegates were the
true servants of the people, Bonnerji's claim about their completely representative character was premature. The vast majority of the people of India - the agriculturists - did not evince much interest in the Congress proceedings of the early years. The official record of the second Congress admits that "the ryots and the cultivating classes were insufficiently represented".

Budruddin Tyabji, in his presidential address to the third Congress, claimed that the Congress was "a truly representative national gathering" and asserted that if the legislative councils were reformed and enlarged and made more representative then many of the Congress delegates would be formally be elected to those councils. Large public meetings had been held to elect the delegates for the third Congress. But according to the Raja of Bhinga those meetings were attended mainly by the English-educated town people and the vast majority of agriculturists had kept away from such meetings. True, some agriculturists attended Congress meetings but the most important information one should have about political meetings, in such a populous country like India was not, wrote the Raja, how many people did attend the meetings, but how many people did not. Out of about two

2. Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.22.
3. The Raja of Bhinga, Democracy Not Suited to India, p.23.
hundred million people of British India barely half a million men, according to the official report of the 1887 Congress, actually and directly took part in the public meetings for the election of Congress delegates. The report maintained that if the issues were explained to the people then ninety per cent. of the adult males of India would have supported the Congress and its principles but, on the basis of known facts alone, it remarked that "cannot .... see grounds for supposing that more than ten per cent. of these (that is, adult males) at the utmost, even indirectly and passively supported the Congress .... the statistics .... do not lead to the conclusion that, as yet, the Congress is by any means so 'broadbased upon the people's will' as has been supposed and asserted".

By the time that the 1888 Congress was held Congressmen had organized numerous public meetings and distributed thousands of leaflets and pamphlets among the people. The 1888 Congress report claimed that due to this vigorous political agitation one-third of the adult male population had acquired some knowledge about the Congress and its principles. Three million people took a direct part in electing the 1888 Congress delegates. On this basis and by a rough method of computation

2. Idem, p. 16.
computation the Congress report worked out that "these three million of active supporters representing fully five times this number of favourers of the movement, and constituting with their women, children, and dependents, fully 75 millions of the population" could be counted as, in some way, sympathisers of the Congress.

On the basis of these figures Congressmen declared that they did not constitute a microscopic minority of India's total population. Some of them even claimed that they were the real representatives of the Indian people.

In his correspondence with Hume, Sir Auckland Colvin, the Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, disputed this claim and asserted that if real popular government was introduced, then India would be ruled not by the small minority of English-educated Congressmen but by the representatives of the vast majority of ignorant Indian peasants. "The government of the English in India" he said, "was the government of a people far more advanced than those among whom it exists"; that government could wean the Indian people from their "archaic order of ideas", but there was no prospect of that happening if owing to the introduction of real representative government the ideas of the ignorant masses were allowed to influence the policy of the Indian government.

1. Ibid.
1 government. Theodore Beck thought likewise. Real representative government in India would mean the rule of the peasants and that would be the "government of ignorance and superstition".

Congressmen did not claim representative institutions for the masses; they did not believe that the masses would be able qualified enough to exercise the right of franchise in an enlightened and thoughtful manner. "Who has ever asked" wrote The Bengalee in 1887, "that the peasantry should participate in the government of the country and direct the affairs of the Empire? Not even the most dreamy of our politicians have ever sought to compromise our cause by committing this outrage upon common sense". In the same year in a pamphlet written by Congressmen it was clearly stated that the right of franchise should not be conceded to the mass of the people, it should only be given to "the upper and middle, fairly educated class" which, it was believed, contained "a majority of fairly sensible and reasonably honest men". Early Congressmen definitely repudiated

1. Idem. p.25.
3. See the Congress presidential addresses of Ferozeshah Mehta and George Yule in 1888 and 1890 respectively. (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp.41-2, 76.)
4. The Bengalee, November 12th, 1887. See also The Tribune February 8th, 1888.
repudiated the idea of universal suffrage and demanded especially representative institutions "for the educated community who, by reason of their culture and enlightenment, their assimilation of English ideas and their familiarity with English methods of government, might be presumed to be qualified for such a boon".

Congressmen maintained that the fact that the majority of the people were uneducated was no argument why the right of franchise should not be granted to the small English-educated minority. If in a country the number of persons capable of running a steam-engine were few then that was no reason why those few persons should be disallowed to run steam-engines until all the men of the country learned to drive such engines. Congressmen pointed out that a House of Commons existed in Britain long before the British masses were educated, and they recalled the wise words of Dewan C. Ranga Charlu, the founder of the Mysore Representative Assembly

1. A. O. Hume and A. Colvin, Audi Alteram Partem, p. 71. In 1888 Hume said that the actual number of Indian voters, according to a proper electoral system, would come up to one-and-a-quarter per cent of the total population of India. (Ibid).

2. See 1895 Congress presidential address of Surendranath Banerjea. (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp. 180-81).


4. See George Yule's 1888 Congress presidential address. (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp. 41-2).

5. Ibid; The Tribune, November 9th, 1887.
who said to that Assembly (1882) Assembly, that if "the spread of any high degree of education among the great mass of the people were to be insisted upon as a sine qua non, we may have to wait for ever; meanwhile every year under an autocratic system of government will find the people less fit for representative institutions".

The introduction of representative institutions for the educated community would have directly and immediately benefitted the English-educated class. But the mere fact that the English-educated Congressmen would have benefitted by the introduction of more liberal principles government does not necessarily prove that their interest in liberalism was not genuine. In 1890 Lord Lansdowne, the Viceroy, had, through his Private Secretary, paid a handsome compliment to the Congress by saying that the Congress movement represented in India of "what in Europe would be called the more advanced Liberal party as distinguished from the great body of Conservative opinion which exists side by side with it".

Unfortunately, instead of recognising the Congress as a progressive force most Englishmen in India were, as H. Whitehead, a former Bishop of Madras, records, from the very beginning, hostile to the Congress. In 1894 General Sir George

1. See M.V. Chari, The Mysore Representative Assembly and The Indian National Congress: A Dialogue, p.8; Report of the Sixth Indian National Congress, p.22.

2. See the "Introduction" of The Indian National Congress (Containing the Presidential Addresses... The Congress Resolutions.... and Notable Utterances on the Movement) 1st ed. p.5.

George Chesney characterized the Congress as a thoroughly disloyal organisation, and Whitehead narrates that in the early years of the Congress "all talk of self-government in India was regarded by the majority of the British as disloyal". In 1899 Sir Alfred Lyall wrote that those who desired, with the help of Britain, to elevate the moral and intellectual standard of Indian life "must see how ruinously premature it is to quarrel with the British government upon details of administration, or even upon what are called constitutional questions". Even as early as 1888 Theodore Beck had declared that "the agitation of which the Congress is the visible head will, if unchecked, sooner or later end in a mutiny".

In 1889 Sir Edward Watkin, a member of the British parliament, made the unfounded allegation that Congressmen were tempted to create agitation by the offer of Russian gold.


In the same year J.M. Maclean, another member of the British parliament, suggested that the government should prohibit all Congress meetings. He doubted the loyalty of Congressmen: "professions of loyalty from Orientals are utterly worthless". With great frankness he stated his position thus: "Let us have the courage to repudiate the pretence, which foreign nations laugh at, and which hardly deceives ourselves, that we keep India merely for the benefit of the people of that country and in order to train them for self-government. We keep it for the sake of the interests and the honour of England; and the only form of government by which we can continue to hold it in subjection is that of despotism".

But there were other Englishmen whose views about the Congress were not as narrow and illiberal as that of Maclean. John Slagg, who was once a member of the British parliament, wrote in May 1886, that the first Congress was like the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzer's palace, for it showed that the educated Indians who had imbibed English political ideas

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1. The Voice of India, May, 1889, p. 256. (The Voice contained extracts from the vernacular and English newspapers of India).

2. J.M. Maclean, "The Home Rule Movement in India", The Asiatic Quarterly Review, April, 1889, pp. 436-37 (Maclean was once the editor of The Bombay Gazette).


ideas would no longer remain satisfied with the system of 
government that obtained in India. In 1888 Sir Richard Garth, 
who was once a Conservative member of the British parliament 
and was later the Chief Justice of Bengal, testified to the 
fact that the Congresses were attended by "the recognised 
leaders of native thought and opinion"; and in 1890 Sir Charles 
Dilke, after a visit to India, declared that "there is so much 
reason to think that the Congress movement really represents 
the cultivated intelligence of the country that those who 
ridicule it do harm to the imperial interests of Britain, 
bitterly wounding and alienating men who are justified in what 
they do, and who do it in reasonable and cautions form, and 
who ought to be conciliated by being met half-way".

The most powerful advocate of the Congress cause in the 
British parliament was Charles Bradlaugh, who in reply to a 
Congress address in 1889, said "I feel I should like to have 
the title that some have given me in sneer, and some in hearty 
meaning of 'Member for India'". The 1889 Congress submitted 
to Bradlaugh a scheme for the reform of the legislative 
councils - the most important feature of which was that one-half

1. John Slagg, "The National Indian Congress", The Nineteenth 
Century May 1886, p.710. On May 29th, 1866 The Bengalee 
wrote that the views of John Slagg would, sooner or later, become the views of the 
House of Commons.

2. R. Garth, A Few Plain Truths about India, p.10.

3. Charles W. Dilke, Problems of Greater Britain (London 1890 
Vol.II. pp.146-47. See also R. S. Watson, "Indian National 

of the members of the reconstituted Governor-General's and provincial councils should be elected - in the hope that he would draft a Bill on the basis of that reform scheme and introduce it in the British parliament.

After Bradlaugh had introduced his Bill, Lord Cross, the Secretary of State of Lord Salisbury's Conservative government, brought forward on 21st February 1890 a Bill for the reform of the Indian legislative councils. Some of the proposals of the official Bill were adopted from a dispatch which Dufferin had sent to Britain in 1888. In that dispatch he advocated the liberalization of the legislative councils, but he expressly disclaimed that he had any intention of setting up in India those representative and parliamentary institutions which Britain had evolved, patiently and gradually, through the discipline of many centuries. The executive in India was to remain responsible to the sovereign and parliament in Britain; it was not to be brought into subjection to the will of any legislative council in India, and no legislative council was to have a majority of elected members. Lansdowne, who succeeded Dufferin as Governor-General, said in the Indian Legislative Council on March 16th, 1893, that all the local governments in India were of the opinion that "what was desirable

desirable was to improve the present councils, rather than to attempt to put in their place bodies comprising a large number of persons, and possessing the attributes of Parliamentary assemblies of the European type".  

Dufferin as well as Lansdowne desired to increase the powers of the legislative councils. Following Dufferin's recommendation the 1892 Councils Act conceded to the legislative councils the right of interpelation and the right of discussing questions of finance.

Surendranath Banerjea said that only a government which felt that it had nothing to fear from publicity could have granted the right of interpelation, and he recalled that in the dark days of the Second Empire in France, when repression was the order of the day, the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies were deprived of this right. Yet, however, pointed out that though, in the British House of Commons when an answer had been given to a question asked by a member, the member had the right of addressing further questions to the Minister on the same subject, this right of asking supplementary questions was not conceded by the 1892 Act. This meant

that even when the reply of the government spokesman was
evasive, incomplete, or unsatisfactory, it had to be accepted
without further question.

Dufferin had suggested not merely that the powers of the
legislative councils should be increased, but also that their
size should be expanded, and that the elective system should
1 partially be introduced for selecting non-official members.
This last recommendation was not accepted by Cross, who, as
Lansdowne records, was opposed to the elective principle "even
2 in homoeopathic doses".

Lord Salisbury asserted that the principle of election
was alien to Eastern minds, and that its application in
Eastern countries, such as Turkey and Egypt, had not produced
any tangible result. He pointed out that considerable
religious differences existed between the Hindus and the
Muslims, and argued that whereas representative government or
government by election could work successfully in a society
where all those who were represented desired much the same
thing, it was put to an intolerable strain when it rested
upon a society which was divided into two sections, one of
which was hostile to the other. Cross believed that two of
the most important reasons why English parliamentary institu-
tions could not be introduced into India, were that the

II, p.66.
2. Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne: A Biography, p.73.
3. Speech on 6th March, 1890 (Hansard's Indian Debates,
1890, pp.84-5.)
4. Ibid.
peoples of India lacked a sense of common nationality, and that the large majority of them were uneducated.

The repudiation of the representative or the elective principle pleased the Anglo-Indian paper, The Pioneer Mail, which had previously argued that the sudden introduction of English representative institutions into India would "be a blunder so great that England would deserve to lose India forthwith". The paper was even opposed to the partial introduction of the elective principle which, it maintained, would not satisfy those classes who were "making a trade of political agitation". On March 6th, 1890, Salisbury had also maintained that it would be wrong to believe that the introduction of the elective principle in small doses would be of much use, "At least", he said, "we know this of the elective principle from our experience of Europe, that whenever it has made for itself a small channel it has been able to widen gradually, until all has been carried before it, and that is the danger of any action you may take in India".

Congressmen, who wanted gradually to introduce into India more and more elective or representative institutions, could not be discouraged by this argument, on the contrary, they

2. The Pioneer Mail, March 5th, 1890: "The Indian Councils Reform Bill".
3. The Pioneer Mail, January 8th, 1890: "The Elective System in India".
4. The Pioneer Mail, March 5th, 1890.
5. Hansard's Indian Debates, 1890, p.96.
strongly protested against the repudiation of the elective principle by Salisbury and Cross. The Bengalee declared that no reform would be acceptable to Congressmen which did not concede this principle, and it regretted that by refusing to admit this principle Cross' Bill fell short even of Dufferin's recommendations.

Replying to the criticisms that representative institutions could not be applied in India, because the people were uneducated and lacked the sense of a common nationality, Congressmen said that they had not yet asked for representative institutions for the ignorant masses, and that though there existed great differences among Indians, they were increasingly developing a sense of common nationality because they were all "citizens of one country, subordinate to one power, subject to one supreme Legislature, taxed by one authority, influenced for weal or woe, by one system of administration, urged by like impulses to secure like rights and to be relieved of like burdens". Answering Salisbury's criticism that the representative principle was not an Eastern idea, Pherozeshah Mehta approvingly quoted the following remarks of The Manchester Guardian: "Salisbury's great argument is that the elective principle is not an Eastern idea. It is sufficient perhaps to say that English rule is not

2. The Bengalee, March 1st, 1890: "Lord Cross' Bill on the Reform of the Councils".
3. The Bengalee, February 22nd, 1890: "Parliament and the Reform of the Councils".
not an Eastern idea, yet it prevails in India, and that it is by Western rather than by Eastern ideas that it is to be strengthened and made permanent". This was not a sound argument. The proposition that it is by Western rather than by Eastern ideas that India should be ruled, was as fallacious as the counter statement that no Western idea could profitably be adopted by Indians. Congressmen were, however, on much surer ground when they said that if the principle of election was an Western idea, it was too late in the day to say that it could not work in an Eastern soil, because downright election had already been introduced into the local boards; and as Congressmen believed that the elective system had not worked unsatisfactorily in the local boards, they urged its extension in the provincial and imperial field.

They conceded that if the elective system was introduced, then the constituencies that would be created in India would not be as good as those which existed in Britain. In the 1890 Congress, Pandit Malaviya, however, pointed out that "no electorates that might be formed here, could be half as bad as those which existed in the Anti-Reform days in England." The members were then returned by closed and rotten boroughs: "Mr. Sheridan was returned by a constituency of only seventy electors... Mr. Pitt... was returned by a constituency numbering only one hundred electors". The Bengalee argued that there existed

2. Eminent Indians on Indian Politics, ed. C.L. Parekh, p.98.
4. Ibid.
no reason why Indians, unlike the British people, should be
required to wait for the creation of perfect constituencies
before they could have the right of working even a limited
measure of representative institutions.

It was not only Congressmen who favoured the introduction
of the elective principle; Lord Northbrook on 6th March, 1890
expressed in the House of Lords his regret that Cross' Bill
made no provision for choosing some non-official members by a
system of election or selection. Lord Northbrook's regret
was shared by Lord Ripon and Lord Kimberley. Kimberley while
maintaining that "the notion of a Parliamentary representation
of so vast a country - almost as large as Europe - containing
so large a number of different races, is one of the wildest
imagination that ever entered the minds of men", yet strongly
favoured the introduction of a partially elective system.
Ultimately an amendment known as the Kimberley clause was
adopted which, by empowering the Governor General in Council
with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council to make
regulations as to the conditions of nominating the additional

1. The Bengal, March 23rd, 1889: "Lord Dufferin's Scheme
   for Expansion of the Councils".
2. Hansard's Indian Debates, 1890, p. 58.
4. Idem. p. 79.
5. Kimberley drew attention to the fact that though the
government in presenting Dufferin's minute to the Parlia-
ment had excluded the portion in which he had recommended
the adoption of the elective principle, it was widely
known that Dufferin favoured the elective principle (Idem,
p. 80). In a speech on 4th March, 1909 Cross said that the
surreptitious publication of Dufferin's minute forced the
hands of the government and compelled it to do something
about it. (Debates on Indian Affairs, House of Lords,
1909, p. 127).
members, permitted, though it did not prescribe, the adoption of the elective principle.

Cross' Bill was not passed in 1890. In a letter to Lansdowne, on 27th June, 1890, Salisbury wrote that he did not think that the Bill would live. He was unjustifiably afraid that it would be a capital danger to the empire if the language that Gladstone was likely to use in the discussion of the Bill was taken as a watchword by political agitators in India, "To speak plainly - and asking your pardon if I wound", he wrote, "any political sympathies - I dread this question being discussed while Mr. Gladstone is still a political force".

Unfortunately, the Bill was not enacted in 1890, or even, 3 in 1891. When the Bill was reintroduced in the beginning of 1892, controversy again centred round the question of adopting the elective principle. In the House of Commons, Maclean criticized the Kimberley clause by saying that if a Liberal government came to power, and if Lord Ripon and Lord Reay were appointed Secretary of State and Governor-General respectively, then they would strain the Kimberley clause in every way in


2. Lord Newton, Lord Lansdowne: A Biography, p.74. When on 28th March, 1892 Gladstone spoke in the House of Commons on the Indian Councils Bill, his speech was not, from the imperial point of view, in any way dangerous. He supported the elective principle, and said that though parliament should lay down the principles of Indian administration, the task of devising specific machineries for realizing those principles should generally be left to the Government of India. (Indian Parliamentary Debates, 1892, pp.145-47).

3. The dropping of the Bill in 1891 was explained by the Congress president of that year by the death of Bradlaugh. (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.81).
order to introduce the elective system. While Maclean was 
unsatisfied with the Kimberley clause because he was afraid 
that it might lead to the introduction of the elective principle
another member, Schwann, was unsatisfied with it because it did 
not specifically prescribe the introduction of the elective 
principle. Curzon, the government spokesman, explained that 
the Indian Councils Bill empowered the Viceroy "to invite
representative bodies in India to elect or select or delegate 
representatives of themselves and their opinions to be nominated
to the legislative councils.

Though under the 1892 Councils Act these representative 

bodies could only recommend the names of candidates, the govern-
ment of India, as a matter of course, accepted those recommend-
ations. The elective system was thus adopted, de facto though not de jure, by the traditional English method of con-
vention as distinguished from the method of specific legislation.

The representative institutions that were established by
the operation of the Act of 1892 were not, however, fashioned 
completely on the British model. In Britain members to the
House of Commons were chosen, except in the case of university
representatives, from territorial constituencies and not from 
particular groups or associations. But under the operation of

1. Speech in the House of Commons on 28th March 1892.
   (Indian Parliamentary Debates, 1892, pp.157-58).
the Act of 1892 non-official councillors, who were generally chosen from municipalities, district boards, chambers of commerce, universities, etc., were selected as Lansdowne put it, "to represent types and classes rather than areas and numbers".

In April 1892, The Pioneer Mail wrote that because the reforms proposed in the Indian Councils Bill might raise false hopes that it meant a new departure in Indian policy, future Indian agitators would be able to "denounce the Government of India not merely for being despotic, but for dishonestly pretending to be something else". That is, the Bill was "a delusion, and therefore, more or less, a snare".

It was true that the Act of 1892 which retained official majorities in the Governor-General's and the provincial legislative councils did not impair the authority of the government of India, but as the Act liberalized the legislative councils, even though to a very limited extent, the Congress welcomed it in a "loyal spirit" and also expressed the hope that the rules for the selection of the members, that were to be prepared under the Act, would be framed in the spirit of Gladstone's declaration in the House of Commons that there should be a real and genuine, even though a limited application, of the elective principle. The rules, when prepared, fell far short of

2. The Pioneer Mail, April 28th, 1892: "The Franchise in India".
Congress expectations, and Congressmen complained that in framing the rules the Indian bureaucrats, who had never been very sympathetic with the aspirations of the politically conscious classes, had not given real effect to the spirit in which the Act of 1892 was conceived.

Though Congressmen had greater faith in the liberal instincts of the British nation than in that of British officials in India, it is worth mentioning in this connection that Curzon, the Under-Secretary of State for India, had not, during the discussion of the Indian Councils Bill, referred to the Congress in very favourable terms. In the manner of Dufferin he characterized the Congress party as a microscopic minority, and asserted that the real people of India, the ryots or the peasants, who lived a life of "mute penury and toil", did not share the political aspirations of Congressmen. He believed that no "system of representation ..... would in the most infinitesimal degree, represent the people of India," and informed the House of Commons that the time had not yet arrived for introducing into India representative institutions on the English pattern.

Speaking about representative government, Salisbury said on 6th March 1890, "It may be - I do not desire to question it that it is to be the ultimate destiny of India," But this was

2. Report of the Ninth Indian National Congress, p.44.
3. Speech in the House of Commons on March 23th, 1892. (Indian Parliamentary Debates, 1892, pp.131-32.)
4. Idem. p.34. Hansard's Indian Debates, 1890, p. 84.
merely a hypothetical opinion. Neither Conservatives, such as Salisbury and Curzon, nor Liberals, such as Kimberley, had any positive belief in the desirability of gradually introducing English parliamentary institutions into India. The repudiation of parliamentary government for India by many British statesmen widened the gulf that separated Indian Congressmen from their British rulers.
CHAPTER II.

THE POLITICAL METHOD OF THE "MODERATES"

The period of the establishment of British dominion in India was contemporaneous with the period of the rapid development of free and democratic institutions in Europe. British politicians were, therefore, faced with the question whether the principles that regulated the conduct of a free and democratic country could be applied to the governance of an empire. They generally agreed that India would not, at least for some time to come, be democratically governed by the Indian people. In 1832, before a parliamentary committee James Mill, the great advocate of representative institutions, was asked: "Do you consider in the present state of society in India, anything approaching to representation as entirely out of the question?" "I conceive wholly so", he replied. Next year Macaulay said in the House of Commons that whereas everyone knew that the best way of securing good government in Europe was by means of representative institutions, every speculator on Indian questions had rejected the idea that representative government was practicable in India.

1. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company, 1832, p. 49.

Though the possibility of immediately introducing representative government in India was universally rejected by British statesmen in the first half of the nineteenth century, they were divided on the question whether certain free institutions, such as the free press, should be introduced into India. In 1822, Sir Thomas Munro declared that "a free press and the dominion of strangers are things which are quite incompatible". Lord Elphinstone was also opposed to the idea of a free press in India. "In other countries", he wrote in 1832, "the use of the press has extended along with the improvement of the government, and the intelligence of the people; but (if India has a free press) we shall have to contend at once with the most refined theories of Europe, and with the prejudices and fanaticisms of Asia, both rendered doubly formidable by the imperfect education of those to whom every appeal will be addressed. Is it possible that a foreign government, avowedly maintained by the sword, can long keep its ground in such circumstances?" Elphinstone agreed with Munro in thinking that a free press and a foreign rule could not exist together.

Sir Charles Trevelyan disputed this proposition and he

2. Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee on the Affairs of the East India Company and also an Appendix and Index, 1832, p.295.
rightly pointed out that in the absence of representative government, a free press was one of the few institutions which could express the aspirations of the people, ventilate their grievances, and operate as a continuous outward check on the conduct of the officials. Seeing that the English-educated class was loyal to British rule, and believing that a free press would be considerably influenced by that class, Trevelyan came to the conclusion that a free press instead of preaching sedition, would desire the continuance of British rule. If there had been a free press in Britain during Roman rule, the "Groans of the Britons", the famous petition which implored the Roman emperor not to withdraw his army from Britain, would, argued Trevelyan, have found expression in the press. Trevelyan possibly believed that if Britain left India in an undue haste then the "Groans of the Indians" would find expression in the Indian press.

Educated India, ever since the days of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, had demanded a free press. The memorials which the Raja and five colleagues addressed to the Supreme Court in Calcutta and to the King in Council in Great Britain against the Press Ordinance of 1823 have become classics in the literature of Indian liberalism and are regarded as the Aeropagitica of the Indian press.

1. Idem. p.45.
2. Charles Trevelyan, On the Education of the People of India, pp.199-200.
The memorialists argued that a free press helped to remove the causes of rebellion, because through the press the people could represent their grievances against the government in order to secure their redress. In the absence of a free press popular discontent festered underground and excited rebellion.

In Great Britain there existed a considerable amount of freedom of comment and remark both on the conduct of the sovereign and on the policy of his ministers, but the former did not forfeit the respect of the people neither did the latter lose their power over the country because of open public scrutiny and criticism. A free press was not an instrument which could only weaken the power of a government, for if the press was an instrument of attack, it was equally so a weapon of defence. In India where the most able and the most learned men were in the service of the government, the government could defend its policies more vigorously than in any other country. Furthermore, in India where the vast mass of the people did not read at all, and had the greatest reverence for constituted authority, a free press, even if it was perverted and seditious, could do much less mischief than what could be caused by a seditious or perverted press in Britain where education was far more widespread. The memorialists, however, maintained that the Indian press was not seditious but was fully loyal.

They urged upon the British rulers not to adopt "the political maxim so often acted upon by Asiatic Princes, that the more people are kept in darkness, their Rulers will derive the greater advantages from them". The consistent pursuit of a policy of keeping the people in a state of ignorant subjection would have involved the suppression not only of all newspapers and periodical literatures but also of all educational institutions, but then history testified to the fact that the adoption of a policy of complete suppression did not strengthen, but rather, it weakened the foundations of empires.

In 1835 Sir Charles Metcalfe, the Governor-General, withdrew all restrictions on the freedom of the press. H.T. Prinsep, a member of the Governor-General's Council, who had some doubts about the new measure, remarked that there was wisdom in the dictum that "when you have a free press on board a man of war then you may think of giving one to India." Metcalfe, however, rightly thought that by fettering the press, discontent could not be removed, it could only be driven underground. Further, one of the purposes of British rule was to pour into India the knowledge of the West, and for the spread of knowledge the

3. Quoted in Margarita Barns, The Indian Press, p.213.
existence of a free press was very necessary. Though Metcalfe believed that the spread of knowledge, through a free press, would not weaken the British empire, but, on the contrary, by removing prejudices, it would substitute in the minds of Indians a rational conviction of the benefits of British rule, he yet asserted that, whatever might be the political consequences, it was the duty of the rulers to spread knowledge and not to attempt to perpetuate their rule by covering the land with darkness.

Till 1878 the freedom of the Indian press was not interfered with except temporarily, for a year, during the Indian "Mutiny". The advantages of a free press was much appreciated by the English-educated class. One of the best representatives of this class, Kristo Das Pal, declared that the British rulers had given India a free press "unasked and unsolicited", and he repeatedly maintained that a free press must remain an essential complement of despotic British rule in India. He asserted that because the "tongue was always tied under Oriental government" the people had to take resort to the sword for the achievement of their rights, but that under British rule because the press was free Indians could constitutionally represent their grievances to the government in order to secure their redress. The Hindoo


Patriot wrote that in Russia, where people were deported to Siberia for presuming to ask for a free press, the government was a despotism tempered by assassination, but that in India, where the people enjoyed a free press, the government was a despotism tempered by public opinion. It declared that Indians enjoyed more freedom of speech and writing under an imperial rule than what the Russians enjoyed under their indigenous government of the Tsar.

In 1878, by the Vernacular Press Act of Lytton, the freedom of the vernacular press was curtailed. Sir Alexander Arbuthnot, the government spokesman, stated that while "the English Press had been, on the whole, loyal ..... to the government ..... a section of the vernacular press had been chiefly remarkable for its disloyalty".

The educated class denied that the vernacular press was disloyal and they protested against this Act. The attitude of the landlords towards this Act was, however, different from that of the English educated middle class. The Hindoo Patriot, which was an organ of the British Indian Association, an organization


2. The Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of India, 1878, p.156. Lytton's press Act was designed to prevent, rather than to punish, sedition. It was based on a system of personal security. It was a restrictive measure, because its machinery was purely executive and the possibility of judicial intervention was expressly excluded.

3. See speech of Surendranath Banerjea in Eminent Indians on Indian Politics, ed. C. L. Parekh, p.33.
of landlords, wrote against the Act but not with much warmth or
vigour. Maharaja Jotindra Mohan Tagore supported the Act in
the Governor-General's Legislative Council. The Raja of Bhinga
stated that the Act did not curtail any right of moderate and
rational criticism. It was only the English-educated middle
class which were strong in their opposition to the Act.

"The only political representatives of native opinion", wrote Lytton to Lord Salisbury in 1876, "are the Baboos, whom we
have educated to write semi-seditious articles in the native
press, and who really represent nothing but the social anomaly
of their own position". Salisbury, unfortunately, characterized
the literary class as "a deadly legacy from Metcalfe and Macaulay;
and expressed the opinion that this class could not but oppose
the government in times of peace and rebel against it in times
of trouble.

In 1879 The Bengalee prayed for the overthrow of the
Conservative Ministry and expressed the hope that if the Liberals
came to power they would repeal Lytton's press Act and reverse
some of his other unpopular policies. When the Liberals came to

1. The Hindoo Patriot, March 18th, 1878: "The Liberty of the
Vernacular Press".
2. The Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of
India, 1878, p.167.
3. The Raja of Bhinga, Democracy Not Suited to India, p.99.
5. Letter to Lord Salisbury dated May 11th, 1876. (Personal
and Literary Letters of Robert First Earl of Lytton, ed.
Lady Betty Balfour, Vol.II, p.21.)
7. The Bengalee, March 8th, 1879.
power in 1880, Ripon succeeded Lytton as the Governor-General. Unlike Lytton, the Liberal Ripon treated the English-educated class with sympathetic understanding. He perceived that partly owing to the greater influx of Western ideas and the establishment of Western institutions, the ideas of Indians were being gradually transformed and that the power of public opinion was growing from day to day. To give the growing public opinion a constitutional outlet, among other things, he repealed Lytton's restrictive press act.

Hume, the "father of the Congress", believed that the Congress would provide a constitutional outlet for the growing public opinion in the country. Hume was a member of the Covenanted Civil Service from 1849 to 1882, and had been decorated for his work during the Indian "Mutiny". He observed that there was great economic discontent in the country and that the government was out of touch with the people. From a study of certain confidential documents and from the information he received about the desperate attitude of the mind of the people, Hume was convinced that India, under Lytton, was on the verge of a revolutionary outbreak. He believed that the Congress, by impressing upon the government the necessity of removing the genuine grievances of the people, would help to prevent the growth of political discontent.

Though in 1888, in a letter to Colvin, Hume described the

Congress as the safest and the most constitutional outlet that could be devised for the growing discontent in the country, it is surprising to note that originally Hume intended to make the Congress a social and not primarily a political body. Dufferin, after pointing out that he found the greatest difficulty in ascertaining the opinion of the people on matters of administration, because there existed no organization in India that performed those functions which Her Majesty's Opposition discharged in England, suggested to Hume that the Congress should take up political matters. When Hume placed his scheme and the scheme of Dufferin before nationalist leaders, the latter scheme was adopted.

The Congress, that was founded virtually with Viceregal approval by an ex-member of the civil service, had in the beginning friendly relations with the government officials. It was even seriously suggested that Reay, the Governor of Bombay, should preside over the first Congress. Many nationalists were filled with great delight when Dufferin gave a garden party to the delegates of the second Congress, met some twenty of them at a private interview, and desired to talk to the president separately.

However, as the resolutions passed by the first two Congresses

1. A. Hume and A. Colvin, Audi Alteram Partem, p.29.
2. This was revealed by W.C. Bonnerji in his "Introduction" to Indian Politics, p.vii.
5. The Voice of India, January 1887, p.4. Lord Connemara, the Governor of Madras, also entertained the delegates of the third Congress at a garden party. (Report of the Third Indian National Congress, p.19).
produced no visible impression on the government, Congressmen decided that in order to increase their political effectiveness it was necessary to adopt a new method of political propaganda. In February 1887 The Tribune wrote that the new method of propaganda should be conceived on the lines of the Corn-Law-League agitation. Hume narrated that when the Corn-Law-League was refused a hearing in the House of Commons, Cobden had said: "The delegates have offered to instruct the House; the House has refused to be instructed; and the most unexceptionable and effectual way will be by instructing the nation." In order to instruct the nation, the Congress organised monster meetings in the towns, sent lecturers to the countryside and circulated broadcast numerous leaflets and pamphlets. Two remarkable pamphlets, a Tamil catechism on the Indian National Congress and "A Conversation Between Molvi Farid-Ud-Din .... and .......... Rambaksh", were issued. These pamphlets criticized certain features of the British administration and pointed out that, to improve their lot, the people should in a constitutional manner press for the introduction of Western representative institutions into India.

The publication of these pamphlets and the adoption of a vigorous method of political agitation from the year 1887 gave rise to some controversy. The Pioneer Mail wrote that treasonable literature were distributed with the implied sanction of

1. The Tribune, February 12th, 1887: "Instructing the Nation".
3. These pamphlets were included in the Report of the Third Indian National Congress.
Congress leaders, and declared that the government of India would be within its legal and moral rights if it took necessary measures to put Hume's genius for agitation under restraint so long as Hume chose to remain in India. Sir Roper Lethbridge thought that the circulation of the above-mentioned pamphlets, with the imprimatur of the Congress, would render it impossible for the people of England to support the Congress movement. Sir Auckland Colvin also impugned this new method of Congress agitation. He believed that the criticisms of the British government which the two new pamphlets contained might incline the ignorant villagers to attribute all their ills to the misgovernment of the British rulers.

As a matter of fact, the pamphlets did not preach sedition or favour the termination of British rule. When Rambaksh said to Molvi Ferid-Ud-Din: "But surely you don't want us to join together and fight with the Sirkar. If we killed all the Europeans ... All would be anarchy"; the Molvi replied: "God forbid! This would be sin. Why should we kill the poor Europeans? Many of them are really good men, most of them mean at any rate to do right".

1. The Pioneer Mail, January 2nd, 1889.
2. Lethbridge was a Professor in the Bengal Education Service in the sixties and early seventies of the nineteenth century, and after the enactment of Lytton's press Act he was appointed Press Commissioner.
3. Nationalists repeatedly pointed out that the pamphlets were written by individual Congressmen, and that they were not the official publications of the Congress. (The Voice of India, December 1888, pp.655-66.)
Amidst universal opposition from the Congress audience, a landed aristocrat by the name of Raja Siva Prasad declared in the 1888 Congress that the government should prohibit the extensive distribution of pamphlets and leaflets which contained serious criticisms of the British administration in India. Language such as, "to what condition the nation has been reduced ..... how distressed she feels ..... is she alive or dead" he considered to be objectionable. This unprogressive Raja said that "to declare the value of the principles of democracy; and that England owes its greatness to it, to hold up to admiration the Republican form of government in France; to show that in the colonies even the negroes enjoy the same rights as the British-born subjects; implying thereby that the condition of the negroes is better than that of the people of India" was to use language that was inflammatory.

Critics of the Congress, such as the Raja of Bhinga, argued that as Indians were not trained in the methods of criticism prevalent in an European democracy they could easily confuse any criticism of a particular governmental measure with a challenge to the very constitution of the country. Other critics asserted that while in Britain because the people were educated they could not easily be influenced by irresponsible propaganda, in India, where the number of people who had any education was small, there was no limit to the political credulity of the

2. The Raja of Bhinga, Democracy Not Suited to India, p.98.
Masses.

As early as 1886 Dufferin had said that the machinery of European democratic agitation could not be applied in India with impunity, and had stated that it was desirable "to forbid mass meetings and incendiary speechifying". Theodore Morison explained that the machinery of European democratic agitation could not be applied in India, because, the government of India being irremovable, the Indian critics would not be subdued by a sense of responsibility that chastened the criticism of the opposition party in Britain which knew that it might anytime be called to power and be asked to make good its criticisms. In Britain the government merely meant a ministry which was temporarily in power, and any attack on the government was consistent with loyalty to the constitution of the country. But in India, argued Morison, because the government meant the constitution, criticism of the government could not easily be distinguished from disloyalty to the very constitution of the country. Arguing on these lines he maintained that the grant of the right of free criticism, by means of a free press and by open public debate, had been a great mistake on the part of the Indian government.

Morison was not alone in lamenting the introduction of free political institutions into India. W. S. Seton-Karr wrote in

3. Theodore Morison, Imperial Rule in India, p.76. (Morison was a member of the teaching staff of the Mahomedan Anglo-Oriental College when he wrote this book).
1889 that Lytton's press Act was repealed under the mistaken notion that the principles of English Radicalism could be applied into India. George Chesney also regretted that Lytton's press Act was repealed in deference to, what he called, a party cry raised in England. Lepel Griffin's opinion was still more emphatic, "Of the many mischievous acts of Mr. Gladstone", he wrote in 1889, "there is probably none that has been more productive of evil than the repeal of Lord Lytton's wholesome Press Act". He affirmed that an institution such as the free press was only suited to enlightened, free and constitutional countries, such as England and France, and was an anomaly and danger in a despotic country like India. In 1894 George Chesney similarly remarked that there was "no instance of any country not invested with free institutions and self-government in which the press was free", and commented that India was not yet fitted for the one and had showed itself absolutely unfit for the other. As early as 1889 Seton-Karr had asserted that the conditions under which the native press of India lived had no parallel in European countries, and had not maintained that the virulence of the native press would/have

3. Lepel Griffin, "Indian Volunteers and Indian Loyalty", The Asiatic Quarterly Review, January 1889, p. 10. (Griffin was from 1881 to 1889, the agent of the Governor-General in central India).
4. Ibid. See also L. Griffin, "India in 1895", The Journal of the East India Association, 1895, pp. 24-6.
5. George Chesney, "India: The Political Outlook", The Nineteenth Century, June 1894, p. 897.
been tolerated even for a day in the Native States of India.

The comments of The Phoenix, a Karachi newspaper, on Seton-Karr's remarks can be taken as representative of the opinions of Congressmen and of nationalists generally. "We have not heard", wrote the paper on August 10th, 1889, "that the Native States are the ideal of the British Government, and the analogy of the continental countries does not apply. England does not emulate Russia. The only other countries for consideration are France and Germany. In the first, the press is more than free; in the second, the restrictions on the press are rather from choice than from compulsion and the circumstances are entirely different".

It could be said, as Munro said in 1822, that the first duty of a free press would be to teach the people to free themselves from the yoke of a foreign rule. The early Congressmen, however, wanted to liberalize and not to end British rule. They sought to liberalize it by means of constitutional agitation through the press and the platform. The Tribune wrote that the native press served the role of a constitutional opposition. If the press was suppressed and the opportunities of constitutional agitation were limited, then how could Indians secure from their British rulers the redress of their

2. Quoted in The Voice of India, September 1889, p.469. See also The Bengalee, August 10th, 1889: "The Cloud No Bigger than a Man's Hand".
4. The Tribune, December 18th, 1887: "Proposal to Gag the Native Press".
political grievances? The theory that even if Indians did not agitate, British rulers would have, of their own free will, redressed Indian grievances, could not be accepted even by the early Congressmen who had a great faith in the British sense of justice. Further, Congressmen pointed out that the suppression of a free press could not check sedition, but that it would only drive it underground, "If I were disposed to foment sedition in India", declared R. C. Dutt in his 1899 Congress presidential address", I would desire in the first place to suppress all free discussion, suppress all newspapers, and suppress all public meetings as a burglar puts out the lights of a room before he commits burglary".

Because early Congressmen wanted free political institutions for Indians, it should not be supposed that they were disloyal to British rule. Sankaran Nair in his 1897 Congress presidential address gloomily described the "anarchy, war and rapine" that would follow the decline of British supremacy in India. British rule, he argued, was not only necessary for the maintenance of an unbroken peace in India; its need was still greater for the evolution of a secular state, impartial to all religions, races and castes, for the elevation of the lower classes, for the equalisation of the status of women with that of men, in short, for the social progress of India by the assimilation of all that was good and

beneficial in the civilization of the West.

Is it to be wondered at that, holding views of this character, early Congressmen should believe that patriotism was not inconsistent with loyalty to British empire, and that they should see the hand of Providence in the establishment of British rule? In 1905 Gokhale declared that he accepted "the British connection, as ordained, in the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, for India's good". Though the reference to "the inscrutable dispensation of Providence" might appear ironical to a present-day nationalist, Gokhale used the expression seriously. As late as 1911, B. N. Dhar in his Congress presidential address said that every rational person recognised that British rule was a providential dispensation.

In 1887 Bepin Pal asserted that though the whole country was loyal, the educated classes were much more loyal than the masses. In 1898 R. C. Dutt wrote that the English-educated class "are loyal in their own interests, loyal in consequence of the education they have received, loyal because they can seek redress for their grievances openly and in a constitutional manner". Next year in his Congress presidential address he claimed that educated Indians had practically identified

themselves with British rule. Congressmen hoped that Britain instead of suppressing the educated classes, would regard them as her "natural and necessary allies" in the task of the political regeneration of India. "To disparage the educated class", said B. N. Dhar, "is to discredit Western civilisation and to cast an unmerited suspicion upon the real justification of British rule in India".

Early Congressmen believed that they would be able to secure the sympathy and cooperation of British politicians in the work of Indian political reform. Rabindranath Tagore, in his eightieth birthday, when he had lost his earlier faith in the moral integrity of the Western nations in their dealings with subject races, described how, in his youth, the days and the nights of the English-educated Indians "were eloquent with the steady declamations of Burke, with Macaulay's long-rolling sentences; discussions centred upon Shakespeare's drama and Byron's poetry, and, above all, upon the large-hearted Liberalism of the nineteenth century English politics...........(the educated Indians) hoped that the victor would of himself pave the path of freedom for the vanquished".

It appears that English education was, to a certain extent, responsible for creating the sentiment of loyalty in the minds

5. W. W. Hunter, The India of the Queen and other Essays, p.54
of the English-educated Congressmen. In the early years of British rule, Indians were hostile to that rule "our danger", wrote Metcalfe in 1835, "lii in the spirit of our subjects from one end of India to the other. We have no hold on their affections; more than that, disaffection is universal". In 1838 Charles Trevelyan recorded that in those parts of India where English education and English ideas had not spread, the people "high and low, rich and poor, had only one idea of improving their political condition........(that is) the sudden and absolute expulsion of the English." Coming to Bengal, where there had grown up a small English-educated class, Trevelyan found that the educated class, far from contemplating the total expulsion of the British, discussed, in their debating societies how best, with the help and under the guidance of the British, a national representative assembly could, in the course of time, be set up in the country. True, with the setting up of a national representative assembly British rule would come to an end, but "no effort of policy can prevent the natives from ultimately regaining their independence"; consequently, the wisest policy that the British could pursue in India was to encourage the people to prepare themselves, gradually and peacefully, in the art of democratic self-government, and to wean them away from all ideas of ending British rule violently and suddenly. Trevelyan argued that the most effectual way to stamp

2. Charles Trevelyan, On the Education of the People of India, p.199.
out sedition in India was by the gradual diffusion of Western ideas in the country. Through Western education Indians would come to value Western political institutions, and to despise, what he called, Asiatic despotism. Trevelyan believed that though an Asiatic despotic rule could be inaugurated in India at a not very distant time, "a century would scarcely suffice to prepare the people for self-government on the European model. If Indians were greatly influenced by Western political ideas then for a century, at least, the safety of British rule in India could be ensured.

The truth of Trevelyan's observations in 1833 that the English-educated class was loyal was proved during the military rising of 1857 when this class did not join the rebels. A decade after the Indian "Mutiny", English-educated Indians increasingly began to take an active part in politics, but they adopted the method of constitutional agitation and generally rejected the methods of revolutionary violence. Surendranath Banerjea, who in the seventies of the nineteenth century made the name of Mazzini familiar among educated Bengalis, wrote: "Upon my mind the writings of Mazzini had created a profound impression ...... I discarded his revolutionary teachings as unsuited to the circumstances of India and as fatal to its normal development, along the lines of peaceful and orderly progress." Though in the seventies educated Indians openly

2. Charles Trevelyan, The Letters of Indophilus, XIX. pp.49-50
3. S. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.43.
criticized various features of the British administration, they were not seditious. In 1880 Sir Richard Temple could testify to the fact that disloyalty "was checked, not fostered or encouraged by education".

The English-educated and loyalist Congressmen asked the British government to rule India in the light of British political principles, and they criticized the government when it violated those principles. In 1897, for example, when, in connection with the plague riots of Poona, the Natu brothers were imprisoned without trial and detained in jail without charge, Congressmen stated that it was a violation of the elementary principles of British justice, and a breach in "that sense of absolute confidence in the majesty of law and the security of person which is the greatest glory and the bulwark of British rule". In this connection Congressmen naturally referred to the right of Habeas Corpus which Englishmen enjoyed, and demanded that the rule of law that informed the British constitution should also inform the British administration in India.

Dadabhai Naoroji said that British rule should be based on British principles and institutions, and that it must not be "maintained by political hypocrisy and continuous subterfuge, unworthy of the British honour and name, and entirely in

1. R. Temple, India in 1880, p.156. (In India Temple had served as the head of the provincial administrations of Central Provinces, Bengal, and Bombay.)

2. See A. M. Bose's Congress presidential address. (Report of the Fourteenth Indian National Congress, p.22.)

opposition to the wishes of the British people, and utterly in violation of Acts and Resolutions of Parliament, and of the most solemn and repeated pledges of the British nation and Sovereign. A resolution of the House of Commons in 1893 which favoured the introduction of simultaneous examinations for the civil service in India and in England, for which Congressmen had been agitating for a long time, was not implemented; and Congressmen pointed out that in the matter of recruitment to the superior ranks of the civil services the British rulers had not acted in accordance with the promise given in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, that race shall be no disqualification for holding government offices. As late as 1915 only five per cent of the posts of the superior civil services were occupied by Indians.

The early Congressmen or the "moderates" admired the British nation for its democratic character, but they pointed out that the bureaucrats in India, composed mainly of British officials, were autocratic and were hostile to the aspirations of Indians for greater self-government. They believed that Britain was the most liberal nation in the world, but they also

1. See a Resolution moved by Dadabhai on 28th December, 1897, at a conference of Indian residents in the United Kingdom. (R.P. Masani, Dadabhai Naoroji, p. 396).


6. See the presidential addresses of B.N. Dhar and S.P. Sinha to the 1911 and 1915 Congresses respectively. (Congress Presidential Addresses, Second Series, pp. 10-11, 196).
asserted that the interests of Indian manufacturers had been sacrificed to that of Lancashire manufacturers, and that sometimes by using Indian troops for purely imperial purposes Britain had brought dishonour to her fair name. They thanked the British rulers for establishing peace and security after the disintegration that followed the break-up of the Mughul empire and for saving Indians from the ravages of plundering armies; but then Dadabhai Naoroji, the "moderate" leader, argued that the British prevented Indians from plundering each other in order that the British themselves might exploit the wealth of India, and that by maintaining the security of property they found that it was possible to drain away some of the wealth of India with perfect security. The "moderates" conceded that the internal and external security of India could not be maintained without the help of the British. Gokhale and S.P. Sinha said to Lord Hardinge and Lady Minto respectively that if the British immediately left the country then no sooner had they reached Aden than Indians would have to telegraph to them asking them to come back. But later Sinha in his 1915 Congress presidential

1. R.C. Dutt, India in the Victorian Age: An Economic Survey of the People, pp.vii-ix.

2. See Dadabhai's 1906 presidential address, (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp.730-1) and also Besant's 1917 presidential address, (Congress Presidential Addresses, Second Series, pp.296-97.)


5. Sinha said this on 15th May 1909. (Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.298.)
address said that, if this was true, then it was the greatest condemnation of the results of British rule, and he earnestly implored the rulers to give Indians greater opportunities for military training.

The "moderates" pointed out various defects of British rule in India, in the hope that the British parliament, in which they had a touching faith, would remove those defects. But they also asked their countrymen to believe that the rate of political progress in India depended not only on the will of the British parliament, but also on their own political capacity. Gokhale said that though the standards of family life that the Indians had evolved in the past were high in the field of public life their achievements, compared with those of modern Western peoples, were quite inconsiderable. He was convinced that compared to an average Indian the average British bureaucrat, who was opposed to the political demands of the Congress, had higher standards of duty, discipline, and organized work. He asked the nationalists to consider it as their good fortune that those who were arrayed against them were persons of high ability and were not just worthless men. However as the political capacity of Indians could only grow gradually, Gokhale did not expect hope for any rapid political advance in India.

Further, Gokhale and other "moderates" pointed out that it would be wrong to believe that the government would easily or

quickly grant to Indians even those political rights for which they were eminently fitted. They reminded the nationalists about the fact that in self-governing England many a cause had to be agitated long before success was achieved. The struggle for the emancipation of the Catholics and the repeal of the Test Acts, the fight of Bright and Cobden for the repeal of the Corn Laws, the agitation for the reform of parliament, and the movement for the enactment of improved factory laws had to be long and arduous.

When in the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century there came into prominence a party of "extremists" who were dissatisfied with the rate of political progress that the "moderate" method of agitation had secured and who derided the "moderates" for believing that political reform could be gained merely by petitioning to the British rulers about the desirability of introducing such reforms, "moderates", such as Dadabhai Naoroji, argued that Indians had not been able to realize their political aims, not because they had petitioned or agitated too much, but because they had agitated too little. In his 1906 Congress presidential address he said, "Agitation is the life and soul of the whole political, social and industrial history of England .... The whole life of England, every day,

2. See Dadabhai Naoroji's speech in 1895. (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp.126-127).
Agitation is the civilised, peaceful weapon of moral force, and infinitely preferable to brute physical force when possible. Agitate over the whole length and breadth of India if we really mean to get justice from John Bull. Referring to this appeal The Bengalee asked: "Could any commandment be more solemn, sacred, or binding?"

The "moderates" believed that by means of persistent constitutional agitation they would be able to secure from their British rulers all the political rights they wanted. They generally claimed wider political rights, not as abstract and universal natural rights, but as rights which had been pledged by British rulers to Indians in their capacity as British subjects. "The Indian's claim to the status of a British citizen is founded", wrote The Bengalee in 1906, "upon the immutable basis of Royal declarations and Parliamentary enactments which constitute the Charter of our freedom".

The document to which the "moderates" usually referred in order to find support for their demand for wider political rights was the Queen's Proclamation of 1858. "The Proclamation", said Surendranath Banerjea in the 1897 Congress, "is our Magna Charta, our watchword, our battle-cry, the gospel of our political deliverance". The Proclamation declared that India

would be governed for the good of her people. The main emphasis was on good government rather than on self-government. And yet referring to the Proclamation, in his 1886 Congress presidential address, Dadabhai Naoroji said, "In it are embodied the germs of all that we aim at now, of all that we can desire hereafter". He gave it as his opinion that every child as soon as it lisps its mother tongue must be made to memorize the Proclamation.

The "moderates" constantly prayed and petitioned to their British rulers to govern India in the light of the principles stated in the Queen's Proclamation, and to grant Indians wider political rights. Though they had some genuine faith in the liberal instincts of the British people, it must not be supposed that "moderates", such as Surendranath, Dadabhai and Gokhale, who were great patriots, did not feel the humiliation of relying on foreign rulers for political concessions. It was because, in the early years of the Congress, the nationalist sentiment was very weak, that, from a sense of sheer helplessness, they came to develop a pathetic reliance on the sense of justice of foreign rulers. This fact is clearly brought out in the controversy between Dadabhai and the British Socialist, Hyndman, who pointed out that it was a mistake to ask for charity, instead of demanding justice, and in a letter to Dadabhai in 1898 asked: "What do you judicious people gain by your moderation?". In reply Dadabhai wrote: "All that you say

1. Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.16.
is true, but Indians cannot do yet what you say. ...... John Bull does not understand the bark. He only understands the bite, and we cannot do this”. Hyndman continued to press Dadabhai to be less moderate. In 1900 he wrote to Dadabhai: "Yes, I saw your memorial in 'India'. I consider it much too humble in tone ...... I remember being with my old and honoured friend Giuseppe Mazzini...... To us was shown in an emissary from King Victor Emmanuelt. You should have seen the old man straighten up and have heard him talk. It was one power talking to, and almost down to, another....... It was the consciousness of his own capacity and the force behind him which gave Mazzini that standing". But the forces that were behind Dadabhai were weak. He could not agree with Hyndman in thinking that India would rebel. He took his stand on confidence in the British people and persevered in the path of constitutionalism.

The "moderates" pursued constitutional methods of agitation and they did not desire revolutionary political changes. They did not want full independence or desire the severance of the British connection. They wanted colonial self-government. But this was their ultimate ideal; immediately, they demanded only a greater association of Indians in the government of the country, that is, they wanted some influence in the government, and did not ask for a responsible parliament.

1. Idem. p.401.
4. See Gokhale's speech on 27th March, 1907. (Speeches of the Honourable Mr. G. K. Gokhale, p.215.)
The "moderates" did not press for the immediate application in India of the abstract doctrines of liberty and democracy to their logical extremes. "We know", said Surendranath Bannerjea in 1895, "that politics is a practical art, and it cannot deal with principles in the abstract". In this he was at one with Burke, whose ideas on politics, he said, had influenced him greatly. Burke always maintained that nothing universal could be rationally affirmed on any political subject, for circumstances limited the applicability of every political principle. He opposed "history to metaphysics and the historical tradition of England to the first principles of France". "We have learnt at the feet of Burke", wrote The Bengalee, "that prudence and moderation are sovereign qualities in the conduct of human affairs......... Compare the history of France with that of England ........ France was wedded to lofty ideas........ she taught the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity with an emphasis unequalled since the birth of Christ. But in the practical pursuit of her lofty ideals she was betrayed into excesses...... The English people ...... never troubled themselves about distant ideals and were content to work in the present and to grapple with the difficulties of the hour......... they have been singularly free from extravagance

2. S. Bannerjea, A Nation in Making, p.142.
of thought and action ..... By all means let us have ideals ....

(but) however fascinating high ideals may be, they must be tempered by a thorough regard for our environments".

The "moderates", who eagerly read Burke's condemnation of the excesses of the French Revolution, were the friends of constitutional evolution and the enemies of a violent evolution. English "revolutions" were generally bloodless and many English political philosophers detested revolutions. The "moderates" shared this feeling of their English political preceptors.

The "moderates" read about the Italian movement of independence, but they possibly admired the practical Cavour even more than the revolutionary Mazzini. During the days of the anti-partition agitation in Bengal, when the faith of the nationalists in constitutionalism was declining, The Bengalee asked the people to remember that "the liberation of Italy was not the work of Mazzini alone, nor even of Mazzini and Garibaldi but, to a very large extent, of another man who represented an altogether different zone of character and temperament from one or both of them, Cavour". The "moderates" asked the people to eschew the violent methods which Mazzini had once advocated, and advised

4. "England", said Surendranath Banerjea in 1895, "is our political guide and our moral preceptor in the exalted sphere of political duty". (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.252).
5. The Bengalee, December 24th, 1907.
them to follow the practical methods of Cavour who wanted gradual change and was willing to use existing machinery, however defective they might be. They were aware of the various defects of British rule but, instead of trying to overthrow that rule, they were willing to cooperate with the rulers themselves in order to remove those defects.
CHAPTER III.

THE POLITICAL METHOD OF THE "EXTREMISTS".

The "moderates" had a firm faith in the value of constitutional agitation. The "extremists" argued that whereas constitutional agitation had a value in England, it could not be greatly efficacious in India, because in India there existed no constitution similar to that which obtained in England. In England there existed a responsible parliament through which the opinions of the people could be made to influence and control all governmental activities. Every Englishman, by the exercise of his vote, had a voice in the control of the sovereign British parliament. Irishmen, who wanted greater self-government, could also send representatives to the British parliament. Even suffragettes who had no vote could wield some influence in parliament through their male friends and relatives who had votes. But Indians had no such opportunity of wielding any considerable influence in the British parliament. There might be in parliament Charles Bradlaugh, who called himself a member for India, the British electorate itself might occasionally return an Indian, such as Dadabhai Naoroji, to parliament, there might be an Indian Parliamentary Committee, that took some interest in Indian affairs, which sometimes included as many as 154 members of


2. See p. 42 above.
parliament - but in spite of all this, it could not be said that Indians had any large or effective influence in the British parliament.

The "moderates" noted with regret that Indian opinion was not adequately represented in parliament. But they found some consolation in the fact that the Liberal and Irish members of parliament sometimes supported the cause of Indian reform. To improve the position of Indians in the parliament, they suggested that India should be directly represented in the British parliament through some Indian members. They argued that because the Indian bureaucrats were not favourable to the cause of Indian reform, it was only to the British parliament that Indians could go for the redress of their grievances. "It is in Parliament we have to fight our last fight, and say our last word . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ." wrote Dadabhai Naoroji in a letter to G.K. Gokhale in 1905.

The "extremists" did not believe that the British parliament would satisfy the demands of Indian reformers against the advice of the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats. They further argued that because Indians did not have a national and

1. William Wedderburn, Allan Octavian Hume, p. 94.
3. See Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p. 132-35. The 1905 Congress demanded the "bestowal on each of the Provinces of India the franchise to return at least two members to the British House of Commons". (Report of the Twenty-First Indian National Congress, p. 54
5. Appendix C of The Report of the Twenty-First Indian National Congress.
sovereign parliament, as Englishmen had in Britain, Indians had no constitutional right of effecting constitutional changes by themselves. Therefore whatever political agitation they could carry on, it could only be called legal agitation, it could not be called constitutional agitation in the sense in which the term was understood in Britain.

They asserted that the "moderates" were utterly mistaken if they believed that, in spite of the fact that Indians had no national parliament, they could yet hope that the British parliament would willingly satisfy all the legitimate political aspirations of Indians. "There is no empire lost", said Tilak on January 1907, "by a free grant of concessions by the rulers to the ruled". In the manner of Arthur Griffith, the Irish Sinn Fein leader, the "extremists" urged the people not to rely on "any such myths as English justice or English mercy".

Rabindranath Tagore, the poet, said that it was not wise for Indians to think that merely by producing good arguments in support of the cause of Indian political reform they would be able to induce the British rulers to grant them wider political rights. A government was not a mechanical moral

2. Bal Gangadhar Tilak's Two Remarkable Speeches, p. 6.
machine which unerringly and unceasingly applied moral principles to the governance of a country. A government, whatever might be its moral pretensions, was composed of men who had their greeds and hatreds. The British officials who occupied privileged positions in the established political structure in India could not be expected to love those Indian reformers who criticized that political structure. Human nature being what it was, it was not unnatural that the ruling Englishman in India would seek to dominate over Indians. The ruling Englishman did not make India his home or associate with Indians on a basis of equality. He was, in fact, placed in an elevated position far above the Indians. From that position Indians looked small and insignificant, and their sentiments and emotions looked rather unreal. Tagore believed that if only Indians knew how small and insignificant they looked in the eyes of the British, then they would have immediately realized the futility of depending on the British sense of justice.

The unpopular rule of Curzon was one of the factors which, in the first decade of the twentieth century, was responsible for weakening the faith of some nationalists in the British sense of justice. In 1904 Curzon had declared that the Imperial Civil Service should as a general rule be

1. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. See Chapter IV below.
reserved for Englishmen. Such a dictum could not easily be reconciled with the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, which stated that race shall be no disqualification for government employment, and which was regarded by the "moderates" as the Magna Charta of Indian freedom. Bepin Pal, the "extremist" leader, argued that because even the Magna Charta of Indian freedom could be explained away, no nationalist could reasonably retain any faith in the sense of justice of the British rulers.

The "moderates", too, were very much dissatisfied with the policy of Curzon (who was a Conservative), but they believed that if the Liberals came to power in Britain they would introduce a certain measure of political reforms into India. The "extremists" were, however, afraid that in matters of Indian administration even the Liberals would adopt the policy of the Conservatives. In 1907 Tilak quoted a remark of Hume, made in 1893, to the effect that civilian officers who were Liberals in Britain, after coming in contact with Anglo-Indian men and women, generally changed their views so that at the time that they left India they had all become Conservatives.

2. See B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p. 44.
3. Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p. 16.
6. B.G. Tilak's Two Remarkable Speeches, p. 3.
After a visit to Britain in 1905 Lala Lajpat Rai was convinced that the attitude of the Liberals towards India was not much better than that of the Conservatives. Similarly R.G. Pradhan, writing from Britain, observed that on Indian questions the Liberals were only Liberals in name. Conservatives as well as Liberals thought of India only as a "pivot of the British Empire, as the brightest jewel in the Imperial diadem". They were not much concerned with the grievances and aspirations of the Indian people. They believed that Indians were very low in the scale of civilisation, and they were convinced that the British officials who were governing Indians were discharging their duty in a most magnificent manner. Pradhan observed that though the working class in Britain were as ignorant about India as any other class, "the inherent justice and righteousness of the nationalist cause received a more sympathetic consideration from them than from any other class of people". Lajpat Rai also thought that whatever help India could receive from Britain would come primarily from the democratic and socialist parties which represented the working class of Britain. But he wisely asked

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
the people not to depend on outside help or to beg for political concessions from their British rulers. He said that an Englishman hated nothing like beggary, and that a beggar deserved to be hated.

Tilak did not believe that in her struggle for freedom India could secure the support of any British political party. He thought that the attitude of the British labouring class towards India would be no better than that of the Liberals or Conservatives, "On the contrary", he said, "they would treat you worse, because British labourers obtain their livelihood by sending us their goods". Similarly G. Subramaniam Iyer, another "extremist" leader, said in August 1907, "India is governed and will continue to be governed in the interest of the British plutocracy, but it will soon begin to be governed in the interests of the British labouring classes also. The latter now show sympathy with us, but as they come to understand Indian questions more clearly, they will see that the industrial and political freedom of India was hostile to their interests".

Tilak did not expect that any political reform would be granted to Indians by their British rulers out of purely benevolent intentions. In fact, he did not believe that

1. Lajpat Rai, Young India, p. 110.
3. Speech on January 1907. (B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p. 60). Later, during the home rule days in 1917-18, Tilak sought and secured the support of the British Labour party for the cause of Indian political reform. (D.V. Athalye, The Life of Lokamanya Tilak, Poona, 1921, p. 264.)
benevolence had any place in politics. The "moderates" expected that that great liberal, John Morley, who became Secretary of State at the end of 1905, would govern India in a really disinterested and truly liberal way. "Some of my countrymen, I know," said Rash Behari Ghose in the 1906 Congress, "think that in relation to Indian affairs the Liberal is as illiberal as the Tory, and they may be right. But of Mr. Morley it cannot certainly be said that he has given to party or class what was meant for mankind. To him the sun-dried bureaucrat is only a bureaucrat and not the very incarnation of wisdom .... Morley is now engaged in digging the grave of bureaucracy; and we can almost hear the thud of the spade and the music, yes, the music of the knell". The "extremists" did not hear this "music of the knell". Tilak maintained that the philosopher Morley must be different from Morley, the statesman. A philosopher could talk nobly, but a philosopher would not be allowed to hold a high political position if the actual application of his moral principles injured the material interest of the British electorate. The "moderates" believed that the British electorate could be persuaded to support the cause of Indian reform. Tilak did not think that lectures to the British public on the justice

1. B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p. 56.
2. Speeches and Writings of Rash Behari Ghose, pp. 10, 22.
4. B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p. 59.
and the inherent righteousness of the Indian cause would be of any avail. If the lectures were good, the British public would say that they were good lectures, but "that man must be a fool indeed who would sacrifice his own interest on hearing a philosophical lecture". Tilak had some respect for the intelligence though not for the moral integrity of the British public.

The method of agitation of the "moderates" was based on a faith in the British sense of justice. The "extremists", who had no such faith, could not pursue that method. The alternative method that they advocated could be summed up in one word: boycott.

In the adoption of the method of boycott the "extremists" were, to a certain extent, influenced by the policy of the Irish Sinn Feiners. The words Sinn Fein can imperfectly be translated as "we ourselves". The Sinn Fein idea of relying on oneself and not looking to the English rulers for succour or charity readily appealed to the Indian "extremists". They closely followed the history of the Sinn Fein movement, and they used to distribute, in their political meetings, pamphlets on the history of the Irish movement.

The Irish Sinn Fein organisation was founded by Arthur Griffith in 1905. The Sinn Fein policy implied non-cooperation

1. Idem. p. 60.
2. Idem. p. 61, 64.
with the established state and a kind of declaration of
Swaraj by the people. The policy of non-cooperation with an
established state by a people striving to establish a
different one in its place had been pursued by Francis Deak
in Hungary. "Hungary", said Arthur Griffith, "won her
independence by refusing to send members to the Imperial
Parliament at Vienna or admit any right in that parliament
to legislat for her". He advised Irish members to withdraw
from the British parliament. He asked the Irish people to
pursue a policy of absolute non-cooperation with the adminis-
tration of Ireland, and to set up their own arbitration courts,
taxing authorities, civil services, banks, stock exchanges,
industries and educational institutions.

Referring to the "extremist" party Rash Behari Ghose,
the "moderate" leader, said in his 1907 Congress presidential
address, "Like the Sinn Fein party in Ireland, it has lost all
faith in constitutional movements ....... All its hopes are
centred in passive resistance of a most comprehensive kind,
derived, I presume, from the modern history of Hungary, the
pacifc boycott of all things English". Like the Sinn Feiners
the Indian "extremists" wanted to leave the government

1. Dorothy Macardale, The Irish Republic, (London, 1937),
p. 66.

2. See Arthur Griffith, The Sinn Fein Policy (Dublin, 1907),
p. 20.


severely alone, and they advocated a comprehensive policy of boycot. Aurobindo Ghose said, "Boycott of foreign goods is a necessary condition for the encouragement of Swadeshi (national) industries, boycott of government schools is a necessary condition for the growth of national education, boycott of British courts is a necessary condition for the spread of arbitration".

Mainly as a result of the insistence of the "extremists" the 1906 Congress passed a resolution urging the people to set up educational institutions "on national lines and under national control". Those who wanted a system of national education did not demand that Western science or Western culture should be banished from national educational institutions. But they wanted to make education less state-controlled and more national in spirit. Arthur Griffith had said that because Irish schools were controlled by the British government the "language of Ireland, the history of Ireland, the economics of Ireland, the possibilities of Ireland, the rights of Ireland ....... found no place in their curricula". Some Indians felt that when Griffith was speaking about Ireland he was, in some measure, "unconsciously speaking of India also".

1. See The Bengalee, December 7th, 1907.
The "extremists" wanted to boycott not only government educational institutions, but also English goods. Economic boycott was the negative counterpart of the positive Swadeshi (buy Indian) movement which existed long before the boycott movement gained currency in the country. The suggestion that the boycott of British goods would be a sure means of arousing the attention of the British public to Indian grievances was first made by a "moderate". Later the "extremists" enthusiastically supported the idea of economic boycott for political purposes. Some of the "moderates" were, however, afraid that the boycott of British goods might be regarded as an anti-British movement. The 1905 Congress expressed the academic opinion that the boycott movement that was started in Bengal was, in the circumstances, perhaps the only legitimate means left to the Bengalis of drawing the attention of the British public to their grievances. But the 1906 Congress passed a resolution which emphatically stated that the boycott movement that was inaugurated in Bengal, to bring political pressure on the government, "was, and is, legitimate".

Bepin Pal, the "extremist" leader, maintained that the expression "boycott movement" in the Congress resolution did

1. See speech of Surendranath Banerjea in The Bengalee, December 21st, 1907.
5. Report of the Twenty-First Indian National Congress, p.70.
not mean that the policy of boycott should be confined to
Bengal alone, but it implied that it should move from province
to province. Further, he argued, that boycott meant not
merely an economic boycott of British goods, but also a
political boycott of the British government, "We in Eastern
Bengal and Assam" he said "have not only tried to boycott
British goods, but all honorary offices and associations with
the Government".

"Moderates", such as Gokhale and Malaviya, dissociated
themselves from the remarks of Pal, and maintained that the
Congress resolution had not supported a policy of total
political boycott of the Indian government. The "moderates"
regarded the policy of boycott as a temporary measure adopted
for the purpose of modifying the partition of Bengal. They
had no sympathy for the Sinn Fein policy of a permanent and
universal boycott of all things English. In his 1907 Congress
presidential address Rash Behari Ghose said that British rule
could not be terminated by boycotting the administration, and
maintained that even if the boycott movement was successful
and the English retired from India then there would be anarchy
in the country. He argued that the only reasonable course
that Indians could pursue was to cooperate with the government

1. Idem. p.85.
2. Ibid.
4. N.C. Sen Gupta, "The Boycott Movement", The Indian Review
May 1909, p.351.
5. Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp.774-78.
in every measure that was likely to hasten their political emancipation.

The "extremists" did not believe that the British rulers would support the cause of Indian self-government. Self-government could only be secured by the people through their own inherent strength and power. It was therefore necessary to turn one's attention away from the Houses of the British Parliament and the Government Houses in Simla and Calcutta, and to derive one's strength from the three hundred millions of people who were scattered over the numberless villages of India.

Rabindranath Tagore asserted that the people in the villages could achieve real Swaraj, if like the villagers of ancient India, instead of relying on the state for help and assistance, they themselves managed most of their village activities. But as the modern Western state performed a large number of social and economic functions, the modern Indian expected the Indian state to act likewise. Tagore argued that it was precisely because the modern Indian looked to the state for help in all their activities that they really lost their independence. He said that in order to regain their independence the people need not agitate, in the Western

1. Ibid. See also "The Peroration of The Hon'ble Bhupendranath Basu's Presidential Address at the Bengal Provincial Conference", The Indian World, May 1905, p. 190.
3. Rabindranath Tagore, Samuh, pp. 67-68.
fashion, by holding public meetings in the Town Halls, but that they should, without state help and assistance, manage most of their activities by starting cooperative and voluntary societies in the villages which would organise their schools, health services, road systems, cooperative shops, banks, arbitration courts, etc.

Aurobindo, Tilak and Pal asked the people not to rely too much on the foreign rulers. In fact, they asked them to cooperate with the rulers as little as possible. Aurobindo said that as "no representation, no taxation" had been the principle of the American revolutionaries, similarly "no control, no cooperation" should be the motto of the Indian nationalists. The main thesis of Tilak, Aurobindo and Pal was that as the existence of the government of India depended on the cooperation of the people, the government would cease to function or to exist the very day the people withdrew their cooperation from the government. If that was so, then why were Indians content to remain the willing instruments of their own oppression? Pal, who unlike the Westernised "moderates" liked to express his political ideas in the phraseology of Indian philosophical literature, argued that this riddle could be explained by the fact that the Indian people were under the spell of a Maya

1. Idem. pp.29-32, 64, 69, 97-98. Similar views were later expressed by Pramatha Nath Bose in "The Illusions of New India", (pp.226-229) and in "The Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Scheme: A Constructive Criticism", pp.17-20.
3. B. G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p.65.
(illusion) which prevented them from perceiving the reality of
the Indian situation. The Indian people had been hypnotised
to believe that, though they were three hundred millions of
people, they were weak and their rulers were strong. They
had been told that they were unfitted to manage their own
affairs, and that, compared with the peoples of the modern West,
they were uncivilized. They cherished the illusion that
Englishmen came to India for the altruistic mission of civil-
izing Indians, and for training them in the art of Western
democratic self-government. They did not know that the
Englishman's mission in India was not altruistic but commercial
and economic, that the Englishman came to India to exploit the
resources of the country, to spread his trade and commerce, and
in order to found an empire. When Englishmen said that they
came to India on a civilizing mission the Indian people,
"untrained in the crooked ways of civilized diplomacy",
believed in their words, and they developed such a great faith
in the liberal instincts of the British people that they came
to look upon the British rulers "as more than human and little
less, if less at all, than God".

2. B.C. Pal, The Spirit of Indian Nationalism, p.42. B.G.
   Tilak; His Writings and Speeches, p.65.
3. See B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p.56.
6. Speeches of B.C. Pal, p.12. Pal was not exaggerating when
   he said this. In 1897 he himself had declared: "I believe
   that God has placed this (British) Government over us for
   our salvation; ....... I know that without the help and
   tuition of this Government my people shall never be able
to rise to their legitimate place in the Commonwealth of
civilized nations". (B.C. Pal, The Indian National
   Congress, pp.8-9.)
The "extremists" pointed out that British rule in India was based on weak and insecure foundations. There were only a handful of Englishmen among a people of three hundred millions. In each district of India there were not more than half-a-dozen Englishmen. Even if the number of British troops in India were increased by a hundred times they could not keep India under control, if Indians did not willingly acquiesce in British rule. Indians, therefore, could be free by refusing to cooperate with the British rulers in the work of the carrying on the administration of the country.

The attitude of the "extremists" towards British rule was that however much it was improved and liberalised it could never be made as beneficial to Indians as an indigenous Indian rule could be made. They would have agreed with Arthur Griffith who said, "(In) the British Liberal as in the British Tory we see our enemy, and in those who talk of ending British misgovernment we see the helots. It is not British misgovernment, but British government in Ireland, good or bad, we stand opposed to."

Any measure that made the British government unpopular was welcomed by the "extremists". Aurobindo told Henry W. Nevinson that he considered the partition of Bengal to be a most beneficial measure because, by arousing intense opposition among the people, that measure had stirred up and strengthened national feeling. He lamented that the unbroken peace

3. See B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p.45.
maintained by Britain in India had emasculated the Indians, and had reduced them "to the condition of sheep and fatted calves". Under British rule the ordinary men devoted his energies for money-making and the thoughtful man spent his time in admiring and imitating Shelley and Swinburne. This tendency of degeneration and of denationalization was, he said, interrupted by "the disguised blessings of Lord Curzon's errors".

The "moderate" Gokhale lamented that Curzon's unpopular policy had created so much discontent that many nationalists were growing up in a spirit of "Irish bitterness". But this was exactly what the "extremists" wanted. In 1907 Bepin Pal said that Curzon was a better Viceroy than Ripon, and he made the paradoxical statement that the "Viceroyalty of Lord Curzon ...... (had) been one of the most beneficent if not decidedly the most beneficent Viceroyalty that India ever had". He meant that he preferred the policy of Curzon to that of Ripon because while Ripon satisfied educated Indians with political concessions, Curzon, by his own unpopular policies, made them so discontented that they demanded Swaraj more urgently than they had ever done before.

Because the beneficent activities of a despotic government increased its hold over the acquiescence, if not the affection, of the people, Pal wanted to restrict the beneficent activities of the government of India within the narrowest

1. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
possible limits, that is, he wanted to make it responsible only for maintaining the internal and external security of the Indian state. In other words, he advocated a policy of *laissez faire*. The theory of *laissez faire* formed an important part of the liberal theory of freedom. Borrowing a term from the phraseology of European political theory the "moderates" sometimes described themselves as liberals. Pal argued that the Indian "moderates" were not liberals, because, unlike most liberals of Western countries, they did not believe in *laissez faire* but wanted to increase the functions of the state.

Pal wanted to restrict the activities of the government of India, and asked the people to cooperate with the British rulers as little as possible. Did he or other "extremists" advise the people to try to subvert British rule violently as the "terrorists" did? The "extremist" Tilak, who poured ridicule on the "moderates" by saying that their policy of three p's - pray, please and protest - would never be very effective, said on June 7th, 1906, "Look to the examples of Ireland, Japan and Russia and follow their methods". Did this mean that Tilak supported the methods of Irish or Russian terrorists? It is possible that Tilak's speeches were interpreted by some people as being a tacit justification of the methods of the "terrorists", but it does not appear that Tilak definitely and unequivocally advocated the use of violent


3. B. G. Tilak: *His Writings and Speeches*, p.45.
Tilak, Aurobindo and Pal argued that the illiberal policy of the government was responsible for the "rank and noxious fruit" of "terrorism," and they criticized the policy of the government as well as the method of the "terrorists." In his 1907 Congress presidential address Rash Behari Ghose, referring to the "extremist" party, said, "Like the Sinn Fein party in Ireland it has lost all faith in constitutional movements, but it must be said to its credit that it has also no faith in physical force".

After two English ladies were killed on 30th April, 1908 as a result of a bomb thrown by a "terrorist", Shamsundar Chakravorty, an "extremist" leader, wrote: "Outrages of this kind have absolutely no sanction in our ancient tradition and culture...... Moderatism is imitation of British constitutionalism, this form of so-called extremism, .... is imitation of European anarchism, and both are absolutely foreign to the spirit of nationalism, which, though opposed by one and occasionally mistaken for the other, is bound in the long run to carve out the future of India.....".

The "extremist" Pal said that in the disarmed and dis-organised condition of the people of India any violent uprising

1. As a matter of fact, he noted with regret that the "terrorists" used bombs. (Tilak's Masterpiece: Being a Verbatim Report of His Address to the Jury, p.51).
could easily be checked and controlled by the government.

Similarly Aurobindo admitted that the physical strength of the country belonged largely to the established authority, and he warned the people not to come into any violent physical conflict with the authorities. In January 1907 Tilak declared, "We are not armed, and there is no necessity of arms either. We have a stronger weapon, a political weapon, in boycott".

Aurobindo asked the people to rely not only on the method of boycott, but also on the will of God. The "moderates" relied on the method of constitutional agitation and on the liberal instincts of the British rulers. Aurobindo had no such faith in the liberal instincts of the British rulers, and he knew that the nationalists had no material strength which the foreign government of India could not crush. He felt that in this situation a nationalist had to rely on God, who was stronger than any earthly power. India, he believed, was bound to be free because it was God's will that she should be free.

Aurobindo was a man of deep religious convictions. "Nationalism", he said in June 1909, "is not politics, but a religion, a creed, a faith". Long before Aurobindo, Bankim Chattopadhyaya, the Bengali novelist, had given a religious

3. B.G. Tilak: His Speeches and Writings, p. 64.
significance to the idea of the Motherland by declaring that in the image of the benign goddess Durga could be seen the future greatness of the Motherland. The Bengali "extremists", such as Aurobindo and Pal, popularized this idea. Pal explained that while worshipping Durga or Kali or Jagaddhatri the people really worshipped the Mother or the Motherland, Aurobindo declared that Bankim's supreme service to the nation was that by showing to the people that the Motherland was not merely a stretch of earth or a mass of individuals, but was really a great Divine and Maternal Power he raised patriotism to the dignity of religion.

An ideal of nationalism that was sanctified by religion and was associated with the worship of ancient gods and goddesses became popular with the nationalists partly because it appeared to be an indigenous ideal and not as something borrowed from the alien culture of Europe. But it must be pointed out that though politics cannot be divorced from ethics, it should be kept separate from religion. The "moderates" who sought to keep religion and politics separate,


4. In June 1909, Aurobindo said, "We speak often of the Hindu religion, of the Sanatana Dharma (Eternal Religion) ...... It is to give this religion that India is rising". (Uttarpura Speech, p.7.)
as in the West, were in this matter more progressive than the extremists. In fairness to the "extremists" it should be added that in political matters they were generally more advanced than the "moderates", and that they were the first important non-cooperators, the forerunners of Mahatma Gandhi.
CHAPTER IV

CURZON, THE CONGRESS, AND SWARAJ

A. CURZON AND THE CONGRESS

The appointment of Curzon as Governor-General of India was announced on 11th August 1898. The Congress president of that year, while extending his welcome to Curzon, said that he could not think of an office that carried greater responsibility than that of the Viceroy of India, and remarked that a successful Viceroy needed, among other things, the gift of sympathy with those who had neither vote nor voice. When in 1905 Curzon laid down the reins of office, Gokhale, the Congress president of that year, expressed the sense of relief that the educated classes felt at the event. He said that though, in some respects, Curzon will always be recognized as one of the greatest Englishmen that ever came to India, it could not be denied that he had not strengthened the foundations of British rule, and that, in fact, discontent was never greater in India than at the end of his Viceroyalty.

In one of his early speeches in 1900 Curzon declared that "the opinion of the educated classes is one that it is not statesmanship to ignore and to despise". He said that he did not consider official wisdom to be so absolute and transcendent as to be above criticism, and that by trying to profit by public

criticism he had endeavoured to "infuse an element of the modern
spirit into Indian administration". Congressmen naturally
welcomed these sentiments. But as time passed and Curzon, in
spite of the strong protest of the educated classes, carried into
law the Calcutta Municipal Act (1899), the Official Secrets Act
(1904), the Universities Act (1904) and the measure for the
partition of Bengal (1905), Congressmen became disillusioned about
Curzon's attitude towards public opinion.

R.C. Dutt in his presidential address to the 1899 Congress
lamented that the Calcutta Municipal Act which had come to pass
in the first year of Curzon's administration meant the "virtual
withdrawal of that boon of self-government which it .... (was)
the proud boast of England to have conferred on the Metropolis of
India". Congressmen opposed the Official Secrets Act on the
ground that it would restrict the liberty of the Indian press. In
opposing this Act in the Imperial Legislative Council Gokhale said
that as, unlike Western countries, the government of India was not
directly responsible to the people, and as the criticism of the
Indian press was almost the only outward check on the actions of
the bureaucracy in India, it was extremely important not to
restrict but to safeguard and to enlarge the freedom of the
Indian press.

The Universities Act of 1904 aroused intense opposition
among the English-educated classes. The atmosphere in which the
University Bill was brought forward gave rise to the suspicion

1. Idem. p.149.
3. The Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of
   India, 1905, pp.280-81.
that it was not merely an educational measure, but that it was a device which, by bringing Indian universities under closer state control, would effect the political purpose of checking the growth of that English-educated class which was increasingly becoming more discontented with the government. In introducing the Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council T. Raleigh had, at the outset, asked whether English education had been a blessing or a curse. His own answer was that by imparting to the East a knowledge of Western science and of the principles of English law it had been more of a blessing than a curse. But English education, he continued, had also produced "the discontented B.A. ..... and the great army of failed candidates" who were a curse to the country. Gokhale emphasized that none of the principal objections to the system of university education was thus authoritatively stated to be the fact that it produced the discontented B.A. Congressmen rightly argued that discontent could not be checked by attempting to build Indian universities on the aristocratic model of Oxford and Cambridge, for Indians trained in Oxford or Cambridge were, at least, not less discontented than the graduates of the Indian universities. Gokhale suggested that the government could convert the discontented B.A.'s "from cold critics into active allies by steadily associating them more and more with the administration of the country."

1. See Speech of G. Y. Chintamanji in the 1904 Congress (Report of the Twentieth Indian National Congress, pp.89-90) and B.G. Tilak: His Writings and Speeches, p.43.
3. Ibid.
After the Universities Act came the measure for the partition of Bengal. The government argued that this measure was necessary in order to relieve the congestion in the administration of the vast province of Bengal. To the Bengalis, and particularly to the English-educated Bengali Hindus, it was clear that the partition would break up the growing unity of Bengali life and culture and that it would weaken the strength of the nationalist forces of Bengal. The 1904 Congress strongly criticized the proposal to divide "the Bengali nation into separate units". As a protest against the partition of Bengal (October, 1905) the nationalists supported a policy of boycotting British goods. They were disappointed when Morley described the partition as a settled fact, but they refused to accept that the question of partition had been finally settled. Surendranath Banerjea declared that in order to undo the partition, the Bengalis would fight with the same determination with which Irishmen, in spite of their many failures over a hundred years, had steadfastly preserved in their struggle for the attainment of complete home rule. With the modification of the partition in 1911, the anti-partition agitation came to an end.

1. R.N. Mudholkar argued that it was to effect this last purpose that the scheme of partition was designed. (Report of the Twenty-Second Indian National Congress, p.79).
2. Report of the Twentieth Indian National Congress, p.222. It was a mistake to describe the Bengalis as a nation, for the Bengalis were only a part of the Indian nation.
5. The Bengalee, December 31st, 1907.
Because Curzon pursued his policies in spite of the opposition of the educated classes, The Bengalee remarked that Curzon, who professed to consult public opinion, merely paid lip-service to it. It is interesting to note that even as late as 1904, in a letter to Sir Arthur Godley, Curzon had complained that the authorities in Britain did not realise the extent to which the strength of public opinion had grown in recent years, and he maintained that it would not be wise to assert either that public opinion did not exist in India or that it could be treated with general indifference. However, in the same letter to add Curzon had been careful/ "I do not, therefore, argue that public opinion here is to be kowtowed to. No one has more consistently defied it in some matters than I".

In 1905, Curzon said, "In India it is very difficult to create ...... a public opinion that is really representative because there are so many different classes whose interests do not always coincide; for instance, the English and the Indians, the Hindus and the Muslims, the officials and the non-officials, the agriculturists and the industrialists". But conflicts of opinion between different classes existed in almost every country. In the face of such conflicts the course that the Indian government or any other government could properly pursue, was not to disregard public opinion altogether, but to consider and give proper weight to the conflicting opinions of different classes.

1. The Bengalee, 17th November, 1905.
Rash Behari Ghose remarked on the above statement of Curzon that in England also the interests of the capitalist came frequently into conflict with those of the working man, and yet most Englishmen believed that there could be a public opinion in England which was not merely sectional.

In a speech in February 1905 Curzon said that public opinion in India could not for a long time be the opinion of the public or the masses, because the masses were uneducated. Congressmen admitted that the type of public opinion which existed in Britain could not exist in India because of the difference in education of the masses, but they rightly maintained that the Indian educated classes could generally understand and interpret the opinions of the unenlightened masses of their countrymen. But, as Ronaldshay aptly puts it ante, in Curzon's view "there was no room for an Indian Intelligentsia aspiring to lead and speak for the masses". It appears that Curzon believed that the rule of India should remain, for an indefinite period of time, in the hands of the British, and, naturally enough, in his farewell speech at the Byculla Club in Bombay, he spoke of an India whose destiny was bound up with those of the British race and whose development would continue to be a British duty.

Curzon deplored the talk of India for Indians alone.

1. Speeches and Writings of Rash Behari Ghose, p.196.
2. Lord Curzon in India, ed. Raleigh, p.496.
In 1902 he said that the Indian as well as the Englishman must work in India in a spirit of refined and cosmopolitan patriotism. But one of the obstacles that stood in the way of work in such a cooperative spirit was Curzon's belief that the Englishman should occupy, not only an important, but also a clearly superior position in the administrative structure of India. In 1904 he declared that the Imperial Civil Service, the highest ranks of civil employment in India, though open to Indians who could proceed to England and pass the required tests would, as a general rule, be reserved for Englishmen. Outside this corps d'élite were Indians, as a general rule and as far as possible, were to be employed, except in certain cases where, for example, "particular responsibility" had to be exercised, it would be necessary to maintain 'a strong European admixture and sometimes even an European preponderance'. It was stated that the reason for reserving the higher ranks of civil employment for Englishmen generally was that they possessed "partly by heredity, partly by up-bringing, and partly by education, the knowledge of the principles of Government, the habits of mind, and the vigour of character, which (were) .... essential for the task". The rule of India being an English rule its tone and standard, said Curzon, must be set by the English.

This line of thought was developed in greater detail by

1. Idem. p.488.
3. Ibid.
The Pioneer Mail. The paper wrote that the higher civil service should remain "sturdily foreign" and "un-Indian". The civil service could persist in the task of Europeanising India if only it was composed of Englishmen who clung tenaciously to European ideals inspite of all their contacts with Indian humanity. An Indian could pass the civil service examination, but that only proved that he was not inferior intellectually to an Englishman, but it was necessary that a civil servant should have not only intellect but also character, which was a far more indefinable thing and which could not be tested by civil service examinations. Character was largely formed by society and the standards of English society, the paper stated, were higher than those of Indian society. Consequently as long as the standards of English and Indian society were not equalised, the character of Indian civil servants recruited in India would remain inferior to the character of an English civil servant recruited in England.

Any general statement about the supposed inferiority of the average level of Indian character could not be a sound argument against the demand for the greater Indianization of the civil

1. The Pioneer Mail, 25th December, 1908. "The Civil Service of India", wrote H. Fielding Hall, "is a peculiarly English service; it is efficient exactly in so far as it is English when Indians enter it they must be inefficient more or less .... Government must do its work in its own way, and that is the English way. No Indian can tell what that is". (H. Fielding Hall, The Passing of Empire, pp.190-194).

2. The Pioneer Mail, March 16th, 1906.

3. The Pioneer Mail, 14th July, 1905, and 16th March, 1906. See also Meredith Townsend, Asia and Europe, pp.114-117.

services. Out of a population of three hundred millions only a small number of people were recruited for the higher civil services. Whatever might be the average level of Indian character, it could not be denied that Indians had produced great administrators, such as Sir Salar Jung, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Sir Dinkar Rao and others, who, as Ministers or Diwans of Native States, had discharged their duties with high ability and integrity. The Public Service Commission of 1886-87 testified to the fact that Indians who had gained appointments to the Indian civil service, through the channel of English competition, had discharged their duties efficiently and to the satisfaction of their superiors. Nationalists could not believe that if the character of Indians was very defective, then those defects could be removed if only an Indian stayed in England for a few years in order to compete for the civil service examinations. From their personal knowledge of the character of their countrymen, they were convinced - and rightly so - that for every Indian, such as R. C. Butt, who entered the civil service through the channel of English competition and who discharged his duties with ability and integrity, there were a few more Indians of no less ability and integrity, who could not enter the civil service, simply because civil service examinations were held only in England and not also in India.

1. See speech of Surendranath Banerjea at the 1904 Congress (Report of the Twentieth Indian National Congress, p.62), and speech of B. N. Dhar at the 1905 Congress (Report of the Twenty-First Indian National Congress, p.43).

Wise British administrators in the past, such as Munro, had advocated the wider employment of Indians in important government offices. In a minute in 1824 Munro wrote: "Let Britain be subjected by a foreign power tomorrow, let the people be excluded from all share in the government, from every office of high trust and emolument, and let them in every situation be considered as unworthy of trust, and all their knowledge and all their literature, sacred and profane, would not save them from becoming, in another generation or two, a low-minded, deceitful and dishonest race".

It is true that though Indians were excluded from many offices of high trust and emolument, they did not become "a low-minded, deceitful, and dishonest race". Yet it cannot be denied that such a policy of exclusion had a dwarfing or stunting influence on the Indian character. "The upward impulse", said Gokhale in 1897 "which every school boy at Eton or Harrow may feel, that he may one day be a Gladstone, a Nelson, or a Washington, and which may draw forth the best efforts of which he is capable, that is denied to us".

When Curzon laid down the dictum that the higher civil service should as a general rule be reserved for Englishmen Gokhale pointed out that this appeared to imply that "race shall constitute in the case of all but a very few a conclusive disqualification for the higher offices of the state", and that

this dictum was, therefore, inconsistent with the Queen’s 1
Proclamation of 1858 which declared: "And it is our further
will, so far as may be, our subjects, of whatever race or creed,
be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our service,
the duties of which they may be qualified by their education,
ability, and integrity, duly to discharge".

Congressmen wanted not only to Indianize the government
services, but also to introduce more self-governing institutions
into India. Early Congressmen, as we have seen, believed that
Britain would train India in the art of democratic self-govern-
ment. But Joseph Chailley, a Frenchman, who visited India
twice during Curzon’s regime, records that the generality of
Englishmen, at that time, did not have any belief in the ideal
of training the Indian people for self-government. Curzon’s
highest ideal of Indian government was not democracy, but some
form of paternal despotism. He believed that administrative
reforms were necessary in India, but he did not think that it was
desirable to concede political reforms to the educated classes.
He said that the salvation of India, in his time, did not lie in

1. The Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of
India: 1905 to March 1906, pp.129-30. See also the Report
of the Twentieth Indian National Congress, pp.39-40, the
40-41, and The Bengalee, November 17th, 1905.

2. Royal and Other Proclamations, Announcements, etc., to the
Princes and Peoples of India, p.4. The phrase "so far as
may be" was ambiguous, and could be narrowly or liberally
interpreted.

3. J. Chailley, Administrative Problems of British India,
pp.165-66.

4. See Curzon’s speech on 16th November, 1905. (Lord Curzon
in India, ed. Raleigh, 585), and Ronaldshay, The Life of
the field of politics, and he had no sympathy for Congressmen who were agitating for the gradual introduction of Western representative institutions into India. How completely he failed to realize the strength as well as the justice of the demand of the educated classes for greater self-government, that found expression through the Congress movement, is clearly revealed in the opinion that he expressed on the movement on 18th November 1900: "My own belief is that the Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise".

The idea that India should be ruled in a non-democratic manner was preached in an extreme form by The Pioneer Mail. This Anglo-Indian paper believed that India was ruled in an absolutely just and impartial manner by the British bureaucracy, and that the bureaucracy in India was the most benevolent and efficient bureaucracy that the world had ever seen. Under the rule of that bureaucracy the masses of the people of India enjoyed more personal security and freedom than did the people of any other part of the world. It was natural that cherishing such an unbounded faith in the benevolence and the impartiality of the British bureaucrats the paper should propagate the erroneous doctrine that the happiness of the people of India

3. The Pioneer Mail, July 14th, 1905.
5. The Pioneer Mail, October 13th, 1905, and December 15th, 1905.
could not be increased either by throwing open more appointments to Indians in the civil service or by introducing self-governing representative institutions.

The paper asked the educated Indians not to imagine that representative institutions on the English model would work well in India, and it warned them not to look upon the political institutions of a distant island "as a fetish and a counsel of perfection". It declared that the complicated and cumbersome machinery of representative government, with its recurrent and wasteful expense of electioneering was an amusement as local to the West as excessive litigation was to the East, and it lamented that the many obvious benefits of the spread, through English education, of the English language in India were counterbalanced by the dangers inherent in the use of English political phraseology in the totally different conditions of India.

The paper failed to realize that parliamentary government should be the goal of India's political destiny, and it unwisely ridiculed those Indians who had the vision to see this goal clearly. The pressure for more self-government, it wrote, came from men who had "been touched by Western thought through misdirected forms of Western education", and that such men did not and could not contribute anything for the real progress of India.

1. The Pioneer Mail, October 31st, 1906.
2. The Pioneer Mail, December 19th, 1907.
3. The Pioneer Mail, December 22nd, 1905.
5. The Pioneer Mail, 22nd December, 1905.
In the opinion of the paper it was vain for educated Indians to expect that all of them could have some share in the administration of the country. Even in Europe and America many of the most energetic and intelligent educated young men had absolutely no voice in the government, for modern governments were "in fact if not in name, small cliques of aristocrats, plutocrats or oligarchs". If this was a correct description of modern governments then it should have been the duty of every democrat not to rest content in explaining the character of modern governments, but to try to change and reform them. As for Congressmen, they believed that the government of India should be made more democratic.

The Pioneer Mail was opposed to this demand, but it maintained that if the Indian masses were given the right to vote, and if they knew how to exercise that right, they would not vote in favour of the frothy rhetoricians of the Congress, but they would as certainly vote for the existing system as the British workman voted for Balfour and Chamberlain. Major Evans Gordon expressed similar sentiments in the House of Commons on 21st June 1905. He believed that in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred the Indian masses would prefer to see Englishmen in responsible positions, so that if a plebiscite of the Indian people were taken the number of Indians employed in administrative posts would be reduced.

But there were other members in the House of Commons who were alive to the changing political conditions in India. T. Hart

1. The Pioneer Mail, 15th December, 1905.
Davies pointed out that the number of Indians who had an English education had been increasing day by day so that it was impossible to go on administering Indians without giving them a wider share in the government of their country. The same idea was expressed by Henry Cotton, who said that in India "something more than mere administration was wanted now".

In 1905 Cotton said: "There are three phases of government - autocratic, representative and responsible. India is now ripe for the intermediate stage and would be content with widely enlarged representation". Congressmen did not press for the immediate introduction of a responsible parliament into India, but they believed that the educated classes were qualified, by virtue of their education, to have a larger voice in the government of the country. Gokhale, while pointing out that the Congress had not demanded that the uneducated masses should immediately be given a voice in the government, also asked the government not to make the fact of mass ignorance into a reason for denying the educated classes their rightful share in the administration of the country.

Gokhale admitted that from the numerical point of view the English-educated classes were not very important. Out of a population of three hundred millions only a little over a million

3. The Bengalee, November 15th, 1906.
5. Ibid. See also R.C. Dutt's views in The Journal of the East India Association, October 1906, p.21.
persons were literate in English. But he correctly maintained that the influence that the educated classes exerted in the country was out of proportion to their numbers. He claimed that the educated classes were the brain of the country and that they largely moulded the opinions of the ignorant multitudes. They controlled the press - the English press in India and more particularly the vernacular press. The vernacular press affected not only the fifteen million literates in vernaculars but also millions of other people who could not read a newspaper but could understand what a newspaper said if it was read out to them.

Gokhale said that whatever political concessions the educated classes wanted, they wanted them only gradually, and that they were willing to pass through periods of laborious apprenticeship before each instalment of power. "For it is a reasonable proposition", he stated in his 1905 Congress presidential address, "that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through political training and experiment alone". But while admitting that political advance in India could be achieved only by "reasonably cautious steps", he did not fail to protest strongly against Curzon's doctrine that efficiency of administration alone should be the

highest ideal of statesmanship in India. He lamented that Curzon did not believe in what Gladstone used to call the principle of liberty as a factor in human progress, and in criticizing those who opposed all reform on the ground that the people were not ready for it he quoted another wise saying of Gladstone: "It is liberty alone which fits men for liberty. This proposition, like every other in politics, has its bounds; but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, wait till they are fit".

**COLONIAL SELF-GOVERNMENT OR SWARAJ?**

Curzon's policy created much discontent among the educated classes. In his 1907 Congress presidential address Rash Behari Ghose went so far as to say that Curzon alone was responsible for the rise of the "extremist" party. Though this was an exaggeration, there can be no doubt that Curzon's unpopular policy had, as Surendranath Banerjea declared in the 1908 Congress, deepened the nationalist sentiment in favour of self-government. The Bengalee, however, rightly pointed out that

6. Report of the Twenty-Third Indian National Congress, p.48. In the same speech Banerjea also expressed the extreme view that Curzon was "the one man who, more than any other, by his labours contributed to the upbuilding of our national life".
though the misgovernment of recent years had strengthened the movement for self-government, it was not true that the educated classes desired self-government merely because "good government" was denied to them by their British rulers. It wrote that however good an Englishman might be, his love for India could not be as great as that of an Indian. Good government, therefore, could never ultimately be secured except by way of self-government.

The movement in favour of self-government was strengthened by the news of the military victory of Japan over Russia in 1905. This news, wrote The Bengalee, was discussed not only by the educated classes but also by the masses in the Indian bazaars, and this victory was popularly interpreted in Asia as the victory of Asia over Europe, of the East over the West. Hyndman, the British socialist, said that if he had been an Indian and if he had felt himself a man before, he would feel it five times more so after the Japanese triumphs. "We feel", declared The Bengalee, "that we are not the same people as we were before the Japanese successes".

It wrote: "For the first time in modern history Asia has triumphed over Europe and has vindicated its equality in the knowledge of those arts which have their cradle in Europe and which have made Europe what she is". It argued that just as

1. The Bengalee, November 9th, 1907.
3. The Bengalee, June 14th, 1905.
4. The Pioneer Mail, July 7th, 1905.
5. The Bengalee, June 14th, 1905.
the success of a few European nations had convinced the Europeans of their superiority over Asians, so the victory of Japan would dispel from the minds of the Asians their mistaken belief about the inevitable superiority of the West. It may be recalled that in 1894 Alfred Lyall had written: "The English dominion once firmly planted in Asia is not likely to be shaken unless it is supplanted by a stronger European rival. Henceforward the struggle will be, not between Eastern and Western races, but between the great commercial and conquering nations of the West for predominance in Asia". Later Lyall admitted that the Japanese victories of 1905 had materially altered the political situation and prospect in Asia. Writing some time after the Japanese victories, C. F. Andrews observed that comparing extracts from the newspapers of Teheran, Cairo and Peking he had found that the sentiments expressed therein were almost identical with those that were expressed in The Bengalee and The Hindu, and that those sentiments could be summarised "as a desire for Western institution and scientific training, ...... and a race longing for freedom from European control".

Early in December 1906, The Bengalee wrote: "Persia has self-government. China will soon have it. India after one hundred and fifty years of British rule is still without self-
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government". On 26th December 1906, in his Congress presiden-
tial address, Dadabhai Naoroji said that Indians could not

1. The Bengalee, June 17th, 1905.
3. The Bengalee, November 21st, 1907.
4. The Bengalee, 19th December, 1906.
continue to remain subject to despotism when China in the east and Persia in the west of Asia were waking up, and when the greatest autocrat of the world, the Tzar, had granted a Duma to the Russians. In the same speech, he declared that self-government like that of the United Kingdom or the British colonies was the political ideal of the Indians.

As early as 1885 Henry Cotton had spoken of this ideal. In his 1897 Congress presidential address Sankaran Nair had also expressed the hope that "India may one day take her place in the confederacy of the free English-speaking nations of the world.

The ideal of colonial self-government, however, became a matter of lively political controversy only after the beginning of the twentieth century. Henry Cotton, in his 1904 Congress presidential address, said that the Indian patriots should aspire to establish "a federation of free and separate states, the United States of India, placed on a fraternal footing with the self-governing colonies, each with its own local autonomy, cemented together under the aegis of Great Britain". Next year Gokhale in his Congress presidential address spoke in favour of the ideal of colonial self-government. The following year, in one of its resolutions, the Congress declared itself in favour of this ideal.

The "moderates" wanted self-government within the British

empire. They were steeped in English influences, and the idea of severing every political link with Britain was extremely repugnant to them. In 1889 a moderate Congress man wrote: "(We do) not regard the British Government as an alien Government, but look upon it as our national Government. English is our lingua franca: of English institutions we have become deeply enamoured; and, as we have been trained on lines peculiarly British, we cannot do aught but ask for privileges of British citizenship". In 1895 Surendranath Banerjea, in his Congress presidential address, expressed the hope that "India may find its place in the great confederacy of free states, English in their origin, English in their character, English in their institutions rejoicing in their permanent and indissoluble union with England".

By 1905 there had grown up a new and powerful party which had no special love for institutions that were peculiarly English in their origin and English in their character. The Bande Mataram, an "extremist" paper, which wanted Swaraj (self-rule) outside the British empire and not colonial self-government wrote that it had no sympathy with those who desired "to make the government of India popular without ceasing in any sense to be essentially British". "We desire", continued the paper, "to make it autonomous and absolutely free of British control".

The Times declared that both the ideals of colonial self-government and of Swaraj were "visionary and unpractical", but it

2. Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.255.
3. The Times of 16th September, 1906, contained this extract from the Bande Mataram.
maintained that while the plan of securing colonial self-government gradually through constitutional means was compatible with genuine loyalty to the crown and the empire, the aim of getting rid of British control at the shortest possible notice in order to establish Swaraj was "openly and flagrant seditious".

In spite of what The Times wrote Dadabhai Naoroji said in his Congress presidential address in December, 1906 that "self-government or Swaraj like that of the United Kingdom or the colonies" was the political ideal of Indians. Bepin Pal went further, and declared that India could be a fully self-governing country outside, and not inside, the British empire. The ideal of self-government within the British empire appeared to him to be an impossible ideal. It might be that colonial self-government meant that Indians would enjoy autonomy in all domestic matters but that their foreign affairs would be conducted by the British. But if the British controlled foreign affairs for India, then they would also have to look after the defence of India, and in order to meet the cost of defence they would demand an important voice in the control of the purse of the Indian nation. What then would remain of India's domestic autonomy?

The "moderates" pointed out that British colonies, such as Canada and Australia, were autonomous in domestic matters. But then the "extremists" doubted whether it would be possible for India to occupy a position in the British empire similar to that

1. The Times, October 16th, 1906.
4. Idem, p.28.
which was occupied by the Canadians or the Australians. 

Bopin Pal referred to the existence of colour prejudices which prevented the English from cooperating with the Indians in the same manner that they could cooperate with the Australians, and he invoked the authority of Lord Bryce in support of this statement. Bryce maintained that "to the Teutonic peoples, and especially to the English and Anglo-Americans, the difference of colour means a great deal. It creates a feeling of separation, perhaps even of slight repulsion. Such a feeling may be deemed unreasonable or unchristian, but it seems too deeply rooted to be effaceable in any time we can foresee". Further, the "extremists" drew attention to the fact that the Indians were racially and culturally different from Englishmen, Canadians and Australians.

But the "moderates" were fond of saying that both the English and the Indians belonged to the Aryan family of nations, and that culturally the difference between Englishmen and Indians were somewhat reduced owing to the spread of English education in India. Further, they pointed out that the French in Canada and the Boers in South Africa had shown that peoples that were culturally and racially different from the British could hold self-respecting positions in the British empire.

The prospect of remaining a member, even though a self-governing member, of the British empire did not attract the

2. Bryce, The Ancient Roman Empire and the British Empire in India, p.39.
4. In his 1897 Congress presidential address Sankaran Nair said "We, in fact, now live the life of the English". (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.320).
"extremists", who preferred the indigenous ideal of Swaraj. In the National Conference of the "extremists" in December 1907, Tilak said, "The colonial form of government was a lower ideal, was not inspiring, and would not catch the popular mind as much as autonomy". He added that though "it might be sedition under the Penal Code to take practical steps to realise the ideal (of complete autonomy), the mere enunciation of it as a theoretical goal would be outside the criminal law".

The Bengalee remarked that it would be impracticable for the Congress to accept the ideal of unqualified Swaraj, when any attempt to realize that ideal would bring it into direct conflict with the laws of the state. Further, it criticized Tilak's statement that the ideal of colonial self-government was not a sufficiently inspiring ideal, and it argued that the self-governing India of the future could combine "the love of freedom and the sentiment of nationality with a desire for international cooperation" by remaining as an autonomous unit within the British empire.

In 1908 the Congress finally laid down in its constitution that its aim was the attainment of colonial self-government by means of constitutional methods. As the acceptance of this creed set out in the constitution was a condition for the membership of the Congress those who repudiated the ideal of colonial self-government could not continue to be members of the Congress.

1. The Bengalee, December 23th, 1907.
2. The Bengalee, 25th and 28th December, 1907.
3. The Bengalee, December 28th, 1907.
In July 1909 Gokhale stated that no man could be so fallen as not to feel the humiliation of living under a foreign rule, but he maintained that as Indians, because of their endless divisions, feeble public spirit and other national defects, were unfitted for immediate self-government, and because British rule alone stood between order and anarchy, "only mad men outside lunatic asylums could think or talk of independence". He characterized the argument that independence could be achieved by peaceful passive resistance as ridiculous nonsense. "Independence never had been achieved in the history of the world, and", Gokhale stated, "never would, except by force and the British would spend their last shilling and sacrifice their last man before they would suffer their rule to be overthrown".

It is not easy to see why Gokhale so vehemently repudiated the ideal of complete Swaraj or independence. In the Alipore Bomb Case (1908-09) it was freely admitted on behalf of Aurobindo Ghose, one of the accused, that he believed in the ideal of independence and the counsel for the Crown conceded that there was nothing wrong in cherishing such an ideal provided it was not sought to be achieved by violent means. In his judgment report the English judge nobly said, "No English worthy of the

2. Ibid. See also Bhupendranath Basu, "The Indian Political Outlook", The Indian World, January, 1903, p.4.
4. See the judgement report of the Alipore Bomb Case in The Bengalee, May 18th, 1909.
name will grudge the Indian the ideal of independence". As a matter of fact, there were not a few Englishmen who repudiated this ideal of independence.

1. See the judgement report of the Alipore Bomb Case in The Bengalee, May 7th, 1909.
2. See p.175-7 below.
CHAPTER V

"TERRORISM"

A. The Method of the "Terrorists"

In the first decade of the twentieth century nationalists in India could be divided into three classes: the "moderates", the "extremists" and the "terrorists". The "moderates", who drew their inspiration from English constitutional history, wanted to achieve a colonial form of self-government and sought to achieve it in a peaceful, gradual and constitutional manner. The "extremists" generally wanted Swaraj or full independence and, like the Irish Sinn Feiners, had a great faith in the efficacy of a comprehensive policy of boycott. The "terrorists" who also believed in Swaraj, sought to achieve their ends by the adoption of the methods of revolutionary violence which had been widely practised in Russia.

It was a common belief with the "terrorists", that the rule of a foreign Western power was destructive of Indian religion and culture, and that the violent overthrow of that rule was essential for the spiritual survival of India. During the Ganapati festival of 1894 leaflets were circulated throughout the city of Poona which referred to the intolerable yoke of a foreign rule and urged the Hindus to rise up in arms against the alien British rule as Sivaji did against Muslim rule. In the Sivaji

1. The "terrorists", who were sometimes denounced as anarchists, called themselves revolutionaries. See S. Pakrashi, Agnideener Katha, p.100. (Agnideener Katha is a memoir of a "terrorist").
festival two orthodox Chitpavan Brahmins, Damodar and Balakrishna Chapekar, asked the people to risk their lives "on the battlefield in a national war" and to "shed upon the earth the life-blood of the enemies who destroy our religion". In the Ganapati festival they asked: "This is called Hindustan, how is it that the English rule here?" They advised the people to kill the English. On June 12th, 1897 one of the speakers in the Sivaji coronation festival said that if the people who participated in the French Revolution could argue that they did not commit murder but only removed the obstacles on their way, there existed no reason why the people of Maharashtra could not use the same argument.

In 1897 when plague broke out in Poona the government used troops to search the houses of suspected cases. The local press complained that the privacy of houses has been violated. The Sholapur samachar wrote: "It is really a misfortune that honour, religion and the modesty of women which was safe even under the rule of the Moguls, should be violated under the enlightened English government". The paper went further, and hazarded the guess that all this was done for the purpose of retaliating the torture once inflicted by Tantia Topi on Europeans, and for punishing the people of the Deccan for taking the lead in every public agitation. Another local paper, the Sudharak, declared that Rand, Plague Commissioner, had shown what British tyranny was like and added: "And still we look calmly on and show not

1. Idem. para. 2.
2. Idem. para. 3.
3. These extracts are taken from The Pioneer Mail, July 8th, 1897: "Current Comments".
the slightest sign of resistance. What does this prove? Simply that we have no pluck, no spirit left among us, that we are an over-meek and cowardly race of beings ....". Tilak's paper the Kesari, wrote in a similar vein. On 22nd June 1897 Rand was assassinated.

"Terrorism", that first emerged in 1897, reappeared in the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century. When Plehve, the Russian Minister of Interior, was assassinated, the Kal, a Maratha newspaper, wrote on 3rd September 1904 that such assassinations had "an educative value": their laudable object was "to cut off a poisonous part", they were "a kind of surgical remedy", and they were perpetrated for the good of the world". It quoted the manifesto alleged to have been issued by the central committee of the revolutionary socialists in Russia which declared that the oppression of Plehve rendered his assassination inevitable. The Pioneer Mail remarked that Kal was possibly the first Indian paper which had unequivocally and publically commended political assassination. It must be pointed out that though the Kal justified the method of political assassination in certain circumstances, it did not openly declare that the adoption of this method had become necessary in the particular conditions of India, and in the same article it had also remarked that Curzon's regime in India had been far less oppressive than that of Plehve's in Russia.

2. A few extracts from the Kal were given in The Pioneer Mail of 7th October 1904.
3. The Pioneer Mail, October 7th, 1904: "Killing No Murder".
4. This extract is taken from The Pioneer Mail, July 8th, 1897.
After the failure of the constitutional movement to prevent the partition of Bengal in 1905 some people argued that nothing could be achieved without the use of violence. A study of the history of Japan seemed to strengthen the argument for the use of physical force. It was because Japan was militarily strong that in 1905 she could defeat Russia, a Western power. India, similarly, could throw off the rule of a Western power by violent rather than by constitutional means. It may be added that soon after the Japanese victories a correspondent of The Pioneer Mail had pointed out that the Japanese victories would weaken the conviction of Indians that resistance to British authority was useless and that, therefore, it would make the foundation of British rule less secure.

During the first decade of the twentieth century many ardent nationalists felt that the people must suffer, and even sacrifice their lives, in order to attain freedom. "Remember then", wrote the Swaraj, a nationalist paper, "the difficulties undergone for independence in Western countries. In England ... many battles were fought for people's rights ..... In these conflicts, many patriots were placed in prison for Rajadroham (treason). Many persons who served their country sacrificed their lives. In France there was a great revolution for independence ......... Indiscriminately kings and nobles were killed ..... (when) the Japanese waged (war) against the Russians ... (many) sons of Japan gladly laid down their lives. Just as gem cannot shine unless it is polished, just as butter cannot be got unless curds

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are churned, so unless commotion takes place, the people's power cannot shine". The paper, however, did not ask the people to take up arms against the rulers, it advised them to rely on the weapons of dharma (righteousness) and boycott.

But the use of violent methods was openly and unequivocally supported by the Yugantar, the organ of the Bengal "terrorists". It declared that sedition had no meaning from the Indian standpoint, because if every Indian came into violent conflict with the laws of the state in order to overthrow an alien rule then right and justice would be on the side of the Indian people and not on that of the British rulers. The terrorists argued that the Indian people were "in a perpetual state of war" with the British rulers, and that, therefore, every manner of attack on the foundations of British rule was justified.

The Yugantar pointed out that not much muscle was required to shoot Europeans. Not only revolvers but bombs also were used by the "terrorists" of Bengal. "In every country", wrote the Yugantar on 12th August 1907, "there are plenty of secret places where arms can be manufactured ..... The very large number of bombs which have been and are being manufactured in Russia have all been manufactured in the secret factories of the revolutionists". Narendranath Gossain, a "terrorist" who later turned 

1. This extract, which was cited in the Swaraj sedition case, is taken from The Bengalee of 6th August 1908.
2. Quoted in Valentine Ghirol, Indian Unrest, p.16.
3. See the "dying speech" of Dhingra, who assassinated Sir Curzon Wyllie, in Appendix III of W. S. Elutt's "My Diaries".
government approver, said in court during the hearing of the Alipore Bomb Case that Barindra Ghose, the "terrorist" leader, told him: "We are sending some young boys to Japan, England, France and America to learn science". He asked: "What science?" "How to make bombs, etc.,” replied Barindra”.

The Kal wrote that though in Russia many people sided with the government against the bomb-throwers, in India, where the people were no longer in a mood to sing the praises of British rule, very few people were likely to support an alien government against Indian bomb-throwers. It argued that if "even in such circumstances Russia got the Duma, a fortiori India is bound to get Swarajya (home rule or independence)".

In December 1907 the Indian Sociologist, the organ of the revolutionary Home Rule Society started by Shyamaji Krishnavarma, wrote: "The only methods which can bring the English Government to its senses are the Russian methods". It pointed out that the way in which Russian methods could be applied would depend on the nature of the local conditions and circumstances in India, but it remarked that possibly, "as a general principle the Russian method will begin with Indian officials rather than European”. But the Indian "terrorists", who killed both European and Indian officials, started by killing European officials.

The Yugantar wrote that the money that was required for

1. The Pioneer Mail, June 26th, 1908: "The Anarchist Trial".
financing "terroristic" enterprises could be obtained by plundering post-offices, banks, government treasuries, and by robbing the luxurious rich. The examples of Russian and Irish "terrorists" who obtained money by means of political robberies were cited to give confidence to those who felt uncertain about the virtues of political dacoity.

The Yugantar referred to the fact that during the French and Russian revolutions, there were some partisans of the revolutionaries among the troops of the government, and argued that in India, where the ruling power was foreign, it might be easier to enlist the support of some of the government troops on the side of revolution.

The "terrorists" hoped that ultimately they would be able to create a revolution in India. They, therefore, tried to obtain as much knowledge of military matters as they could. Among the books that the police seized at various searches of "terrorist" centres were the following: "Nitro Explosives" by Sanford, the "Swordsman" by Alfred Hutton, a "Handbook of Modern Explosives" by Rissler, "Modern Weapons and Modern War" by J.S. Bloch, "Field Exercises", "Rifle Exercises", "Manual of Military Engineering", "Infantry Training", "Cavalry Drill", "Machine-Gun Training", "Quick Training for War".

In a document called the "General Principles", seized by the police after the search of a house at Calcutta on 2nd September

4. Idem. para.94.
1909, it was stated that from a study of the history of the Russian revolutionary movement one could learn that the revolutionary party should work gradually and not, at the outset, try to engage in all manner of activities. It should first organise a nucleus recruited from the educated class, that nucleus was later to spread revolutionary ideas among the masses, and ultimately when the military organisation of the party was satisfactory then it was to start an armed rebellion.

During the first great war the "terrorists" sought to realize their last and final aim of ending British rule by means of an armed rebellion. To succeed in their aim they sought for material assistance from the Germans. But they grossly underestimated the strength of British power in India and their plans for creating a violent revolution utterly failed.

The "terrorists" had no clear positive political philosophy. A small minority of them believed in the anarchism of Bakunin. Some of the "terrorists" were attracted by vague socialistic ideas and some others believed in the social ideal of Vivekananda, but the large majority of the "terrorists" had no definite political philosophy. The "terrorists" were militant nationalists but the lack of a clearly defined political philosophy was one of their fundamental weaknesses. In this respect "moderates", such as Surendranath and Gokhale, who firmly believed in the English form of parliamentary democracy were in much surer ground. The

1. Idem. para. 90.
primary aim of the "terrorists" was not to set up a democratic form of government but to establish a government that would be under the control of Indians and not of foreigners. They realized that it was the force of circumstances that would decide who would be the head of the Indian government, that would be established as a result of a successful revolution, whether he would be a successful soldier or a President as in the United States. As the "terrorists" had no firmly held democratic belief it is probable that if they succeeded the former and not the latter alternative would have been realized.

Some of the "terrorists" were men of deep religious convictions. They believed that, whatever might be the case in Western countries, religion and politics could not be separated in India. Partly from a study of the works of Vivekananda and others they were convinced that no political or social work could be done in India unless the people were led to believe that there were some religious significance in such work. They felt that the death-defying courage that was required in a "terrorist" could only be cultivated through some form of spiritual discipline, and in order to provide that training to the new recruits some of the leading "terrorists" sought the help of sadhus (religious ascetics).

1. See report of a conversation between Khaparde, who supported "terrorism", and Blunt, (W.S. Blunt, My Diaries, pp.677-78). It is interesting to note that during the great war the "terrorists" decided that if their revolutionary plans succeeded they would establish in India a federal republic on the model of the U.S.A. (S.Pakrashi, Agnideener Katha, p.59
The new recruits were asked to read the *Bhagavad Gita*, the writings of Vivekananda and Bankim Chattopadhyaya's *Anandamath*. In the *Gita* Krishna had justified "righteous war" but had not discussed the question of "terrorism". The "terrorists", however, referred to the *Gita* to show that assassination for a worthy cause was not unjustified. The *Anandamath* was also used for the same purpose. The Children (of the Mother or Motherland), who were the chief characters of the *Anandamath*, considered it their religious duty to slay the enemies of the gods. It does not appear that Bankim himself sought to justify violent or revolutionary activities in the *Anandamath*, for in the preface to its first edition he had said that the book was written to show, among other things, that the British saved Bengal from anarchy, and that the adoption of revolutionary methods could bring nothing but death and destruction. But it is necessary to add that till one comes to the close of the book one does not feel that the author does not sympathize with the violent activities of the Children.

B. "TERRORISM" AND THE QUESTION OF CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Congress officially condemned the deeds of violence committed by the "terrorists". Describing the "terrorists" as anarchists Surendranath Banerjea said in the 1912 Congress,

2. The *Anandamath* was translated into English by N.C. Sen-Gupta as "The Abbey of Bliss".
"Anarchism has wrecked the prospects of Russian freedom; an emasculated Duma was the reply of the Czar to Russian anarchism". He declared that anarchism was not of the East and that it was absolutely foreign to the spirit of Indian culture and civilization. Echoing Surendranath's sentiments Lajpat Rai asked:

"Shall we in this land of the Buddha, in this land of the Vedas, in this land of mercy to animals, blacken our past by taking to this cult of the bomb?"

While condemning "terrorism" Congressmen did not fail to point out that repression and coercion alone would not check "terrorism". The Bengalee drew attention to the fact that though the Russian government had tried a policy of pure repression by deporting thousands of "terrorists" to Siberia, it had not succeeded in stamping out "terrorism" altogether. Further, the fact that "terrorism" flourished in Tsarist Russia and not in free England seemed to suggest that "terrorism" could flourish in a place where the people were denied their rights and liberties and that it could not easily thrive in a place where the people enjoyed a large measure of political freedom. The paper advised the government to try to remove the grievances of the people by means of generous reforms. If the grievances of the people were first removed then the people would cooperate with the government in repressing "terrorism". But if the people's grievances were not redressed, then those whom the government punished on the

3. The Bengalee, September 30th, 1908.
4. The Bengalee, July 2nd, 1908, and January 30th, 1909.
charge of sedition would be regarded by large sections of the people as patriots and martyrs.

When the government of India was faced with the challenge of "terrorism" the Secretary of State for India was Morley, who had been Gladstone's chief lieutenant in his campaign for Irish home rule. Morley realized that a policy of coercion alone would no more solve the Indian problem than it had solved the Irish problem. He hoped that by granting political reforms he would be able to bring the "moderates" on the side of the government and so provide a check to the growing influence of the "extremists" and the "terrorists". The government could also pursue the alternative policy of doing nothing and thereby throw the "moderates" in the arms of the "extremists" and the "terrorists" so that they could end up "by getting knocked on the head with rifles and guns". There were some who favoured the adoption of this alternative policy and who referred to the history of the French Revolution and the Irish nationalist movement to show that the "extremists always won in the long run". They argued that concessions granted to the "moderates" provided only new weapons of struggle in the hands of the "extremists". But Morley rightly favoured a policy of reform, and replying to those who argued that only a policy of extreme repression was suited to

1. The Bengalee, July 2nd, 1908.
5. Ibid.
Oriental countries said on 17th December 1908 that he did not believe that Oriental countries invariably interpreted kindness as fear and he drew attention to the fact that the Founder of Christianity was born in an Oriental country. On 21st October 1907 he had declared that because the British in India were the representatives of Western, not Oriental, civilization he could not be hurried into repression by any such assertion that Orientals did not understand patience or toleration. In a speech to the Indian civil servants in July 1908 he expressed the opinion that so long as English public opinion watched the activities of the Indian government it would not be possible to enter upon a policy of pure repression.

"If reforms do not save the Raj", wrote Morley to Minto, "nothing else will". On 28th May 1908 Minto replied: "The Raj would not disappear in India as long as the British race remains what it is, because we shall fight for the Raj as hard as we have ever fought, if it comes to fighting, and we shall win as we have always won". Minto believed that to repress sedition it was necessary to curtail, to a certain extent, the liberty of the person, the liberty of the press, and the liberty of holding political meetings, and he warned Morley that it would be dangerous for the security of the British empire in India if "out of too much inherited respect for the doctrines of the Western world quite unsuited to the East"

1. Speech in the House of Commons. (Indian Debates, 1908, p. 996
strong repressive measures were not pursued in India. Morley did not believe that it was possible to introduce every English political institution into India, but he yet asked Minto to realize that it was desirable that the spirit of English institutions, its ideas of law and justice, should gradually and prudently be applied in India, and that the government could pursue a policy of complete suppression of popular liberties on the ground that "the Nizam or the Amir would make short work of sedition writers and spouters".

One of the first acts of repression suggested by Minto, which Morley had to approve, was the arrest and deportation in 1907 of Lala Lajpat Rai and of Ajit Singh, after the riots at Lahore and Rawalpindi. In November 1908, after some disturbances in Bengal, nine Bengalis were similarly deported. These deportations were effected under an old Regulation of 1818, under which a man could be sent to prison and kept in prison without trial for any limit of time and without being told what was the crime that was charged against him.

The Madras Mail, which generally voiced the opinions of the European community of Madras, unhesitatingly supported the deportation of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh. Congressmen, on the other hand, strongly condemned these deportations. Rash Behari

3. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.250.
4. The Madras Mail, May 16th, 1907: "Stamping Out Sedition". See also the issue of August 1st, 1907: "The Indian National Congress".
Ghose, in his Congress presidential addresses of 1907 and 1908, denounced the Regulation of 1818, under which a man could be deported without trial, as a lawless law, a standing negation of all law. The 1908 Congress demanded the repeal of this Regulation, and asked that the deported persons be brought to trial or else be set at liberty. Tej Bahadur Sapru, the jurist, pointed out that in no other part of the British empire did such a law as the Regulation of 1818 exist, and he declared that the spirit of the Regulation was against the very first principles of English jurisprudence and that it was opposed to all the traditions of the English constitution.

The deportations were criticized in Britain by a group of Conservatives led by F. E. Smith, a future Secretary of State for India, and more especially by Liberals and Radicals. Mr. Mackarness, a member of the House of Commons, said in April 1909 that the power of deporting without trial was clearly unconstitutional if Magna Charta had any meaning. Similarly Wedgwood,

2. Report of the Twenty-Third Indian National Congress, p.107. Syed Hussain Imam of Bankipore said that the Regulations were framed in the early days of British settlement in India but since that time Indians "after receiving English education and having come into contact with Western methods of thought and Western methods of life" had progressed considerably so that they wanted "more civilized laws" than the Regulation III of 1818. (Idem. p.108.)
3. Idem. p.115. J.D. Rees wrote that within the British empire a law similar to the Indian Regulation of 1818 existed in the East African Protectorate. (J.D. Rees, The Real India, p.165.)
4. Report of the Twenty-Third Indian National Congress, p.115. See also the article "Personal Liberty in British India" by "Civis Romanus Sum" in The Indian World, July 1907.
5. Debate on Indian Affairs: House of Commons, 1909, p.216. (Mackarness was member for Berkshire, Newbury).
another member, asserted in July 1910 that the principle of the Regulation of 1818 "is the principle of the Bastille. It is the principle of the lettre de cachet under Louis XIV".

There were, however, others in the parliament, such as J.D. Rees, who not only approved of the deportations but argued that the government had not used this method as much as was necessary for suppressing sedition. He referred to Aurobindo Ghose who "called upon youths not to be cowards, and said (that) imprisonment was not as terrible as it seemed", and he added: "I hope the government will deport this man". He said that a man who could speak like Aurobindo should be deported even though no legal proof could be found against him for any political crime he had committed. He did not deny that the power of deporting without trial was an autocratic power, but he advocated the use of that power because he held the mistaken belief that the people of the East would not realize that their rulers had power unless the rulers used that power autocratically in grave and critical situations.

Lady Minto wrote that the "practice of deportation had always stuck in the throat of the Secretary of State, it outraged his Liberal conscience .....". Morley had some misgivings about the wisdom of the policy of deportations. He wrote to Minto:

"Radical supporters will be critical, and Tory opponents will

1. Debates on Indian Affairs; House of Commons, 1910, p.243. (Wedgwood was member for Newcastle-under-Lyme).
4. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.300."
scent an inconsistency between deporting Lajpat, and my old
fighting of Balfour for locking up William O'Brien.1 But he
tried to defend his policy by saying that there need not be any
necessary inconsistency if the policy pursued in India was not
exactly the same as Irish policy because India was greatly
different from Ireland.

In a letter to Minto on May 16th, 1907, Morley said that if
he did not "possess a spotless character as an anti-coercionist
in Ireland", the opposition to the policy of deportation would
have been much greater than it actually was. However, as time
passed, the opposition to this policy grew in strength and force.
In a letter to Minto on August 12th, 1909, Morley raised the
question of releasing the deportees, and pointed out that F. E.
Smith was uneasy about deportations, that at least a dozen
Unionist members would support a move against deportation, that
the orthodox rank and file Liberals did not understand indefinite
detention, and that Labour men, possibly, and Irishmen, certainly,
would oppose deportation. To Minto's argument that the detention
of deportees would frighten evil-doers generally, he replied on
January 27th, 1910 thus: "That's the Russian argument: by
packing off train-loads of suspects to Siberia we will terrify
the anarchists out of their wits, and all will come all right".
That policy had been tried in Russia, but it had not succeeded.

Neither had that policy worked in Ireland. If he knew anything

2. Speech in the House of Commons on June 6th, 1907 (Morley,
Indian Speeches, p. 18).
in the world it was, claimed Morley, the working of the Irish
Coercion since 1881, and it was when Parnell was in prison and
the Coercion Act was in full blast that the Dublin Invincibles
were reorganised and strengthened. At the persistent request of
Morley, Minto released the Bengal deportees almost immediately
after the passing of a stringent press law in 1910.

Before closing the discussion on deportations it is necessary
to refer briefly to the controversy over the question of deporting
Keir Hardie, the Labour leader, who visited India in 1907. In a
letter to the Prime Minister on 2nd October 1907 Morley wrote
that he had come to the conclusion that if Keir Hardie had really
used the language which he was reported to have used in his
speeches in India then Hardie was a propagator of sedition and
should be punished. Morley was convinced that if Hardie was
allowed to go unscathed then it would be impossible to continue
or to justify the deportation of Lajpat Rai.

In September 1907 Hardie had compared the Swadeshi with the
Sinn Fein Movement and had suggested that possibly both the
movements arose because the legitimate demands of the people were
not satisfied. On 27th September, Hardie, after arriving in
Mymensingh, remarked that the number of police in existence in the
streets reminded him of a city in a state of siege. He also
observed that Russian methods of administration were similar to
those existing in Mymensingh, and that some of the atrocities

1. Letters from J. Morley, Campbell-Bannerman Papers, Vol.XVIII.
   (British Museum Additional Manuscript, 41223, ff.266-67).
2. For a brief summary of Hardie's Indian speeches see the copy
   of a telegram from the Viceroy, dated October 7th, 1907.
   (Idem. ff.274-76).
recently committed in India could be compared with the outrages committed by Turkey in Armenia. He assured Indians that the British Labour Party sympathised with the political aspirations of educated Indians, and declared that on his return to England he would recommend the grant to India of self-government on lines similar to that of Canada.

Minto sent a brief summary of Hardie's Indian speeches to Morley. Minto did not consider that there was any probability that Hardie's speeches might lead to public disorder of a serious kind. The question of deporting Keir Hardie was therefore dropped.

Apart from deportations there were other measures which the government adopted in order to fight sedition and "terrorism". In 1907, after some disturbances in the Punjab and in Eastern Bengal, the Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act was passed. This Act provided that no political meeting could be held in a "proclaimed area" without the permission of the local authorities, and that the authorities could forbid the holding of any political meeting which they apprehended might tend to promote sedition.

Sir Henry Adamson, the government spokesman, argued that because in India, unlike Britain, respectable law-abiding citizens had not satisfactorily assisted the government in prosecuting law-breakers by coming forward to testify in the courts of law against those who preached sedition in public meetings, the Indian law

1. Speaking in the House of Commons on July 22nd, 1908 Hardie said that he had never made a statement of this character and that the statement was a pure concoction. (Indian Debates, 1908, p.759).

2. Telegram from Viceroy to Secretary of State received at India House, October 6th, 1907. (Letters from J. Morley, Campbell-Bannerman Papers, Vol.XVIII, f.273).
about holding public meetings had to be made more stringent than the English law.

Gokhale and Rash Behari Ghose pointed out that the new measure would place very great powers in the hands of the local authorities to forbid, in some cases, the holding of political meetings which they might mistakenly believe would tend to the promotion of sedition. As a result of this the liberty of holding political meetings might be seriously curtailed, and this would enable "extremists", lamented Ghose, "to adorn their perorations with references to Russian methods of government".

Ghose, who was a celebrated jurist, referred to the fact that no law comparable to the new measure, existed "in Italy or Belgium, France or Switzerland, though the seditious agitator is not an unknown figure in Europe, which is honeycombed with secret societies of anarchists and socialists". He spoke of the utmost freedom of public meeting that obtained in England, and declared that it was to the liberty of holding public meetings and discussions that England owed the abolition of slavery, repeal of the Corn Law, Catholic emancipation, and parliamentary reform.

The right of public discussion through public meetings was a liberty over all other liberties and an attempt to restrict that right would be, said Ghose,

2. Idem. pp.45-6, 52.
quoting the words of Milton, "slaying of an immortality rather than a life".

The Seditious Meetings Act was passed on November 1st, 1907. On June 8th, 1908, the government brought forward a Bill to prevent incitements to murder and other offences in newspapers. Under this new press law the Yugantar was suppressed. When an attempt on an English judge's life at Muzaffarpur resulted in the death of two English ladies the Yugantar wrote: "If in an attempt to destroy the enemy a woman is accidentally killed, then God can have no cause of displeasure like the English. Many a female demon must be killed ..... in order to extirpate the race of Asuras (demons) from the breast of the earth". The revolutionary papers had advocated the adoption of the methods of the Russian nihilists and the use of the bomb. They had asked for the avenging of the "murder of the Motherland" by blood, the lighting of a huge sacrificial fire to be fed not with ghee (butter) but with blood, the blood that would propitiate the goddess Kali. Such writings said Henry Adamson, while introducing the 1908 press Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council, would appear as "ridiculous bombast" to an Englishman, but it was otherwise with "impressionable and immature minds in the East", and consequently the effect they produced on the youthful reader of the revolutionary papers "must be judged by Eastern and not by Western standards."

1. This extract is taken from the report of the speech of Sir Henry Adamson. (The Proceedings of the Council of the Governor-General of India: April 1908 to March 1909, p.10)

2. Idem. p.11. (Kali is the Hindu goddess of strength and destruction).
Western standards". Similarly Minto said that such writings would have been immediately dismissed in England, habituated to constitutional agitation, with ridicule and contempt, but that that had not been the case in India; therefore, "India is not ripe for complete freedom of the Press".

While discussing the 1908 press Act in the House of Lords Earl Cromer, who had supported Ripon in repealing Lytton's press Act of 1878, recanted his former faith in the desirability of having a free Indian press. He said that a policy of complete freedom of the press had been tried in India as well as in Egypt, but the working of the press in those two countries had shown that Western ideas of the freedom of the press were unsuited to Oriental conditions. Curzon, speaking on the same occasion, said that since Ripon repealed Lytton's press Act, in accordance with what was called Liberal principles, the government of India had to rely upon the indifferent protection of the penal code. He welcomed the new press Act, but considered it to be inadequate for various reasons, chief among which was that it was confined exclusively to incitements to murder and violence and as such it could not check the ordinary everyday incitements to sedition and attack on the British government. Lord Lamington, a former Governor of Bombay, similarly said that ordinary everyday attack on the British government in India was far more insidious than incitements to murder, and he urged upon the government the necessity of introducing a more stringent press law.

1. Ibid.
3. House of Lords, 30th June 1908. (Indian Debates, 1908, p.643)
The theory that the idea of a free press was a Western idea and that it could not be applied in an Eastern country was rightly rejected by Congressmen, but in his 1908 Congress presidential address Rash Behari Ghose said that though he believed in the freedom of the press, in the conditions then existing in the country, a measure like the 1908 press Act "was perhaps necessary". But the 1908 Congress expressed the earnest hope that the new press Act would have "only a temporary existence in the Indian Statute Book".

As was to be expected the new press Act was enthusiastically welcomed by extremely conservative Indians. The Indian Nation, an organ of the Bihar landlords, had long been saying that not more freedom but more restraint was necessary in India. The paper repudiated the suggestion of some Congressmen that in India, as in Russia, police repression was largely responsible for producing secret conspiracies and bomb outrages. It intemperately wrote that discontent in India had been produced by "villainous rhetoric" in the press, by mere "words, words, words", such as the preaching of the ideal of independence. In its characteristic exaggerated manner the paper declared that as the propogation of the political philosophy of Voltaire and Rousseau had helped to produce the French Revolution, so the Indian Revolution, if it ever happened, would have resulted "largely from

3. The Indian Nation, May 18th, 1908.
4. The Indian Nation, June 1st, 1908.
5. The Indian Nation, May 11th, 1908, and June 1st, 1908.
a political philosophy the preaching of which the Government has not repressed but has permitted in its most unrestricted form".

The Pioneer Mail welcomed the press Act of 1908, but it considered the Act to be inadequate. It advocated the "return to the principles of Lord Lytton's legislation coupled with a system of licensing of universal application". This would have meant the virtual suppression of a free press.

On 17th December, 1908 Morley wisely spoke against the policy of suppressing a free press. He pointed out that a policy of suppression, to be consistent, must involve not only the suppression of the press but also the shutting down of schools and colleges that taught the doctrines of liberty, and the enactment of an "Explosive Books Act" which would make the possession of un-licenced books on freedom, such as those of Milton, Burke, Macaulay and Bright, as completely seditious and illegal as the possession of a bomb.

On 4th February 1910 the government of India brought forward a Bill for the stricter control of the Indian press. In introducing the Bill Sir Herbert Risley said that because the 1908 press Act dealt only with actual incitements to violence it could not stop those writings which vaguely or indirectly referred to the "methods of guerilla warfare as practised in Circassia, Spain and South Africa; Mazzini's gospel of political assassinations; Kossuth's most violent doctrines; the doings of Russian Nihilist

1. The Indian Nation, June 1st, 1908.
2. The Pioneer Mail, June 12th, 1908.
4. Ibid.
the murder of the Marquis Ito", that is, which provided implied justification for political assassination by references to revolutions in other countries. The comprehensive section 4 of the press Bill of 1910 dealt with all writings which had a tendency, directly or indirectly, whether by inference, suggestion, allusion, metaphor, implication or otherwise" to promote hatred, contempt or enmity against the government of India. Risley pointed out that though the Bill gave the government the right to demand and to forfeit security from any newspaper it did not provide for the institution of a system of universal licensing of newspapers. "The liberty of unlicensed printing, for which Milton pleaded three centuries and a half ago, and at the time pleaded in vain, is", he said, "untouched by this Bill".

Speaking in the Imperial Legislative Council on 8th February 1910, Gokhale supported this Bill. While pointing out that the press in India had been, in the main, a potent instrument of progress he said that in the last five years seditious ideas of overthrowing British rule had been making headway in India, and that, because writings in a section of the press was partly responsible for producing this result, he felt he could not oppose the measures that were contemplated in the Bill for putting an end to such writings. The Congress, on the other hand, passed a resolution in December 1910 asking that the new press Act "be

removed from the Statute Book without delay". Congressmen were justifiably afraid that this Act might restrict the freedom of the press. From the remarks of the Chief Justice of Bengal about this Act it is clear that it would have been extremely difficult for any person to succeed in any suit that he might bring to the court against the actions that the executive might have taken under this Act.

Some people suggested that to combat "terrorism" it was necessary to control the system of education that prevailed in India. Speaking on 30th June 1908 in the House of Lords, Cromer asserted that the most important cause which produced the unrest was the system of education that the British had introduced into India. "Western education in India", wrote Justice Beaman in February 1909, "has proved so far a failure. It has not contributed to the strength of our government; it has ... weakened and embarrassed it". On 30th June 1908, Curzon referred to the fact that in the course of a police investigation Mill's essay on

2. The Chief Justice said, "The provisions of section 4 are very comprehensive, and its language is as wide as human ingenuity could make it ..... It is difficult to see to what lengths the operation of this section might not plausibly be extended by an ingenious mind. They would certainly extend to writings that may even command approval". (W. R. Donogh, The History and Law of Sedition, Calcutta, 1917, p.241).
4. Justice Beaman, "The Situation in India": The Empire Review, February 1909, p.63. See also J.D. Rees' speech in the House of Commons on July 22nd, 1908 (Indian Debates, 1908, p.743).
"Liberty" and Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France" had been found among the personal property of one of the bomb-throwers, and he remarked that from a knowledge of this fact one could detect the remote spark which led to the ultimate conflagration. He argued that the English system of education, which was well adapted to England that had centuries of constitutional development behind it, was profoundly ill-adapted to the different conditions of India, and that it had taught Indians "the catchwords of Western civilization without inspiring them with its spirit or inculcating its sobriety".

The Pioneer Mail argued that it was an error to prescribe the works of Burke and Mill as textbooks in Indian colleges. In his essay on "Liberty" Mill was concerned almost exclusively with progressive Western countries, consequently it was fatuous, wrote the paper, to set it as a textbook in the universities of a backward Oriental country such as India. Sir Charles Elliott wrote in June 1907 that one of the causes of unrest in India was that schoolboys and youths at colleges were "fed on the literature of Burke and Herbert Spencer and on political dogmas such as 'no taxation without representation' made in England and unsuitable for export". "It is not too much to say", wrote J.D. Rees, "that in our schools pupils imbibe sedition with their daily lessons: they are fed with Rousseau, Macaulay, and the works of...

1. Indian Debates, 1908, p.617.
2. The Pioneer Mail, November 1st, 1907.
3. C.A. Elliott, "The Unrest in India", The Empire Review, June 1907, p.382. (Elliott was Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from 1890 to 1895).
4. Rees was an Additional Member of the Governor-General's Council from 1895 to 1900.
philosophers, which even in Oxford tend to pervert the minds of students to Socialistic and impractical dreams". He lamented that Indians read Mill's essay on "Liberty" without Stephen's "crushing rejoinder".

Rees drew attention to the fact that the Indian Sociologist, an organ of the "terrorists", gave at the head of each issue the following extract from Herbert Spencer: "Every man is free to do that which he wills, provided he infringes not the equal freedom of any other man. Resistance to aggression is not simply justifiable but imperative. Non-resistance hurts both altruism and egoism". He remarked that this was "the kind of pernicious stuff upon which young India fastened and fed". It is difficult to see how one could criticize the above extract from Spencer unless one held that in the particular circumstances of India it was necessary to preach not the doctrine of liberty but the gospel of absolute and blind obedience to authority.

Cromer maintained that the extremely literary character of higher Western education had produced a large number of unemployed demagogues, and that owing to the insufficient attention that had been paid to the spread of elementary education among the masses, the numerous unemployed demagogues had found the best opportunity of propagating their subversive doctrines among the ignorant.

1. J. D. Rees, The Real India (London, 1908) p.162. In 1906 H. F. Prevost Battersby had written that the English were manufacturing discontent in India by means of exaction. (H.F.P. Battersby, India under Royal Eyes, p.444).

2. Speech in the House of Commons on July 22nd, 1908. (Indian Debates, 1908, p.738). See also the speech of Sir Henry Craik (Idem. p.747). This extract is also quoted in

masses. Lord Lamington said that the wide diffusion of elementary education among the Indian masses would enable them to appreciate the benefits of British rule and to reject the revolutionary ideas of political agitators. He further suggested that higher Western education should be given "at its proper cost" so that no "fictitious encouragement" was given to Indians for taking up higher education.

Congressmen agreed with Lord Lamington, though not for exactly the same reasons, about the desirability of a wider diffusion of primary education in India as can be seen from Gokhale's insistence in 1911 on the passage of an Elementary Education Bill in the Imperial Legislative Council, but they rightly opposed any suggestion of giving higher Western education in India "at its proper cost" which might have the tendency of checking the number of those who had the benefit of having a higher Western education. They denied that the study of the works of English political philosophers, such as Burke, Mill, and Spencer, was in any way responsible for the growth of a revolutionary party in India. Surendranath Banerjea wrote that he regarded Burke's "Reflections on the Revolution in France" as the strongest and the most reasoned protest against revolutions of all kinds. The study of English political history that was so devoid of violent revolutions could not tend to promote a revolutionary mentality among English-educated Indians. If nevertheless a spirit revolutionary "terrorism" had developed in India,

1. Indian Debates, 1908, pp. 644-45.
3. S. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p. 142.
developed not because of the spread of English education but in-spite of it. It may be recalled that in the early years of British rule the spread of English education was partly responsible for weakening the revolutionary sentiment in the country, and for generating in the minds of the educated Indians the idea that political progress should be achieved not by overthrowing British rule, but by working for the liberalization of that rule by means of constitutional agitation. But though Congressmen generally believed in constitutional methods of agitation, Rash Behari Ghose, in his welcome address to the Congress of 1906, warned England that if she sought to deprive India of her just political rights then the condition of India might become like that of Ireland, or even that of Russia. Next year, in his Congress presidential address, he pointed out that dissatisfaction with the administration did not amount to disaffection with the government, and he declared that it was vitally important that the legitimate political aspirations of the educated Indians, who had been fed on the works of Burke and Mill, should be satisfied by giving them a wider voice in the administration of the country.

Minto and Morley could not always agree on the measures that would be appropriate for repressing sedition. In 1910 Minto said, "I have often wondered whether the centralised political machinery of Great Britain .... could in a case of really dangerous emergency do anything but hamper the hands of those entrusted

1. See The Indian Nation, July 13th, 1908.
2. See pp.72-6 above.
with the preservation of the distant territories of a mighty empire. The doubt that Minto expressed in the above statement was not a new one. It can be recalled that in 1878 Lytton had written: "I have long believed that the permanent maintenance of a great Empire is incompatible with our present institutions. Either the Empire must go, or the institutions".

It is doubtful whether Minto would have expressed himself as categorically as Lytton. In a letter from India to Morley on 28th May, 1903, he, however, wrote: "The modern House of Commons is absolutely incapable of understanding Indian humanity .... and is to my mind perhaps the greatest danger to the continuance of our rule in this country". In a subsequent letter Minto explained that he did not intend to attack parliamentary institutions as such, but he entertained a "doubt as to the competency of the British Parliament, as at present composed" (the Liberal party had a majority in parliament at the time) to deal with Indian questions.

The Pioneer Mail wrote that under the influence of "the visionaries, the faddists, and the irresponsible humanitarians of the (Liberal) party" the British parliament underestimated the strength of seditious tendencies in India and hesitated for a long time to sanction the adoption of strong measures in order to

repress sedition. It went so far as to write that the parliament of 1906 denounced and despised anything that savoured of 'Imperialism', of what was called 'bureaucracy', of coercion and of legal and executive restraint' and stated that it was "one of the most emotional and untried assemblies" that Westminster had seen.

The government of India wisely did not support the adoption of those extreme measures of repression such as the "return to the principles of Lord Lytton's legislation coupled with a system of licensing of universal application" which The Pioneer Mail suggested. Though Minto did not entertain these extreme ideas of The Pioneer Mail, he yet believed that "government by the strong hand" was necessary in the circumstances of India, and that India could not be "governed by the standards of British political requirements". "(A) crisis", wrote Minto to Morley on May 28th, 1908, "... is ... certain to come ... if the Government of India is not given a free hand to rule the country they understand, and if the Members of Parliament and those who are supposed to represent the feeling of the British public continue to disseminate amongst the people of India doctrines which are totally unsuited to their surroundings". Curzon declared in the House

1. The Pioneer Mail, November 11th, 1910.
2. The Pioneer Mail, June 12th, 1908.
3. Letter to Morley dated May 28th, 1908. (Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, pp.235, 249.)
5. Idem. p.236. In a speech in London on February 23rd, 1911, Minto said that though in respect of the inauguration of broad lines of policy the government of India must be entirely subservient to the Secretary of State, in the matter of carrying on the daily administration of the country, the government of India should be given a free hand. (Speeches by the Earl of Minto, 1905-10, pp.501-502).
of Lords on 30th June 1908 that some members of the parliament belonging to "the extreme wing of the Radical Party" by constantly denouncing British rule and by preaching the doctrines of self-government to Indians had contributed to the causes that produced the Indian unrest. He further maintained that the necessity of supplying answers to "fantastic and ignorant questions put in the British House of Commons" caused great trouble and difficulty to the officials in India. If that was not so, then surely Morley, the Secretary of State, would have been unaware of it. Morley said that the task of answering questions in parliament had not taken a great amount of his time or that of his officials, and it does not appear that he accepted the proposition that the effect of asking questions in parliament on Indian affairs was fatal or deleterious.

Many bureaucrats in India desired that the interference of the British parliament in the administration of Indian affairs should be confined within the narrowest possible limits. The Pioneer Mail, which expressed the opinion of an important section of the bureaucrats, remarked that the very fact that the House of Commons was deserted on an Indian Budget night was "a testimony to the good sense of the majority of the members". It showed that the members knew that the management of Indian affairs were in good hands, so that there was no necessity for parliamentary interference. Obviously, the error in this line of argument lay

1. Indian Debates, 1908, p.619. See also Arthur Crawford, The Unrest in India, p.6; and The Pioneer Mail, Dec. 2nd, 1910.
2. Indian Debates, 1908, p.619.
in the assumption that, even though the members of parliament were very inadequately informed about Indian conditions, they could yet come to the reasonable conclusion that India was governed well and not otherwise.

Morley did not believe that a democracy could not govern an empire, and he rejected the theory that the government of India should be given a free hand to rule India. He pointed out that parliament being ultimately responsible for the government of India, it could not delegate its imperial power and responsibility wholesale to its "agents" in India.

On 26th July, 1911 MacCullum Scott, a member of the House of Commons, said that though both the Russian as well as the Indian bureaucrats were not responsible to the people, the Indian bureaucrats differed from the Russian bureaucrats in one fundamental respect, that is, they were "responsible to a great democracy across the seas". If that responsibility was removed then the Indian bureaucracy "would inevitably go the way of all irresponsible bureaucracies". Whatever the "moderates" might have thought about the system of government that obtained in Russia, about the system of government that existed in India they were clearly of the opinion that the bureaucrats would never

1. The authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report of 1918 admitted that discussion of Indian affairs in parliament was "often out of date and ill-informed". Montagu-Chelmsford Report (Cd.9109), 1918, para. 294.
2. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.158.
concede Indian political demands without pressure from England, and that it would be an evil day if the bureaucrats became the sole arbiter of the destiny of Indians. As regards the "extremists", we have already seen, that they did not expect political justice either from the British bureaucrats of India or from the members of the British parliament, and that they emphatically maintained that for securing political reforms Indians must rely on their own inherent strength and power and not on the supposed liberal instincts of their foreign rulers.


2. See pp. 86-90, 94-5, 100 above.
CHAPTER VI

THE MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS

By the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century most Congressmen had ceased to expect that the British bureaucrats would support the cause of Indian reform. Some of them, however, believed that British statesmen, and particularly those who belonged to the Liberal party, might support the political demands of Indian reformers.

Many of the active British supporters of the Congress were Liberals and Radicals such as John Bright, Charles Bradlaugh, Allan Octavian Hume, William Wedderburn, and others. Surendranath Banerjea, in his 1895 Congress presidential address, declared that though Indians had tried not to get involved in British party politics it was clear that most of the Congress sympathisers were Liberals and not Tories.

From the middle of 1895 to the end of 1905 the Tories, in close alliance with the Liberal Unionists, remained in power in Britain. Many Congressmen felt that the Liberal party, which under the leadership of Gladstone had insisted on the rights of the Irish people and had supported the demand for Irish home rule, could have sympathised much more with the political aspirations of Indians than the Tories had done. No important

2. See pp. 91, 94 above.
political reform was introduced in the period 1895 to 1905, and Curzon, who was Viceroy in the latter part of this period, did not believe that, during his time, India was ripe for political reforms. The Bengalee went so far as to write that just as a Liberal Viceroy, like Ripon, could make Indians forget all the defects and shortcomings of Liberal policy towards India so a Conservative Viceroy, like Curzon, could make Indians forget all the good things that the Conservative party had, in the past, done for India.

In 1905 W.C. Bonnerjee optimistically declared that the return to power of the Liberal party in Britain would, sooner or later, enable Indians to redress all their grievances and help them to acquire a real share in the government of the country. Though many "moderates" expected much sympathy from the Liberal party, Hume rightly asked Indians not to forget that the Liberals would not do justice for India, simply because it was justice, unless Indians vigorously and persistently agitated for their just political rights.

While not disagreeing with this remark of Hume, the "moderates" could yet argue that the Liberals would concede political reforms to Indians less reluctantly than the Conservatives. In July 1905 Sir Pherozeshah Mehta emphatically declared that it was to the Liberal party that Indian reformers

1. See p.120-1 above.
2. The Bengalee, May 24th, 1905; "India and the English Political Parties".
should look for support. This opinion was shared by R. N. Mudholkar who remembered that though the delegates to Britain that were appointed by the 1889 Congress had addressed many Liberal meetings, in which they were well received, they could hardly get a hearing from a Conservative audience. Sir William Wedderburn, an old Liberal who for years had worked in Britain to advance the Congress cause, was also of the opinion that it was not from the Conservatives but from the Liberals, Labourites and Home Rulers that Congressmen could get real support for their political demands.

When the Liberal party came to power in Britain at the end of 1905 Morley became the Secretary of State. "Large numbers of educated men in this country", said Gokhale, in December 1905, in his Congress presidential address, "feel towards Mr. Morley as towards a master, and the heart hopes and yet tremble as it had never hoped or trembled before. He, the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone, — will he courageously apply their principles and his own to the government of this country, or will he too succumb to the influences of the India Office around him and thus cast a cruel blight on hopes which his own writing have done so much to foster?"

Though Morley wrote that the Liberal party "was least likely to quarrel with abstract catchwords in the rising India movement", he himself could not share the faith of Congressmen about the desirability of gradually introducing English parliamentary institutions into India for the ultimate establishment of a colonial form of self-government. In August 1906 he frankly told Gokhale that he believed that for many a day to come Gokhale's hope that India would attain a colonial form of self-government would remain a mere dream. On 23rd February 1909, during the second reading of the Morley-Minto reform Bill, he expressed the hope that the reforms might win over those Indian nationalists who desired a colonial form of self-government on the side of those who entertained no such desire, but who would be content if only they were admitted to a fair and workable cooperation in the running of the administration. Earl Percy doubted whether Morley's reforms would serve any such purpose. The introduction of the Morley-Minto reforms encouraged strengthened the belief of the "moderate that, through constitutional agitation, the political institutions in India could gradually be liberalised so that ultimate a colonial form of self-government could be established. If, however, the reforms were not introduced it was quite possible

4. Speech on April 1st, 1909 (Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Commons, 1909, pp.121-22.)
that some of the "moderates", losing faith in constitutionalism would have joined the ranks of the "extremists", who believed in the ideal of Swaraj as distinct from the ideal of colonial self-government.

Morley repudiated the ideal of democracy for India. He argued that Liberalism did not uphold the theory that because parliamentary self-government was good for Britain it was equally good for a backward country, such as India, which was passing through a "transition from the fifth European century in some parts in slow, uneven stages, up to the twentieth". He could not imagine a time when India would cease to remain a "theatre of absolute and personal government". Minto also maintained that the introduction of representative government in India "would be a Western importation unnatural to Eastern tastes".

Congressmen were not daunted by the difficulties that stood in the way of the development of English parliamentary institutions in India, and they rightly pointed out that India would not take as much time as it took Britain to evolve parliamentary institutions. The Bengalee wrote that England by first developing parliamentary institutions had made it

1. Surendranath Banerjee's speech in the 1908 Congress shows that the proposed reforms strengthened the faith of the "moderates" in the method of constitutionalism. (Report of the Twenty-Third Indian National Congress, p.48). See also Rash Behari Ghose's speech in the 1908 Congress (Idem. pp.35-7).
5. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.110.
easier for other nations to develop such institutions. It maintained that though there were many people in India whose mental development was at the stage of the fifth European century when Macaulay wrote, some of them had already been imbued with the spirit of twentieth century Europe. Not even a hundred years separated Macaulay's time from Morley's and "yet how momentous has been the transformation which European civilisation and European education working upon the Indian soil has brought about in India!" The Bengalee argued that it was no longer possible to maintain the proposition that Oriental peoples, unlike the Occidental nations, were not fit for self-government, because towards the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century there had developed constitutional and democratic movements in Oriental countries, such as Japan, Persia, and China.

But when many Asian countries were stirred with a new spirit for self-government Morley was not alone in putting no limitation of time on his repudiation of democracy for India. "It seems to be much better to lay it down at the outset ..." said Earl Percy on 6th June 1907, "that however true in the abstract it may be to say, as the Prime Minister said last year and a most unfortunate observation I think it was - 'that good government is no substitute for self-government', so far as

3. The Bengalee, July 29th and August 2nd, 1908. See also a speech of Surendranath Banerjea in the 1908 Congress (Report of the Twenty-Third Indian National Congress, p.48.)
India, at all events, is concerned, it is good government and 1 not self-government that we have in view. In a paper on 2 "Self-Government for India" that Gokhale read at a meeting of 3 the East India Association on July 1906 he approvingly quoted 4 the above remark of Campbell-Bannerman, the British Prime 5 Minister. In a discussion that followed the reading of the 6 paper Theodore Morison said that the aim of British policy in 7 India should be not merely good government but also self- 8 government. Many Anglo-Indian officials did not share this 9 advanced viewpoint of Morison. S.S. Thorburn, a retired 10 civil servant, characterized the above remark of Campbell- 11 Bannerman as "a vote-catching observation" and he argued that 12 self-government in India would mean government by inefficient 13 and unenlightened people. On October 1907, J. D. Rees asserted 14 amidst applause, in a meeting of the East India Association, 15 that no subject of the British Crown had the right of discuss- 16 ing any theory according to which Indians were to attain ultime 17 gate self-government. "I think I may assume", he said, with 18 confident dogmatism, "that India, which is our greatest 19 possession, is to be retained to all time, so far as we can 20 foresee".

The Bengalee pointedly drew attention to the curious 21 sociological phenonema that when some of the progressive

1. Indian (Parliamentary) Debates, 1907, pp.191-192.
2. The Journal of the East India Association, October, 1906, p.15
3. Idem, p.15.
4. See discussions on J.B. Pennington's paper on "Indian Administration by an old Officer" in The Journal of The East India Association, October 1907, p.15.
5. Ibid.
peoples of Asia were genuinely enthusiastic about the political ideals of democratic self-government evolved by the genius of England and France, some Englishmen upheld the theory of despotic and benevolent imperialism and regarded with doubt and distrust the possibility of the development of self-governing democratic institutions in India.

Though Morley did not agree with the ultimate political aims of Congressmen, he yet believed that it was essential that political concessions or reforms should be granted to Indians. In a speech in the House of Lords on February 23rd, 1909 Curzon said that when he was Viceroy political concessions were not in the field, but he conceded that in the last few years the whole political situation had changed, and that, therefore, he would try, as far as possible, to look at the Indian situation through Morley's spectacles.

Morley favoured political reforms that after the introduction of Occidental education the establishment of a limited measure of Occidental political machinery could not be avoided. Critics, such as J.D. Rees, declared that Occidental political institutions were demanded only by a small

1. The Bengalee. August 1st, August 11th, 1908.
2. Speech in the House of Lords, February 23rd, 1909. (Morley Indian Speeches, p.121.)
3. Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Lords, 1909, p.25. In the same speech, however, Curzon had also said that he believed that the mass of the Indian people wanted good government and not representative government, and that they identified good government with government by Englishmen. (Idem. p.24).
minority of English-educated class, and that India should be
governed aristocratically and not according to English demo-
ocratic ideas. Rees suggested that the powers of the hereditary
leaders of Indian society should be confirmed and increased.
Colonel L.J.H. Grey warned the government against transferring
any power to the English-educated and Europe-returned talkers
and writers of Presidency towns, and advised it to rule India
with the help of the great ruling chiefs, the provincial
nobility and the landed gentry. F.H. Barrow, a retired civil
servant, said that the government could give greater political
power to the landholding and commercial classes, who were
loyal to British rule, and that it could rely very little on
the support of the English-educated professional class. Writing
on February 1909 Justice Beaman remarked that the educated
Indians were mostly disloyal, and that it could well be doubted
whether they could reasonably ask for any political concession
or reform.

Morley did not believe that the educated class was, on the
whole, disloyal, or that it would be wise to resist the legiti-
mate political aspirations of that class by saying that they
constituted only a microscopic minority of India's total
population. He said that though the educated section of the

also George Adams, "Indian Reform: In Which Direction?", The Empire Review, September 1908, pp.111, 116.
17-19, 32-33.
3. F.H. Barrow, "Hinduism and Unrest in India", The Empire
Review, September 1909, p.98.
4. Beaman, "The Situation in India", The Empire Review,
February, 1909, pp.63-5.
people was small it would be fatally idle to believe that they did not count. "This educated section", he declared on 6th June 1907, "makes all the difference, is making and will make all the difference". In the same strain as Morley, Montagu, Under-Secretary of State for India, said, in the House of Commons on 26th July 1910, that it was true that unrest in India was confined to a small fraction of the people, but when the vast mass of the illiterate people had little or no ideas on politics, then the opinions of the educated classes were "the most prominent factor in the situation". Similarly Ramsay MacDonald declared in the House of Commons on 28th April 1910 that the problem in India was not chiefly the problem of dealing with the vast mass of ignorant peasantry who ceaselessly toiled in the fields and who had no political aspirations, it was rather the problem of dealing with that small group of educated Indians who, while they retained their fundamental Eastern characteristics, were trained in Western political ideals and sought to introduce Western political institutions into India. Congress enthusiastically welcomed these remarks.

Morley admitted that it was no longer possible to continue

1. Indian Debates, 1907, p. 183.
to govern India by a cast-iron bureaucracy and he must have realized that the government would have to deal with the Congress movement. Minto while conceding that the government would have to make friends with the best type of Congressmen, yet asserted that there was much in the Congress movement that was absolutely disloyal. On June 27th, 1906 he wrote that Congressmen, who could easily imitate Western political methods, had secured for their political utterances much greater importance in Britain than they ever could aspire to obtain in India. He believed that the most important factor with which the government had to deal was "not impossible Congress ambitions". On the contrary, he desired to satisfy the aspirations of big landowners and others who wanted Indians to have a greater share in the highest councils of the government but who were not enthusiastic about the Congress demand for the increase of representative government in India. On May 28th 1906 he wrote to Morley: "I have been thinking a good deal lately of a possible counterpoise to Congress aims. I think we find a solution in the Council of Princes, or in an elaboration of that idea; a Privy Council not only of Native Rulers, but of a few other big men ...... we should get (from them) different ideas from those of Congress".

2. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p. 28.
5. Idem. p. 29.
It was probably in pursuance of the above idea that the government of India suggested the formation of an Imperial Advisory Council to be composed of ruling chiefs and territorial magnates, and of provincial advisory councils to be composed of substantial landholders, representatives of the smaller landholders, of industry, commerce, capital and also of the professional classes. These advisory councils would have borne not the slightest resemblance to the English parliament. They were to be purely consultative bodies. The advisers could be consulted individually as well as collectively, and consultations as a general rule were to be private and confidential.

The undemocratic Ruling Chiefs objected to a mixed Imperial Advisory Council on the ground that they would have to sit with the subjects of the British government who were "necessarily of an inferior status". Ultimately the idea of creating advisory councils were dropped. The dropping of the idea pleased Congressmen for they could easily see that such councils would have provided a counterpoise to the influence of the educated middle class.

In the reform proposals suggested by the government of

1. Circular from the Government of India to Local Governments and Administrations dated August 24th, 1907: (Cd. 3710) 1907, para. 5.


3. Idem. paras. 4-5.

4. Proposals of the Government of India dated October 1st, 1908: (Cd. 4426) 1908, paras. 4-6.

5. Idem. para. 6; Dispatch of the Secretary of State dated November 27th, 1908: (Cd. 4426) 1908, para. 4.

India it was stated that the operation of the quasi-elective system since 1893 had resulted in an excessive representation of the professional middle classes, and that "the requisite counterpoise to their excessive influence" could be found by the creation of an "additional electorate recruited from landed and monied classes". Congressmen pointed out that the very fact that few landlords but many members of the professional classes had been elected to the councils showed that the professional classes had a greater representative character than the landed classes.

The amount of representation granted to the landlords by the Morley-Minto reforms was considered by Congressmen to be excessive, and many of them also criticized the provision for the separate representation of the landlords. Pandit B. N. Dhar pointed out that the landlords were an extremely conservative force. "You want in the Councils", he said, "men who are educated, .... who have the intelligence to appreciate the ideals of British civilization and British government, and who alone are suited by their training to help the government in moulding our institutions according to the needs of the new

1. Proposals of the Government of India, October 1st, 1908: (Cd.4426) 1908, para. 20.
2. Circular of the Government of India, August 24th, 1907: (Cd.3710) 1907, para. 7.
5. B.N. Dhar, "The Reform Scheme and the Councils Regulation" The Indian World, April-May 1911, p.266.
times. The landed magnates are at least a conservative force - not in the sense in which that phrase is applicable to the landlord class in England, which is educated, intelligent and conversant with public affairs - but a body of men who are backward in knowledge and wedded to retrospective habits of thought, and whose golden age lies behind the mists of the past.

The Morley-Minto reforms dispensed with official majorities in the provincial legislative councils. J. D. Rees commented that the democrats in Britain, by approving of the reforms, that provided for the creation in the provincial councils of non-official majorities, which were to be largely composed of landlords and the professional or English-educated middle class, showed that they had failed to realize the fact that the interests of the masses could only be protected by the British rulers of India and that those interests would suffer under the rule of the English-educated middle class. Sir Bampfylde Fuller, the first Lieutenant-Governor of Eastern Bengal, gave expression to the same idea by saying that the reforms meant the sacrifice of philanthropy to politics. Curzon also believed that the liberalization of the councils effected by the

1. Report of the Twenty-Sixth Indian National Congress, p.94.
2. This was done at the suggestion of Morley. See Dispatch of the Secretary of State dated November 27th, 1908: (Cd. 4426) 1908, para. 18.
3. J.D. Rees, Modern India, pp.187, 190.
4. B. Fuller, "Quo Vadis? A Prospect in Indian Politics", The Nineteenth Century and After, April 1909, p.712; See also Fuller's "Studies of Indian Life and Sentiment" (p.247) and "The Empire of India" (pp.283-85).
Morley-Minto reforms would have some harmful consequences. "I am under the strong opinion", he said on February 23rd, 1909, "that as government in India becomes more and more Parliamentary - as will be the inevitable result (of the reforms) - so it will become less paternal and less beneficial to the poorer classes of the population".

The above criticisms were based on the mistaken notion that the rule of the Indian professional class was likely to be more oppressive or less beneficial than the rule of the foreign bureaucrats. In any case, the Morley-Minto reforms did not transfer the government of India to the hands of the English-educated middle class. The Madras Mail, an Anglo-Indian paper, rightly pointed out that the abolition of official majorities in the provincial councils would not, in all probability, result in any serious danger to the administration, because, firstly, it was not likely that all the non-official members (some of whom were not elected, but were only nominated by the government) would combine against the government, and, secondly, because the fate of measures were not finally settled in the provincial legislatures. In the Imperial Legislative Council, as distinguished from the provincial councils, a substantial official majority was retained, for Morley insisted that that was necessary.

2. B.N. Dhar, in his 1911 Congress presidential address, said that elective majorities should be introduced in all the provincial councils. (Report of the Twenty-Sixth Indian National Congress, p.26).
3. The Madras Weekly Mail, December 24th, 1908: "Reforms in the Councils".
for maintaining the undisputed supremacy of the British parliament over Indian affairs.

The Morley-Minto reforms conceded to the members of the legislative councils the right of asking supplementary questions and the right of moving resolutions on all matters including the budget. A.J. Balfour stated that by asking supplementary questions Indian councillors would be able to attack and embarrass the officials. Englishmen, he continued, being brought up in the parliamentary atmosphere, did not realise how difficult it was to defend an administration against those who wanted to criticize it by the use of all the parliamentary debating dialectics. Further, criticism in India was likely to be irresponsible, because the opposition party in India, unlike the opposition party in Britain, could not be subdued by the calming reflection that one day it might come to power and then it would have to put into practice all the lofty principles on the basis of which it had criticized the previous government. Balfour could not understand the propriety of making the Indian legislative councils the mimics of all the worst and most labourious parts of British parliamentary procedure so that "some ingenious native lawyer whose delight and pleasure, and perhaps whose road to fame, and it may be to income" was to attack and embarrass the Indian administration was given an opportunity to satisfy his desires. It is clear that Balfour's

1. Dispatch of the Secretary of State dated November 27th, 1908 (Cd. 4426) 1908, para. 22.
3. Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Commons, 1909, pp.166-67. Curzon's criticism of the grant of the right of asking supplementary questions was somewhat similar to that of Balfour's. (Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Lords, 1909, pp.28-9).
estimate of Indian politicians was erroneous. "It cannot be said", remarked the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, "that the right of interrogation has been abused".

Separate electorates for Muslims, which were demanded by many Muslim leaders, were introduced by the Morley-Minto reform. On September 22nd, 1893 in a letter to The Pioneer Saiyid Ahmed Khan said that after a study of John Stuart Mill's views on representative government and after much reflection he had been convinced that representative government, which was entirely regulated by the majority of votes, could only be successful in a country which was homogeneous in point of "race, religion, social manners, customs, economical conditions, and political tradition of history". He maintained that as there existed no such homogeneity in India, the interests of all the peoples of India, and particularly that of the Muslims, would suffer if Western representative institutions were introduced.

In 1896 when Saiyid Ahmed and Theodore Beck drew up a paper on behalf of the Muslim Anglo-Oriental Defence Association, they said that it would be useless and foolish to demand that the elective system, which was introduced in 1893, should be abolished, for such a proposal would excite the opposition of the Hindus and would be received unfavourably in England. They, however, asserted that as a Catholic member chosen by a Protestant

1. Montagu-Chelmsford Report (Cd.9109), 1918, para. 94.
2. The Pioneer Mail October 5th, 1893.
3. Ibid. See also pp.23-4 above.
constituency in Ireland would not represent the true Catholic interests so a Congressite Muslim elected by a predominantly Hindu constituency would, in no way, represent the true interests of the Muslims. They suggested that the electors of Muslim councillors should consist of Muslims only.

On October 1st, 1906 an important Muslim deputation presented an address to Minto. The address stated that representative institutions of the Western type were new to India, that great care and caution was necessary to see that the introduction of such institutions did not place Muslim "national interests at the mercy of an unsympathetic majority". It declared that because British rulers had, in pursuance of their political instincts, given representative institutions of the European type an increasingly important place in the government of the country the Muslims could not hold aloof from such institutions, but it maintained that in order to prevent the Muslims from being reduced to an ineffective minority in the reformed councils it was necessary that the amount of Muslim representation should be determined not merely on the basis of their numerical strength in the country and that only Muslims should be allowed to choose Muslim members of the councils.

Minto agreed that the claim that the position of the Muslims should be estimated not merely on the basis of their numerical strength but on the basis of the political importance

2. The full text of the address is given in The Pioneer Mail October 5th, 1906: "Mahomedans and the State".
of the Muslim community and the service it had rendered to the
British empire was a just claim. He assured the Muslims that
their political rights as a community would be safeguarded in any
reform plan, and he affirmed that any electoral representation
which aimed at giving a merely personal enfranchisement, regard-
less of the beliefs and traditions of the communities of India,
was bound to be utterly unsuccessful.

The reform proposals suggested by the government of India on
October 1st, 1908 were drawn on the assumption that because the
peoples of India could not be compared with any homogeneous
community of the West, the Western system of personal and terrri-
torial enfranchisement was not suited to India, and that represent-
ation in India could only be given on the basis of classes and
interests. The government of India recommended that part of the
representation of the Muslims should be provided through separate
electorates.

In a dispatch on November 27th, 1908 the Secretary of State
had, on the other hand, tentatively suggested the creation of
joint electoral colleges. Many Congressmen welcomed this scheme
and opposed the alternative scheme of creating separate elector-
ates for Muslims. Soon after the latter scheme was suggested on

1. Speeches by the Earl of Minto, pp.69-70.
2. Ibid. Morley also agreed that the Muslims should be given "a
   number of seats somewhat in excess of their numerical
   strength". (Morley, Indian Speeches, p.126). Some "weight-
   age" to the Muslims was given by the Morley-Minto reforms.
3. See Proposals of the Government of India: (Cd.4426) 1908,
   paras. 18-19.
5. Dispatch of the Secretary of State: (Cd.4426) 1908, paras.
   12-14.
6. See Malaviya’s 1909 Congress presidential address (Congress
   Presidential Addresses, First Series, p.810); Bishan Narayan
   Dhar, "The Reform Scheme and the Councils Regulations", The
   Indian World, April-May 1911, pp.269, 274; The Indian World
   February-March 1909, p.178.
October 1st, 1906 by the Muslim deputation to Minto, *The Bengalee* had pointed out that the adoption of this scheme would "lay the axe at the root of the growing conception of a future Indian nationality". On March 10th, 1906 R.C. Dutt wrote that the creation of electorates on the basis of creeds would teach Indians "to disunite, to vote according to religion, to nurse sectional differences, and to relight dying hatreds and jealousies". By voting through separate electorates men tended to think not in terms of the nation, but of their separate creeds. The opposite result could, perhaps, have been obtained by the creation of joint electorates with reservation of seats for Muslims. The establishment of separate electorates, however, became a precedent and the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms continued the system, "How can we say to them (the Muslims) asked the authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report", that we regard the decision of 1909 as mistaken, that its retention is incompatible with progress towards responsible government, that its reversal will eventually be to their benefit; and that for these reasons we have decided to go back on it?"

One of the most important reforms introduced by Morley and Minto was the appointment of an Indian in the Governor-General's Executive Council. On June 15th, 1906 Morley wrote to Minto that he did not think that it would be possible to appoint an Indian in the Governor-General's Council and remarked that the appointment of an Indian would frighten "that

nervous personage .... the Anglo-Indian*. On July 5th, 1906 Minto wrote to Morley that though he had often been attracted to the idea of appointing an Indian to his Council, he had felt that it would be premature to make any definite proposal about it. Early in 1907 Minto had definitely decided in favour of appointing an Indian. But Minto's Council was opposed to the idea. On February 27th, 1907, Minto wrote: "The reasons against it stated by Members of Council are generally narrow, based almost entirely on the assumption that it is impossible to trust a Native in a position of great responsibility, and that the appointment of a Native Member is simply a concession to Congress agitation". However, in a dispatch to the Secretary of State in April 1907 the government of India definitely advocated the proposal of appointing an Indian member. Though Morley supported the proposal, his Council was opposed to it.

In March 1907 Morley casually discussed the question of appointing an Indian member to his Council with Austen Chamberlain. Partly out of racial prejudices Chamberlain was opposed to the idea. He argued that the whole British position in India was based on the assumption that the British were different from the Indians, "We could not", he said, "admit equality. White men could not and ought not to submit to

2. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.97.
coloured rule ...". However in August 1907 Morley took a
bold step by appointing two Indians to his Council.

Though the Conservative Viceroy and the Liberal Secretary
of State agreed that it was desirable to appoint an Indian in
the Viceroy's Council, a strong body of opinion in England was
opposed to this proposal. On March 13th, 1909 King Edward VII
wrote to Morley that he believed that such an appointment was
"fraught with the greatest danger to the maintenance of the
Indian empire under British rule". In a letter on March 17th,
1909 Morley drew the attention of the King to the promise given
by Queen Victoria in 1858 that race or colour should not be a
bar to the appointment of any Indian to government offices. In
a marginal comment to Morley's letter the King wrote that he
could not see why the name of Queen Victoria was brought in
and he did not think that the Queen would have approved of the
appointment of an Indian member.

Lord MacDonnell, who had held charge of three provinces,
said in the House of Lords on February 23rd, 1909, that the
admission of an Indian in the Viceroy's Council would mean "the

1. A. Chamberlain, Politics from Inside: An Epistolary
Chronicle, p.60.

2. In June 1907 Sir Charles Elliott, who had governed Bengal
from 1890 to 1895, argued against the idea of appointing
an Indian member. (Elliott, "The Unrest in India", The
Empire Review, June 1907, p.389).


5. Idem. The King argued that the Indian princes would object
to the appointment of a commoner of inferior birth, that
the Muslims would object if only a Hindu was appointed, that
the Indian member might reveal to his countrymen important
state secrets discussed in the Council, and that the appoint-
ment of an Indian would become a precedent so that future
Viceroy's might find it extremely difficult to avoid appoint-
ing an Indian to the Viceroy's Council. (Idem. pp.387-388.)
introduction of a foreign element" in the Council. He mistakenly believed that the princes of India and the majority of the Indian people would regard an Indian in the Council as a foreign element. Curzon similarly said that Indians would not believe that any of their countrymen was capable of that detachment and impartiality which, he thought, had in the past characterized the British members of the Viceroy's Council. He asserted that if a plebiscite was taken then a large majority of Indians would vote against the admission of Indians in the Viceroy's Council. Lord Lansdowne, another ex-Viceroy, was in agreement with Curzon about the result of such a plebiscite.

It is worth mentioning that Cromer, the great imperialist, favoured the appointment of an Indian. He rightly described India to be almost the only country where education had advanced but which was governed by non-resident foreigners, and he wisely suggested that closer association of Indians with the administration of their country was most essential.

Congressmen enthusiastically welcomed the appointment of an Indian in the Viceroy's Council. Though it was a partial and tardy fulfilment of the noble promise of equality given by

1. Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Lords, 1909, p.48. On April 1st, 1909 Minto wrote to Morley: "Sinha's appointment has been splendidly received". (Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.287). On April 28th, 1909 Lady Minto wrote in her Journal: "There has been remarkable demonstration in favour of Mr. Sinha throughout India, ... ". (Idem. p.291).


Queen Victoria in 1858, R. N. Mudholkar, in his 1912 Congress presidential address, argued that after Curzon's pronouncement in 1904 that the highest ranks of civil employment should generally be reserved for Englishmen "the admission of Indians into the Executive Government......was very much like the introduction of a new principle".

S.P. Sinha, the first Indian member of the Viceroy's Council, proved that there was no truth in the assertion that Indians were not qualified to hold high offices in the government. Minto bore testimony to the able assistance he had received from Sinha, and publicly thanked him for "the absolute fairness and broad-minded patriotism" which had characterized any advice that Sinha had offered him.

In December 1908 the Congress expressed its deep and general satisfaction with the reform proposals that were formulated in Morley's dispatch of November 27th, 1908. In December 1909 the Congress, while appreciating the measure of reform introduced by the Indian Councils Act of 1909, placed on record its strong sense of disapproval of the creation of communal electorates and also expressed its regret that the Regulations framed under the Act by the government of India were not conceived in that liberal spirit which had inspired Morley's dispatch of the previous year.

2. Speech on October 14th, 1910 (Speeches by the Earl of Minto, p.417).
The Regulations gave rise to much controversy. We shall refer only to the controversy that arose on the question of how much power the government of India should have of disallowing the candidature of any person seeking election to the legislative councils. Congressmen, remembering the names of important deportees, such as Lajpat Rai and Krishna Kumar Mitra were particularly insistent that deportees should not be disqualified. They argued that when one Michael Davitt, who had once been convicted of sedition, could be allowed to be a member of the British parliament and when John Burns, who had once been sentenced to 'six weeks' imprisonment, could afterwards become a Cabinet Minister in Britain there existed no reason why Indian nationalist leaders whom the government had once deported should be prevented from becoming members of the Indian legislative councils. The Bengalee wrote that the exclusion of deportees was in entire conflict with the spirit of English political practice, and that it was fundamentally wrong in principle because it restricted the right of the electors to choose whomsoever they pleased as their representatives in the councils.

The idea of attaching political disqualification to deportees outraged the liberal conscience of Morley. In a telegram to Minto on April 19th, 1909 he said that neither he nor the Liberal government could see any justification for

1. The Bengalee, February 28th, 1909; Pandit Malaviya's address in the 1909 Congress (Congress Presidential Addresses, First Series, pp.823-4).

2. The Bengalee, February 28th, 1909.
sanctioning any Regulation under which "the fact of a man having been deported shall, after his release, be itself a 1 ground for disqualifying him".

But Minto believed that whereas a released political prisoner in England, if he was elected to the House of Commons, did not endanger the security of the English constitution, the election of an Indian deportee, such as Lajpat Rai, would "set 2 India in a blaze". In a telegram to Morley on May 3rd, 1909 he stated that the election of a deportee to any of the Indian legislative councils would bring discredit to British administration and lower its prestige.

However, already in April 1909 Hobhouse, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, announced on behalf of the British government that though the government of India would have a general power of disallowing the candidature of persons, deported or not, whose election would, in the opinion of the government of India, be contrary to public interests, deportees as such would not be disqualified. This was a very wide power and Congressmen took strong objection to allowing the government of India/ to exercise this power. This wide power offered, as Minto put it, "a law of political restraint exactly parallel

3. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.303.
4. Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Commons, 1909, p.222. Minto, of course, protested to Morley that this announce- ment meant a disregard of the opinions of the government of India. (Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.305.)
to the law of personal restraint contained in the Regulations of 1818, ...". Morley, however, cautioned Minto that this power should be very charily used, and he asked him to remember that the government of India shall bear full parliamentary responsibility for the exercise of this power.

Congressmen criticized various features of the Morley-Minto reforms, but yet they considered them as a step towards the development of parliamentary institutions. Surendranath Banerjea claimed that Morley would stand forth in history as the Simon de Montfort of the future parliament of India. But Morley himself declared that he would have had nothing to do with the reforms if it could be said that they would directly or necessarily lead up to the establishment of a parliamentary form of government. Morley, however, was not opposed to the introduction of English representative institutions into India. While advocating the reform proposals for the liberalization of the legislative councils he had argued that after the establishment of Occidental education the introduction of a limited measure of Occidental political institutions could not be avoided. It appears that while he was willing to give Indians some influence over the government by making the legislative councils more representative, he was not prepared to give them

1. Lady Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.504.
5. See p.178 above.
any power over the government by introducing responsible or parliamentary government under which the popular legislative would be able to control the executive authority. But after non-official majorities in the provincial councils were introduced by the Morley-Minto reforms it was almost inevitable that with the development of Indian nationalism, elected majorities would have to be conceded, and it was certain that the popularly elected legislatures would have demanded the right not of influencing but of actually controlling the policies of the executive. "You want", said R.N. Mudholkar in his 1912 Congress presidential address, "a Parliamentary form of Government, your legislative Councils are even now Parliaments in embryo. It rests with your representatives to secure their full growth".

1. Congress Presidential Addresses, Second Series, p.73.
CHAPTER VII

THE CONGRESS DEMAND FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT AND THE

MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD REFORMS

The Morley-Minto reforms strengthened the desire of Congressmen for greater self-government. Their hopes for self-government were further raised as a result of a dispatch of the Government of India dated August 25th, 1911 in which it was stated that in order to meet the just demands of Indians for a greater share in the government of the country, without impairing the ultimate supremacy of the Governor-General-in-Council, which was essential for the continued maintenance of British rule, it was necessary to give the provinces a larger measure of self-government. The Congress interpreted this dispatch to mean not only that the provinces would be less controlled by the centre, but also that there would be more popular control over provincial administrations. Lord Crewe, the Secretary of State, explained that the dispatch had merely advocated a policy of giving more power to the local governments and this, he correctly maintained, was not a new policy. It appears that Crewe did not think that local self-government necessarily implied self-government by Indians. Referring to certain Indian statesmen who hoped that "something approaching the self-government enjoyed by those Colonies which have of late years received the name of Dominion" could be introduced into India, he remarked, "I say quite frankly that I see

no future for India on those lines". The Pioneer Mail was
naturally happy at this authoritative declaration of "what was
certainly not to be the trend of British policy in India". But
The Bengalee rightly remarked that inspite of Crewe's declaration
Indian nationalists would persist in demanding colonial self-
government and that they would ultimately attain it.

In suggesting a scheme of political reform the 1912 Congress
demanded a non-official majority in the Imperial Legislative
Council and a majority of elected members in all provincial
councils. While asking for reforms how greatly the Congress was
dominated by English influences can be seen from the fact that the
reform scheme of the 1912 Congress contained the curious clause
that "a person ignorant of English should be held ineligible for
membership" of the councils.

The great war stimulated Congress aspirations for self-
government. On December 28th, 1914, Bhupendranath Basu, in his
Congress presidential address, optimistically declared that the
war in Europe would end the medieval domination of one man over
many, of one nation over another; and he confidently asserted that
the ideals of freedom and of liberty that were powerfully stirring
the minds of European peoples could no longer be shut out of India

1. Ibid., p.211.
2. The Pioneer Mail, July 5th, 1912: "Lord Crewe and the
Future of Indian Administration".
3. The Bengalee, July 3rd, 1912: "Dream of Provincial Autonomy"
5. Ibid.
In the next Congress, S.P. Sinha, the president, said that the goal of Indian nationalists could best be described in Abraham Lincoln's words as "government of the people, for the people, and by the people", but he also maintained that this goal could not be immediately realised. Borrowing an analogy from Edwin Bevan's book on "Indian Nationalism", Sinha described India as a patient whose fractured limbs were in splints and bandages. India, therefore, could not dispense with the services of the British who played the part of the doctor.

Annie Besant took objection to this analogy, "India", she declared", is no sick man. She is a giant who was asleep and who is now awake". Some time after the 1915 Congress Besant started a Home Rule League. Possibly it was the Irish home rule movement that suggested to her the idea of starting a similar movement in India. She chose the expression "home rule" instead of the word "self-government" because the English people were more familiar with the former expression. She started a vigorous campaign for home rule through The Commonwealth whose "stirring articles and outspoken directness" was, she wrote, "new in Indian politics. It was an English political agitation". Early in 1915 Besant also started a "Madras parliament" because she clearly realised that those who wanted democratic home rule

3. E. Bevan, Indian Nationalism. See p.45 onwards et. seq.
should familiarise themselves with parliamentary procedures and must devote themselves assiduously to the study of Indian national problems. The Madras parliament was a debating society which observed, as far as possible, English parliamentary forms. The parliament had a Speaker, a Leader of the House, a Prime Minister and other Ministers.

Besant frankly admitted that in demanding home rule or self-government Indians derived much inspiration from the history of the struggle for constitutional liberties which Englishmen had waged in their own country. India, she said, was "deeply grateful for the inspiration she had breathed in from English literature, from Milton, from Burke, from Shelly, from Mill". Indians admired England not only for her ordered freedom, but also for the sympathy she had shown for the oppressed nations of Europe when they struggled against their despotic rulers, and for the shelter she had offered to political refugees. In a speech in London on June 11th, 1914 she told Englishmen that it would not be proper for them, who had crowded the streets of London to welcome Garibaldi after he had fought against the despotic ruler of Italy, who had given shelter to Mazzini when all the tyrants in Europe sought to seize him, and who had given shelter even to Stepniak, the "terrorist" from Russia, and Kropotkin, the exile and rebel, to imprison Indian patriots who fought for their

3. Letter to The Times, May 29th, 1914 (A. Besant, India and the Empire, p.33).
country's freedom. She pointed out that because Indian political demands were not satisfied Indians who had once a great faith in the liberal instincts of Englishmen were increasingly losing that faith. To those who said that India's loyalty to British rule must be unconditional Besant replied that "the price of India's loyalty is India's freedom". She reminded Englishmen that liberty was their birthright and asked them to share their birthright with Indians. She drew attention to the fact that Indians had loyally supported the British war-effort, but she rightly pointed out that India's loyalty did not mean that Indians were satisfied with the rule of the bureaucrats or that they were willing to remain for ever in a state of pupilage under their British rulers. Besant realised that it would be easier to convince the British public of the justice of the Indian claim for self-government at a time when that public was deeply impressed by the help that India had rendered to the British war-effort, but she did not fail to make it clear that Indian nationalists should ask for home rule as a natural right and not as a reward for their war-services.

The war-services of the Dominions had encouraged people to speculate about the readjustment of the relations of the Dominions to their mother country. After two years of the war, Indian politicians found that the place that India would occupy

in any scheme of post-war imperial reconstruction had not been clarified. Consequently, in October 1916 nineteen elected members of the Indian Legislative Council drew up a memorandum in which a scheme of post-war reforms was suggested.

After stating that, at the end of the war, the world, and particularly the British empire, "which entered into the struggle in defence of the liberties of weak and small nationalities", would witness a great advance in the ideals of government, the signatories of the memorandum declared that, in future, the ideal of Indian government should be not merely good government but also self-government, that is, government which was responsible to the people and therefore acceptable to them. They suggested that after the war in all the legislative councils the elected members should be in a substantial majority, and that in all the executive councils, imperial as well as provincial, half the members should be Indians who would be selected by the elected members of the legislative councils.

Lord Sydenham, a former Governor of Bombay, criticized the above suggestions on the ground that their adoption would weaken the authority of the government of India. He declared that under no circumstances any surrender or weakening of paramount British power should be tolerated, and he asked the government to announce that the constitution of the legislative councils would


2. Memorandum Submitted to His Excellency by Nineteen Elected Additional Members of the Imperial Legislative Council with regard to Post-war Reform dated October 1916. (Cd.9178) 1916 Appendix II, p.95.

remain unchanged. He also expressed his disapproval of the formulation of "revolutionary proposals" of reform when the British empire was fighting for its very existence.

Some people believed that Indian nationalists started a home rule movement during the war primarily because they were guided by the maxim of the Irish home rulers that "England's difficulty is the opportunity of her enemies". Replying to the criticism that the raising of the controversial political question of home rule might embarrass the government during the war, Besant said in the 1916 Congress that by asking for self-government Indian nationalists were only following the example of the self-governing Dominions and acting on the advice of Bonar Law, the late Colonial Secretary, who had asked the Dominions to strike while the iron was still left. Besant asked Indians to strike before the iron was cold, because she was afraid that India's silence during the war might be construed as a sign of contentment with her existing political status, so that unless Indians clearly stated their political demands during the war nothing might be done in any post-war imperial reconstruction to raise the political status of India.

There were some apprehensions in the minds of Congressmen.

that if certain schemes of post-war imperial reconstruction were realised then India would find herself in a position of subordination not only to Britain but also to all the British Dominions including the Dominion of South Africa which denied the Indian settlers their just rights. The 1916 Congress expressed the hope that in any reconstruction of the imperial system India would "be lifted from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with the self-governing Dominions".

The 1916 Congress adopted a scheme of reform known as the Congress-League scheme. The scheme safeguarded the maintenance of British supremacy in India in matters dealing with the direction of military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, but with regard to internal affairs the scheme provided that the central as well as provincial executive councils were to be bound by the resolutions of their legislative councils, unless they were vetoed by the Governor-General-in-Council or Governor-in-Council, as the case may be, and, in that event, if the resolutions were again passed after an interval of not less than a year then they were to be put into effect. According to this scheme though every Indian legislature, whether in the centre or in the provinces, was to


have a substantial majority of elected members it was not to have the power to remove the executive. Congressmen stated that though a form of government which contained a popular legislature and an irremovable executive was alien to English political practice, in the United States of America such a form of government had not proved altogether unsuccessful. In America as the President and his principal advisers did not belong to either house of the Congress they could not personally defend their policy in the Congress. Srinivasa Sastri argued that one advantage that the executive in India, under the Congress-League Scheme, would have over the American executive was that it would have the right of nominating one-fifth of the members of the legislative councils, who would be able to explain and defend the policy of the executive directly in the legislature.

Some time after the formulation of the Congress-League British scheme, the government in Britain announced on August 20th, 1917, that the goal of British policy was "the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire". Surendranath

1. But the scheme provided that, at least, one-half of the members of the executive councils were to be elected by the elected members of the legislative councils. (Idem. pp.78, 80).


3. The policy was announced by Montagu, the Secretary of State on 20th August 1917. (Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Commons, 1917-18, p.445.)
Banerjea said that the British democracy had by its August announcement properly responded to the demand for self-government put forth in the Congress-League scheme of 1916, and pointed out that the ideal of self-government which the Congress had cherished from its inception and which had seemed to many as a mere phantom have now come within the range of political realisation. Bepin Pal stated that the August announcement, which declared responsible government to be the aim of British rule, theoretically marked the end of the old aim of British policy in India which, through the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, had promised Indians good government rather than responsible self-government.

It was in the August declaration that the words "responsible government" appeared for the first time in any authoritative declaration of British policy. The phrase "responsible government" had acquired a definite meaning in English political theory. The fundamental principle of responsible government was the amenability of the executive to a legislature that was elected by the general body of the people. The German system of government under the Kaiser in which the legislature could not dismiss the executive was not therefore responsible government. Gokhale, in his "last political testament", had

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2. Speech on November 18th, 1917. (Pal, Responsible Government, pp. 105-106). See also The Bengalee, August 30th, 1917: "Montagu's Speech and the Public Attitude".

3. "Responsible government", wrote The Bengalee, three days after the announcement, "means Parliamentary government". See also Tilak, The National Demand, pp. 6-7.
suggested that in any scheme of post-war constitutional reform
the relations between the provincial legislative and executive
councils should be roughly similar to that between the
Reichstag and the Imperial Government in Germany. This testa-
ment which was drawn up early in 1915, long before the August
declaration, did not envisage responsible government in the
technical sense of the term. Gokhale and many other Congress-
men, however, believed that parliamentary government, more or
less, on the English model would eventually have to be intro-
duced into India.

The 1917 Congress welcomed the August declaration and
asked that a Parliamentary statute should immediately be enacted
to give effect to the declaration. It further demanded that
the British parliament should fix an early and definite time-
limit within which full responsible government would be intro-
duced into India.

According to the August declaration the British government
and the government of India were to remain the judges of the
time and measure of each constitutional advance. This
condition implied, as The Hindu put it, a limitation on the

1. Gokhale's Memorandum: (Cd.9178) 1918, No. 3 of Appendix
II, p.102. See also Prithwis Chandra Ray, Our Demand for

3. Ibid.
4. Debates on Indian Affairs: House of Commons, 1917–18,
p.446.
5. The Hindu was one of the leading Indian-owned newspapers
of Madras.
right of Indians for self-determination, and as it was almost inevitable that British rulers and Indian nationalists would differ on the question as to the time and measure of each constitutional advance, it was natural that nationalists, such as Tilak, would claim for themselves the right to decide that question.

During the war years among the world events and movements which, along with profoundly important internal causes, strengthened the faith of Congressmen in the necessity of a rapid constitutional advance in India were the destruction of Tzarian autocracy in Russia, the discussions on the necessity of improving the status of the Dominions in any post-war imperial reconstruction, and the impassioned advocacy by President Wilson of the ideal of national self-determination.

After the destruction of the Tzarian autocracy a pamphlet called "The Lesson from Russia" was published in the Home Rule Series in which its author congratulated the Russian people on its realisation that when the Tzar was a kind of Kaiser Prussianism could not be fought in the battlefield outside Russia until Prussianism had been defeated within Russia, and he asked the educated classes to understand fully and to explain clearly to the Indian masses the inner meaning of the liberation


2. Tilak, The National Demand, pp.9-10. See also Report on Reform Proposals Published by the Bengal Provincial Conference Committee, pp.2-3.
movement in Russia. Indian nationalists attentively listened to Lloyd George when he said that as in the eighteenth century Frenchmen who went to America to fight for American freedom, after living in an atmosphere of freedom in America, came back to France only to fight against the autocratic French government, similarly during the great war the Russians after fighting for the freedom of Serbia, Montenegro and Roumania had to come back to Russia in order to fight against the Tzarist autocracy.

Indian nationalists pointed out that the position of Indians was not very different from that of the Russians because both fought outside their country for a freedom which they did not fully enjoy within their own countries. In April 1918 Tilak said that though India could claim home rule as a matter of right or on the ground of her fitness for it, it was essential that Britain should realise that it was necessary to grant home rule to India as a war-measure, that is, on the ground that Indians could fight wholeheartedly on the side of freedom in Europe only if they knew that the freedom for which they fought outside their country was not denied to them inside their country.

1. The Lesson From Russia (Home Rule Series, No.23), p.1.
2. Extracts from Lloyd George's speech was given in G. A. Natesan's article on "Self-Government for India", in The Indian Review, May 1917, p.335.
3. Ibid.
Towards the end of the war many people in Britain came to realise that the people of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, who had fought on the side of liberty, would not, after the war, be satisfied merely with the readjustment of the map of Europe or with the destruction of German militarism, but that they would insist on a full recognition of their Dominion nationhood and would seek to become equal partners with Britain in a cooperative association of nations. Indian nationalists argued that Indians who had also fought in defence of freedom should be given an equal status in the British empire with the other British Dominions.

During the war the progress of the Irish nationalist movement was closely watched by Indian home rulers. It was known that President Wilson desired a settlement of the Irish question, and it was widely believed in nationalist circles that "the armed support of the United States was delayed until the President could reassure the American people as to the direction of English policy in Ireland". Wilson's sympathetic interest in the solution of the Irish question impressed Indian nationalists profoundly, and G. Subramaniam Iyer addressed a letter to Wilson on June 24th, 1917, stating the case in favour of home rule for India and asking his support for it.

1. See Besant's speech in the Report of the Thirty-Second Indian National Congress, p. 24; The Lesson from Russia, p. 2; and The Bengalee, October 17th, 1916.


4. Speeches and Writings of Dr. Subramaniam Iyer. See Appendix (1).
Wilson said that his desire was to make the world safe for democracy, and to ensure that governments were based on the consent of the governed. He declared that, in future, every political question should be settled on the basis of the free acceptance of the settlement by the people immediately concerned and not upon the basis of the material interest of any outside nation which might desire a different settlement more suited to its own selfish desires. Lloyd George similarly said that the wishes and interests of the people of the German colonies ought to be the primary consideration in settling the character of their future administrations, and added that one of the chief aims of those administrations would be to prevent the exploitation of those colonies by European capitalists and governments. These statements by Allied leaders were frequently quoted by Congressmen. Though these statements were not made with reference to India, they did undoubtedly support the principle of government by the consent of the governed which Indian nationalists professed and preached.

At a time when for various reasons, some of which have been set forth above, the hopes of Congressmen for greater self-government were raised considerably, the "Report on Indian

1. Woodrow Wilson, Why We are at War (New York, 1917) pp. 16, 55.
Constitutional Reforms" was published (July 1918) by Montagu, the Secretary of State, and Chelmsford, the Governor-General. This Report rejected the Congress-League scheme of reform partly on the ground that under it the elected legislature, that would be responsible to the people of India, and the irremovable executive, that would retain its responsibility to the Secretary of State and the British parliament, might, owing to racial and political differences, often come into conflict, and that the scheme did not provide any satisfactory method of resolving such conflicts. Replying to the argument that the device of an irremovable executive and a popular legislature had not proved altogether unsuccessful in the United States of America, the Report pointed that under the constitution of the United States, unlike the Congress-League reform scheme, both the legislature and the executive were ultimately responsible to the people.

It appears from the speeches of Surendranath and of Tilak that Congressmen wanted to make the irremovable executive a virtual agent of the popular legislature. In that case, it

1. Montagu-Chelmsford Report. (Cd. 9109) 1918, paras 167 and 174. Though in a speech on December 12th, 1917 Bepin Pal said that the Congress-League scheme was designed to create deadlock and to make the administration impossible. (Pal, Responsible Government, pp. 93-94), it does not appear that this was the general intention of Congressmen.


3. He said that the elected legislature could create conditions under which the "irremovable" executive, if it supported unpopular policies, would be compelled to resign. (Report of the Thirty-Second Indian National Congress, p. 94).

would perhaps have been better to have made the executive responsible to, and removable by, the popular legislature as in Britain.

Montagu did not think that it was possible to introduce responsible government in the centre, and he knew that Indian aspirations would not be satisfied by the grant of full responsibility only in local matters. The Montagu-Chelmsford Report favoured the introduction of a limited measure of responsible government in provincial matters. It suggested the introduction of "dyarchy" or the division of provincial administration into two parts, "reserved" and "transferred", so that the irremovable executive would continue to retain ultimate responsibility for the administration of "reserved" subjects, while in the matter of "transferred" subjects the Governor was normally to act on the advice of ministers chosen from, and responsible to, the majority in the provincial legislature.

The conclusion that in order gradually to introduce responsible government, it was necessary to devolve specific functions to ministers responsible to elected bodies, was reached.

4. Montagu-Chelmsford Report, (Cd.9109), 1918, paras. 218-219. By the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms law, order, and finance were made "reserved" subjects while education, agriculture, public health, and local government were made "transferred" subjects in the field of provincial government.
by Lionel Curtis and some Indian officials in the course of the
discussions on a paper to be submitted for circulation among
the study groups connected with the "Round Table". Early in
1917, Lionel Curtis, a member of the Round Table group,
publicly explained his plan of introducing partial responsible
government into India.

Towards the end of 1917 the outlines of his plan were
adopted in a Joint Address presented to the government by a
number of Indians and Europeans. The Joint Address affirmed
that real provincial self-government could only flourish in
homogeneous territorial units, and it suggested that the territo-
rial jurisdiction of the provinces should be reconstituted
with reference to history, race, language, religion and other
relevant considerations. The authors of the Joint Address
stated that many of the provinces of India, which were almost as
populous as any great European state, were too big. They
asserted that in the United States because there were not five
of six giant states but forty-eight small states the people of
none of the
no states believed that their state was big enough to form a
separate sovereign state. But if the United States were com-
posed of only five or six giant states then the people, argued
the Joint Address, would have sought to establish sovereign
independence for their big states, as a result of which the

1. Papers Relating to the Application of the Principle of
Dyarchy to the Government of India (With an introduction

2. Idem, p.330-331. See also T.M. Nair, "Political Recon-
struction in India", The Empire Review, November 1918,
p.398.

3. Papers Relating to the Application of the Principle of
United States, instead of remaining what it was, the home of perpetual peace, would have become what Europe was, the theatre of perpetual conflicts. The Joint Address suggested that the formation of smaller and more homogeneous provinces or states was essential for the ultimate development of a real United States of India within the British empire.

The question of the territorial reconstitution of the provinces was a very controversial one and the Montagu-Chelmsford Report did not recommend any such reconstitution. But the Report, more or less, agreed with the Joint Address in suggesting that the field of government should be divided into a responsible and a non-responsible part. Unfortunately, this idea was opposed in a Majority Minute that the five heads of the provinces submitted on January 15th, 1919. The Majority Minute regretted that the Report, in accordance with English constitutional theory, had suggested the introduction of responsible government for which Indians by their history and tradition were totally unfitted.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report had boldly affirmed that for the development of Indian nationhood it was necessary deliberately to disturb "the placid, pathetic, contentment of the masses."

2. Ibid.
5. Montagu-Chelmsford Report (Cd.9109) 1918, para.144. This statement was strongly criticized by Col. C.E. Yate in "India under the Emperor" (The Nineteenth Century and Aft November 1918, p.870), and by E. Bruce Mitford in "Cause and Effect in India" (The Fortnightly Review, July, 1919, p.151.)
R. Craddock, a signatory of the Majority Minute, believed that the peasant lived contentedly under British rule, and that it would be unwise to stir up discontent among the peasants or to replace the rule of British officials by the rule of Indian middle class lawyers. O'Dwyer, another signatory of the Majority Minute, similarly denied that the peasant had any political aspiration, he affirmed that the peasant would not gain by the grant of political concessions, and he maintained that the prominence given to politics and politicians under the operation of the new reforms would lower the standard of administration. The disturbance of the contentment of the people which had no place, asserted O'Dwyer, in the old ideal of British policy in India, which was stated in the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, thus: "It is our earnest desire to administer its government for the benefit of all our subjects resident therein. In their prosperity will be our strength; in their contentment our security, .....". It is necessary to point out that though Victoria desired the contentment of her subjects she said nothing about their "placid, pathetic contentment".

Craddock wrote that the Report was based on the assumption that "a tiny novitiate of electors out of the vast masses of

2. Michael O'Dwyer, India as I Knew It, pp. 369-70, 373.
4. Royal and Other Proclamations, Announcements etc., to the Princes and Peoples of India, p.5.
illiterate India, bristling with its racial feuds; its religious antagonisms, its castes, its social exclusions, its babel of tongues, its fierce communal controversies, would start functioning in response to a system absolutely alien to them in the same way that the experienced electors of educated England today respond to a system which the people have gradually developed for themselves in the course of many centuries. He lamented that Montagu, whom he accused of having failed to realise the differences between Indian and English political environment, had placed more reliance on the constitutional theories formulated largely on the basis of analogies from the Dominions by the politicians of the Round Table group than on the practical advice tendered by the heads of the provinces.

George M. Chesney in "India under Experiment" similarly attacked Montagu's reform scheme on the ground that the Western ideal of democratic self-government was altogether unsuited to Indian conditions. He maintained that the operation of representative institutions in the socially backward Eastern countries, such as China, Persia and Turkey, had proved completely unsuccessful, and remarked that if the British public believe that the Indian people were oppressed because there did not exist in India an English form of democratic self-government then one could only conclude that a democracy was not capable of ruling a dependency. He believed that the nationalists in

3. Chesney, India under Experiment, p. 173.
India who had borrowed Western democratic political ideas were not really democrats. They were an eclectic aristocratic party which demanded home rule for Indians but wanted the British to maintain law and order so that they could carry on a peaceful system of government under which the masses would be taxed "for the benefit of the middle class, free education, an octopus bureaucracy, interminable litigation and the like". After making these statements about Indian nationalists, most of which were contrary to known facts, Chesney proceeded to advise his countrymen to "dismiss for once confused politico-moral ideas as to natural rights, self-determination and what not", and to look at the Indian problem from the point of view of their national economic interest, and thereby to realise that the establishment of a free government in India, which had broken all political connection with Britain, would be highly injurious to all British investors, producers, shippers, merchants and officials who had connections with India, and that it would really mean the beginning of a harmful revolution in the material condition of the British people.

It will be interesting to consider the views of Curzon, who had once been the most powerful champion of the idea of "good government" as distinguished from self-government, on the application in India of what Chesney called the "confused politico-moral ideas as to natural rights, self-determination and what not". In June 1917, in a note written for the War

Cabinet Curzon said that British statesmen were thinking of making concessions to India because Allied leaders had talked freely about the ideals of democracy and national self-government, and because Britain was expected to apply those ideals in the management of her "own domestic household". Curzon was an important member of the British Cabinet which approved and issued the announcement of August 20th, 1917. Indeed it was Curzon himself who had inserted the words "responsible government" in that announcement. But it appears that Curzon did not realise the full significance of those words, because when Montagu and Chelmsford drew up a scheme for realising a measure of responsible government in India he expressed his disapproval of the scheme on the grounds that the scheme sought to introduce parliamentary government which Morley had repudiated in 1909 and that it sought to establish the kind of provincial autonomy which Crewe had disavowed in 1912. Curzon ultimately supported, though not very enthusiastically, the Government of India Bill of 1919, which was drawn largely on the basis of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. On 12th December, 1919, Curzon asserted that the new system of government that would be introduced under the reforms would lower the standard of administration, but he remarked that in an age in which the ideal of national self-determination was extremely popular it was natural that Indians should prefer self-government to good government.

The European community in India generally believed that the grant of home rule would transfer the control over the administration from the hands of an efficient bureaucracy to that of an inefficient oligarchy, and they asserted that the large majority of the Indian people did not want home rule.

It cannot be said that as a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms some power was transferred from the hands of an efficient bureaucracy to that of an inefficient oligarchy, for dyarchy, as Sir Reginald Coupland correctly estimates, was not a failure in administrative or legislative achievement in the "transferred" field. The opposition to the transfer of some power in the hands of Indians was based not only on the assumption that the Western-educated Indians were not efficient but also on the supposition that they did not represent the interests of the Indian masses. But it does not appear that this supposition was correct. Abdur Rahim, one of the members of the Royal Commission on the Public Services of India appointed in 1912, correctly argued: "As for the representation of .... (the) interests (of the masses), if the claim be that they are better represented by European officials or non-officials, it is difficult to conceive how such a reckless

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1. See Address of the Anglo-Indian Association, (Cd.9178) 1918, p.24; Address of the European Association, (Cd.9178 1918, p.35; and Address of the Calcutta Trades' Association (Cd.9178), 1918, p.23.

2. See The European Association's Final Statement on the Reform Scheme, (Cmd.123) 1919, p.156; Address of the Domiciled European and Anglo-Indian Federation, (Cd.9178) 1918, p.20, and the article "The Political Situation In India" communicated by the Indo-British Association to The Empire Review, May, 1918, p.151.


4. Its Report was ready in 1915 but was not published until 1917.
Claim has come to be urged. The inability of English officials
to master the spoken languages of India and their different
religions, habits of life and modes of thought so completely
divide them from the general Indian population that only an
extremely limited few possessed with extraordinary powers of
intuitional insight has ever been able to surmount the barriers
..... With the educated Indians, on the other hand, this
knowledge (of Indian life and culture) is instinctive ......”.

Many educated Indians sought to develop a political con-
sciousness among the large majority of their uneducated country-
ment. Montagu records that in a meeting on January 24th, 1918
the heads of the local governments expressed to him their grave
concern about the spread of political agitation in the villages.
Remembering the fact that English-educated Indians were often
told that India could not have self-government because the
masses did not want it, Montagu could not agree that the spread
of political agitation in the villages was dangerous or that it
was wrong for the English-educated nationalists to teach
politics to Indian villagers. He clearly saw that if the
point of view of the heads of the local governments were right
then the "announcement of August 20th was wrong; the Morley-
Minto reform scheme was wrong; and India ought not to have any
political institutions!"

On June 5th 1919, Montagu declared in the House of Commons
that it would be natural for the Indian civil servants to

1. Report of the Royal Commission on Public Services in India,
3. Ibid.
dislike any alteration of the system under which they had grown up. He rightly remarked that in India, as in Britain, political reforms could not originate with the civil servants. Because quite a large number of bureaucrats were opposed to the Montagu-Chelmsford reform scheme, The Hindu wrote that if the reforms succeeded they would succeed not because of, but in spite of, the bureaucrats.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report did not satisfy most Congressmen. A small minority of old Congressmen, however, welcomed in a separate Moderates' Conference on November 1st, 1918 the broad outlines of the reforms suggested in the Report. Surendranath Banerjea, the president of the Conference, asserted that he believed that the angle of vision of the British rulers had undergone a profound change so that it was more than ever futile to oppose the government simply for the sake of opposition. True, the Montagu-Chelmsford reform scheme granted only a limited measure of responsible government, but he was confident that in the course of time the government would become more and more responsible. He was convinced that what was important in the scheme was not the paper-guarantees it

2. Idem. p.215. Lord Meston said, "As a body, they (that is, the civil servants) are unhappy about the new constitution believing that it goes too far and too fast"; Meston, India at the Crossways, p.50. (Meston had served as the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces.)
5. Presidential Address of Surendranath Banerjea: All-India Moderates' Conference, November 1st, 1918, p.3.
gave but the spirit that imbued it, because in Britain without almost any paper-guarantee the freedom of the British people had grown continuously at an increasing rate.

Progress on the path of reforms, that was suggested by Montagu and Chelmsford, could only be gradual, but then Banerjea argued that the early pioneers of the Congress believed that only through a period of laborious apprenticeship could Indians be trained to work a form of responsible government. He said that a separate Moderates' Conference had to be convened because the leaders of the Congress did not recognise that the angle of vision of the British rulers had changed. He was, in fact, afraid that the Congress might adopt a revolutionary programme. Banerjea, who was a reverent student of Burke, had a great and excessive horror of revolutions. "We are the friends", he told the Moderates' Conference, "of evolution and the enemies of revolution .... We have witnessed the nameless horrors of revolutions in France, in Russia .... how too often they have been followed by reaction and repression and the enthronement of despotic authority. The execution of Charles I was followed by the autocracy of the Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell. The French Revolution was the precursor of the military despotism of Napoleon Bonaparte'. Banerjea, however, did not forget to add that "reforms indefinitely postponed or

1. Idem. pp. 9, 18.
3. Idem. p.3.
6. Presidential Address of Surendranath Banerjea: All India Moderates' Conference, p.2.
inequately in their scope .... prepare the ground for revolu-
tion".

The special Congress at Bombay in 1918 considered the reforms suggested in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report to be inadequate. Expressing disagreement with the conclusion of the Report that no measure of responsible government could immediately be introduced in the centre, it asked that in the centre apart from Foreign Affairs (excepting relations with the Colonies and the Dominions), Army, Navy, and relations with Indian Ruling Princes, which should be "reserved", all other subjects should be made "transferred" subjects; and in the provinces, apart for the first six years, of the departments of Law, Police and Justice (prisons excepted), which were to be "reserved", all other departments were to be "transferred".

The Congress demanded from the government a statutory guarantee that full responsible government would be established in British India within a period not exceeding 15 years.

When the Congress again met in December 1918 the war had ended and the victory of the Allies had been complete. This time one of the arguments by which the Congress supported demand for self-government was that India was entitled the benefit by the principle of national self-determination which the Allied statesmen had theoretically accepted. The Congress

1. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. p.261.
5. Ibid. p.262.
claimed that, like the self-governing British Dominions, India should be represented in any conference that may be held to decide the terms of peace and reconstruction by the elected representatives of the people, and it selected Tilak and two other leaders to represent India in such conferences. After he could not secure the necessary passport to go to the Peace Conference, Tilak wrote to Clemenceau, President of the Peace Conference, stating the case for Indian self-government, and arguing that a self-governing India, with her vast population and enormous resources, could "be a powerful steward of the League of Nations in the East for maintaining the peace of the world, and the stability of the British Empire against all aggressors and disturbers of peace, whether in Asia or elsewhere. In this connection it is interesting to note that in a memorandum submitted to the Foreign Relations Committee of the U.S.A. on August 29th, 1919 by Malone, a Senator of the United States, it was urged "that the Covenant of the League of Nations be so amended as to make it obligatory upon all its signatories to immediately recognise the right of India, and other dependencies of the British Empire like Ireland and Egypt to determine their own form of government".

Though the Congress was not fully satisfied with the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, in December 1919 it asked the people

so to work the reforms as to secure an early establishment of full responsible government and it thanked Montagu for his work in connection with the reforms. But by the time that the next Congress met at Calcutta in September 1920 the spirit of Congressmen had undergone a profound change as a result of the agitation over the Rowlatt Act, the Khilafat question and the tragedy of Amritsar. The Calcutta Congress passed a resolution approving the adoption of a policy of progressive non-violent non-cooperation with the government for the purpose of obtaining redress for the Punjab wrongs and the Khilafat grievances and for the ultimate attainment of Swaraj.

In the next Congress at Nagpur in December 1920 the old constitution, which asserted that the Congress should seek to realise its goal of self-government within the British empire by all constitutional means, was changed in order to enable Congressmen to work for "the attainment of Swaraj by all legitimate and peaceful means". M. A. Jinnah, who did not want India to sever the British connection, opposed this change of the constitution because he believed that the adoption of the ideal of Swaraj meant a declaration of complete independence.

2. See M.K. Gandhi's final reply to the debate on the resolution on non-cooperation in The Hindu, September 16th, 1920.
4. See p.133. above.
5. Report of the Thirty-Fifth Indian National Congress, p.46.
But the Nagpur Congress did not specifically make any such declaration. M. K. Gandhi, who at that time dominated the Congress, wanted "Swaraj within the Empire if possible, and without if necessary". He said that he would sever the British connection if it proved to be inconsistent with national self-respect and not otherwise.

The policy of progressive non-violent non-cooperation was considered by Congressmen to be a legitimate and peaceful method by which Swaraj might ultimately be secured. While sanctioning the policy of non-cooperation with the government the Calcutta Congress of 1920 approved of the boycott of the law-courts, the government educational institutions, and the elections to the reformed councils. In the Nagpur Congress of 1920 the resolution on non-cooperation was reaffirmed.

In 1920 the Congress definitely broke with the policy of the "moderates" who had a great faith in the British sense of justice and who pursued only strictly constitutional and gradualist methods. The Congress was founded in 1885 by men of moderate views, who were intensely loyal to the British crown and the British empire and who were only mildly critical of certain features of the British administration of India. By 1905 there had developed a new school of "extremists" whose

criticisms of the system of government that prevailed in India were far reaching and serious and who advocated the adoption of the Irish Sinn Fein policy of boycotting the government. The policy of non-cooperation with the government was not however officially approved by the Congress till 1920 from which date the Congress increasingly became a revolutionary body.
CHAPTER VIII

CULTURAL NATIONALISM AND WESTERN IDEAS.

So far we have discussed the influence of Western political ideas on Indian political thought. But apart from the field of politics, narrowly defined, Indian thinkers were influenced by Western ideas. In this and in the following two chapters we shall show that, in spite of all their cultural nationalism, many Indian thinkers were liberal enough to accept some of the cultural, social and economic ideas of the modern West.

THE BRAHMO SAMAJ.

The Brahmo Samaj, founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) was the first important religious reform movement that arose, to a great extent, owing to contact with modern Western thought. Long before he had any knowledge of English Ram Mohan, mainly as a result of his studies in Patna, a lively centre of Islamic thought, had developed certain ideas about religious reform. If he had never come into contact with Western thought he might have become a religious reformer in the manner of Nanak or Kabir. In 1796 he began learning English. He also studied the Upanishads and the Vedanta Sutras in Sanskrit and the Old and New Testament in the original Hebrew and Greek. He published some translations of the Upanishads and a book called "The Precepts of Jesus, the Guide to Peace and Happiness". He

rejected the doctrine of the divinity of Jesus but was much impressed by his ethical teachings. He had many Christian missionary friends but he resisted the attempts of some of them to convert him to Christianity.

Like the Christian missionaries, Ram Mohan was against polytheism and idolatry. He explained that popular polytheism and idolatry were completely antagonistic to the monotheistic spirit of the Upanishads. The Raja wanted to preserve Hinduism by reforming it. His catholic mind however did not reject the new cultural values of the West. He welcomed the introduction of Western education, and asked the government of India to promote not the old Sanskrit system of learning but "a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction, embracing mathematics, natural philosophy, chemistry, anatomy, (and) .... other useful sciences".

As a reformer the Raja took a prominent part in the cooperation with the British rulers for forbidding this cruel practice. The Raja narrates that originally he had only hatred for the English but later, after considerable social intercourse with them, he came to the conclusion that English rule, though

2. F. Max Muller, Biographical Essays, p.24.
5. See the anti-suttee petition to the House of Commons. (Idem. pp.487-8).
foreign, would be favourable to the progress of Indians because, among other things, it would facilitate the growth of liberal religious thought and the development of social reform movements. Though the Raja welcomed British rule he fought like a lion to increase the political liberties of Indians and to liberalize British rule.

As the Raja was the first great religious, social, educational and political reformer of British India Rabindranath Tagore has rightly described him as the "inaugurator of the Modern Age in India".

Devendranath Tagore (1817-1905), who succeeded the Raja as the leader of the Brahma Samaj, introduced a high note of piety and spirituality in the life of the Samaj. Devendranath and his friend Akshay Kumar Datta, editor of the Tatwabodhini Patrika, did much to check the conversion of Hindus to Christianity. In the course of the controversies with Christian missionaries the Tatwabodhini Patrika had proclaimed the Vedas as the basis of the faith of the Brahma Samaj "as a set-off against the Bible of the Christians". But later doubts having arisen about the doctrine of the infallibility of the Vedas

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2. See pp.57-9 above.


Devendranath repudiated this doctrine, and asserted the right of every individual to know by direct intuition all the highest religious truths. Devendranath's repudiation of supernatural scriptural authorities naturally appealed to the minds of those Hindus who, through their English education, had been touched by the rationalistic thought of nineteenth century Europe.

Keshub Chandra Sen (1838-1884) was the next important leader of the Brahma Samaj. Unlike Devendranath, Keshub was considerably influenced by Christianity. In a lecture in 1861 he enthusiastically claimed Jesus as an Asiatic and spoke very feelingly about his "extraordinary greatness and supernatural moral heroism". In a letter to Max Muller on 9th July 1881 Keshub, however, said that he had always disclaimed the Christian name and refused to identify himself with the Christian Church because he could not accept the popular doctrines about the divinity of Christ. Despite all his admiration of Christianity Keshub remained a Hindu, and from the year 1867 he increasingly began to adopt devotional practices which were distinctively Hindu. Towards the close of his life he was seeking to create an advanced type of

4. Keshub Chandra Sen's Lectures in India, pp.33-34.
6. F. Max Muller, Biographical Essays, p.126.
Hinduism under the name of New Dispensation which would harmonise all scriptures and prophets and dispensations so that anyone who accepted the New Dispensation would truly be able to speak thus: "The Lord Jesus is my will, Socrates my head, Chaitanya my heart, the Hindu Rishi my soul, and the philanthropic Howard my right hand". Apart from preaching an eclectic faith, Keshub was passionately interested in social reform, such as elevating the status of women and in removing some of the inequalities of caste.

THE ARYA SAMAJ

The Arya Samaj, founded in 1875 by Swami Dayananda Saraswati, was more conservative and aggressive than the Brahma Samaj. Dayananda accused the Brahmos of having departed too much from ancient tradition and of imitating the Christians. Lajpat Rai, a prominent Arya Samajist, lamented that Keshub's teaching left only a thin partition between Brahmaism and orthodox Christianity. Lala Munshi Rama, the leader of the Gurukula section of the Arya Samaj, argued that one of the reasons why the Brahmos were not very successful in checking the spread of Christianity in India was that the Brahmos themselves were much influenced by ideas that were foreign and not indigenous.

1. See Keshub's letter of May 16th, 1881 to Max Muller. (F. Max Muller, Biographical Essays, p.117).
2. Lecture on January 22nd, 1881 (Keshub Chandra Sen's Lectures in India, p.491).
Dayananda sought to found a religious reform movement on national and indigenous lines. He had no English education, and his ideas were derived from Indian and not Western sources. He looked forward to the day when the religion of the Vedas would become the religion of the whole human race. He attacked both the proselytizing religions of Islam and Christianity and sought to make Hinduism a proselytizing religion. His insistence on the superiority of the Vedic religion appealed to those Hindus who were becoming resentful of the intellectual slavery to the West in which they found themselves. Lala Hansraj, who was the guiding spirit of the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College, pointed out that under British rule Indians were reminded of their inferiority in every sphere of life: the establishment of the railway, the telegraph and the factory demonstrated the superiority of Englishmen in the matter of applying science for increasing the comforts of life, the complex and unified administrative structure of British India displayed Englishmen's great power of organisation, and the perseverance, courage and patriotism of Englishmen showed the excellence of their character. Hansraj wrote: "What wonder is then that in (the) company (of Englishmen) we feel ourselves conquered and humiliated? Just at this moment of weakness, the Missionary comes to..."
us and whispers that the superiority of the European over the Indian is the gift of the Son of God, whom he has acknowledged as his King and Saviour, and that our countrymen can really become great if they come under His banner". At a time when many Indians felt themselves inferior to Englishmen in every respect Dayananda asserted that at least in matters of religion and in the domain of philosophy the best modern European thought did not come up to the level of the best ancient Hindu thought, and he warned the Hindus, that inhabiting the land of the Vedas, they had no right to sink into mere imitators of European modes of thought. It appears that he honestly but mistakenly believed that the people of Egypt, Greece and the continent of Europe "were without a trace of learning before the spread of knowledge from India".

Dayananda maintained that neither the Koran nor the Bible but only the Vedas contained the highest religious truths. He persuaded himself to believe that the most recent inventions of modern science, such as steam-engines and railways, were known, at least in their germs to the poets of the Vedas. Even the liberal-minded Lajpat Rai agreed with Dayananda in believing that the fundamental truths on which modern European science were based were known to the ancient Hindus. But he never

1. Idem. p.35.
5. F. Max Muller, Biographical Essays, p.170; cf. Sri Aurobindo, Bankim - Tilak - Dayananda, p.67.
ceased to draw attention to the fact that the actual achievements of modern Europeans in the realm of physical science were far greater than those of the ancient Hindus, and that Indians would profit much by learning modern European science.

Dayananda was a courageous social reformer. He said that the hereditary caste system based on birth and not merit, and the outrage of untouchability, had no sanction in the **Vedas**. He attacked polytheism and idolatry as being inconsistent with the teachings of the **Vedas**. He also opposed child-marriage and supported widow-remarriage and female education. Because Dayananda argued that he wanted these reforms in order to revive the golden age of the **Vedas** even orthodox Hindus could accept his teachings without any fear that by so doing they would denationalize or westernize themselves.

Dayananda's teaching fostered patriotism, but it does not appear that he was against British rule. He believed that compared to the Indians of his time the English had superior governing capacity and higher political ideals. He explained that Indians were subjected to foreign rule because of the defects of Indian social life. He, however, explicitly stated that indigenous native rule was ideally the best form of rule.

and it was implicit in all his teachings that if Indians could revive the purity of the Vedic times they would again be fitted for self-rule.

Valentine Chirol, who visited India in 1907-10 on behalf of The Times to investigate the causes of unrest, believed that the Arya Samaj was intimately associated with a political movement directed against British rule. In reply to the charges of Chirol and of others, Munshi Rama, and Rama Deva, the editor of The Vedic Magazine, which was the accredited English organ of the Gurnkula branch of the Arya Samaj, stated that the Arya Samaj was not working for the overthrow of British rule. On the contrary, it believed that political agitation was futile because a nation which considered millions of human beings as untouchables had no business to talk of liberty and democracy. The Vedic Magazine argued that Indians were subjected to foreign rule because of their moral weaknesses and that without necessary religious and social reforms political domination in India was bound to continue, and that the expulsion of the English could only result in a change of masters for Indians. It advised Indians to work for religious and social reform.

Lala Munshi Rama wrote that the work of reform could not be carried better under the protection of any government than that of the British. "An Arya", he said, "cannot prefer the

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. p.129.
5. Ibid. p.136.
domination of idol-worshipping Hindus or cow-slaughtering Moslems to the enlightened and tolerant rule of England".

Inspite of all that Munshi Rama and Rama Deva said, fortunately, individual Arya Samajists, such as Lajpat Rai, actively participated in political agitation. Munshi Rama and Rama Deva were, however, correct in stating that the Arya Samaj, as a whole, was not a political body and was not anti-British. The Annie Samaj, as Besant put it, was not anti-British but pro-Indian. It stimulated the pride of Indians in their own tradition and culture. By strengthening the spirit of cultural nationalism it was bound, however, ultimately to strengthen the spirit of political nationalism.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Like the Arya Samaj, the Theosophical Society founded by Madame Blavatsky, a Russian, and Colonel Olcott, an American, stimulated the spirit of cultural nationalism among Indians.

Both the founders of the Theosophical Society repudiated Christianity and were converted to Buddhism. Olcott spoke

4. In a letter to Dayananda on 18th February 1878 Olcott said that the Theosophists "have openly proclaimed themselves enemies of the Christian religion". (B.C. Singh, The Life and Teachings of Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Part II, p.479
5. Blavatsky told Annie Besant that she joined Buddhism because she wanted to show that in her opinion "a religion of the East was rather better than the religion of the West". (Besant, The Work of the Theosophical Society in India, p.10.)
about the majesty and sufficiency of Eastern scriptures and appealed to the sentiment of patriotic loyalty of Indians to cherish and uphold the religion of their forefathers. In a speech at Madras in 1885 Olcott declared that he would not deny that English ways, ideas and literature might be more suited to the English people than Oriental ones, but he maintained that as English boys were brought up in the English way of life so Indian boys should be brought up in the Indian and not in the Western way of life. He declared that in the schools and colleges Indian students were not educated with a proper knowledge of the religion of their ancestors and of the history of their forefathers. He pleaded for a revival of Sanskrit learning and of the ancient religion, philosophy, drama, music and literature of the Hindus. In the face of the criticism of Christian missionaries he asserted that the religious and moral principles inculcated by Hinduism were not inferior to those of any other religion.

The most important populariser of Theosophy in India was Mrs. Annie Besant. Besant had an interesting past. In Britain she had been a freethinker along with Charles Bradlaugh and a Fabian Socialist along with Bernard Shaw. Later she was converted to Theosophy by Madame Blavatsky. Besant came to

1. A. Besant, India: A Nation: A Plea for Indian Self-Government, p. 84; and Henry Steele Olcott, Old Diary Leaves, Second Series, p. 255.
3. Idem, p. 11.
5. Idem, pp. 3-6.
India in 1893. She said that though she was born under Western skies her true motherland was India; she claimed that she was a Hindu in her former birth and declared that she remained a Hindu at heart. She sought to defend Hinduism against the attacks of Christian missionaries and against the criticism of those English-educated Hindus who after studying Huxley, Mill and Spencer had turned atheists and sceptics. She maintained that the deep interest that Indians took in matters of religion showed that Indians inspite of all their degradation yet yearned after the things not of the body, but of the spirit. She was confident that India would take her place in the world "as evolver of the inner man, as teacher of the possibilities of the human soul".

Theosophists popularized the study of Oriental classics, especially the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita, in Europe and America. They also strengthened the pride of many Hindus in their ancient thought and civilisation which as J. N. Farquhar, the Christian missionary, states had for several decades been "most unjustly depreciated and unmercifully condemned by missionaries, by Europeans in general and even by some Hindus."

It must however be pointed out that Theosophists had not worked

4. Ibid.
5. J. N. Farquhar, Modern Religious Movements in India, p.288
6. Ibid.
as passionately as the Brahmos and the Aryas in order to reform some of the evil customs of Hindu society.

**RAMAKRISHNA**

Another important religious movement that emerged in India in the nineteenth century was the Ramakrishna mission movement inspired by Ramakrishna (1833-86), a great Hindu saint in direct line to such saints as Chandidas and Chaitanya. In the course of his spiritual experiments Ramakrishna had tried to understand and practise not only the religious tenets of Hinduism but also those of Islam and Christianity. He came to the conclusion that Krishna, Allah and Jesus were but different names of the same God, and that the practice of all religions would lead to the same goal.

To Ramakrishna God was both personal and impersonal. As a result of his own spiritual experiences he came to believe that one of the ways in which God could be realized was by worshipping Him in the human form, that is, by following some of the traditional methods of Hinduism which Christian missionaries had characterized as idolatrous and superstitious.

Ramakrishna was a simple village saint. Pratap Chandra Mazumdar wrote: "What is in common between him and me? I, an Europeanized, civilised, self-centred, so-called educated reasoner, and he, a poor, illiterate, unpolished, half-idolatrous

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2. Ibid.

friendless Hindu devotee? Why should I sit long hours to attend him, I who have listened to Disraeli and Fawcett, Stanley and Max Muller, and a whole host of European scholars and divines? I who am an ardent disciple and follower of Christ, a friend and admirer of liberal-minded Christian missionaries and preachers, a devoted adherent and worker of the rationalistic Brahmo Samaj - why should I be spellbound to hear him? And it is not I only, but dozens like me who do the same". Those educated Hindus who had accepted the rationalistic ideas of the West with their heads but could not harmonize them with their traditional beliefs were instinctively attracted to this simple village saint who reaffirmed the truths of Hinduism in their highest and purest form.

The educated Hindus who came in contact with the humanitarian ideals of the modern West, were, however, seeking for a religion that promised not merely personal salvation but primarily emphasized the obligation of the individual to the society and glorified the ideal of social service. So when Kris to Das Pal, a fine representative of the English-educated class, came to see Ramakrishna he said, "Sir, this cant of renunciation has almost ruined the country. It is for this reason Indians are a subject nation today. Doing good to others ......... improving the material conditions of the country - these should be our duty now. The cry of religion

and renunciation would, on the contrary, only weaken us".
Ramakrishna replied: "You man of poor understanding! ... You dare to slight in these terms renunciation and piety, which our scriptures describe as the greatest of all virtues! After reading two pages of English you think you have come to know the world! ... How dare you talk of helping the world? ... God alone looks after the world. Let a man first realize Him. Let (him) ... be endowed with His power; then, and then alone, may he think of doing good to others. A man should first be purged of all egotism. Then alone will the Blissful Mother ask him to work for the world". Ramakrishna always used to say that the purpose of life could not be doing good to others by building hospitals and establishing schools, for hospitals and schools were all non-eternal things whereas God alone was real and eternal; once, however, God was realized, by His will, many hospitals and schools could be built.

VIVEKANANDA

Ramakrishna's famous disciple and interpreter, Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), placed a new emphasis on the ideal of social service. Vivekananda was greatly impressed by what he saw of the work of various organisations of the West which engaged in social service activities, and he always advised his

1. Ramakrishna: Prophet of New India (Abridged from "The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna, and translated into English by Swami Nikhilananda), p. 43.
2. Ibid.
disciples not to seek merely their personal salvation but to engage in socially beneficial activities. In the beginning Vivekananda encountered some opposition from his disciples on in conception and that an Indian sanyasi (religious ascetic)estern in conception and that an Indian sanyasi (religious ascetic) should seek only his personal salvation. Vivekananda rightly declared that what was most urgently needed in India was not religion but food for the common people, and he boldly asserted that a truly religious man must be prepared to sacrifice even his personal salvation in order to serve the common people among whom God Himself resided.

Vivekananda was a great cultural nationalist, but yet he was convinced that it was necessary for Indians to learn what was best in the culture of the West. He used to say that one important cause of the degeneration of the Hindus was that believing that they could do without the world, they refused to travel to foreign countries. He asked the Hindus not to observe those harmful social laws which prohibited them from crossing the seas or going to foreign lands, and he himself extensively travelled in Europe and in America.

5. Speeches and Writings of Swami Vivekananda, p. 604.
6. Comparing the attitudes of Indians and Europeans Pramatha Chaudhuri satirically wrote: "We lose our caste if we cross the oceans, and you lose yours if you do not". (Pramatha Chaudhuri, Birbalers Halkhata, p. 18).
As a result of his travels Vivekananda came to the settled conclusion that while Western civilization had sought to preserve certain material values, Indian civilization had primarily attempted to preserve certain spiritual values. The dominant desire of the Indians in the past, he wrote, had been to realize moksha and the dominant desire of the Western peoples had been to practise dharma. The pursuit of dharma made men rajashic or active and set them in constant search of happiness. On the other hand, the person who sought to attain moksha could have no desire to live a life of practical activity devoted to the search of earthly enjoyment, for he knew that earthly happiness could not be permanent and abiding and that the soul of man could experience eternal bliss only after it had been liberated from the bondage of the mortal body and of physical nature. Vivekananda said that though moksha was a higher aim than dharma a person could attain moksha only after he has practised his dharma, that is, one could renounce the world only after one had first enjoyed it.

In modern India there were some people who said that they were spiritual and that, therefore, they did not desire worldly success. But most of these people, Vivekananda rightly pointed out were not really spiritual: they were merely tamashic or lazy and inactive. They lacked the satvic or spiritual qualities of an ideal Indian saint as well as the

rajashtic or active qualities of an ordinary European.

Vivekananda thought that it would be futile for the tamashic modern Indians to aspire too high and to attempt to develop in India immediately a sattvic people. At first Indians should rather attempt to develop the rajashtic qualities which the Europeans had in abundance. They should try to be active and independent, self-reliant and progressive, like the Europeans.

Vivekananda asked his countrymen to learn the methods of modern science and the liberals ideals of social organisation from the Western peoples. He clearly saw that though Indians enjoyed very great freedom in matters of religion, because they enjoyed very little freedom in social matters they had developed a cramped and crystallized society. The English, he believed, were the instrument sent by the Lord to break the crystallized society of India, and he considered it one of the benefits of British rule that the days when the higher castes could claim exclusive privileges had gone for ever.

Though Vivekananda freely admitted that in matters of science and technology Indians could learn much from the West, in matters of religion Indians, he claimed, could teach much to the West. "When the Oriental", he said, "wants to learn about machine-making, he could sit at the feet of the Occidental and

1. Ibid.
4. Speeches and Writings of Swami Vivekananda, p.194.
learn from him. And when the Occidental wants to learn about spirit, about God, about the soul, about the meaning and mystery of this universe, he must sit at the feet of Orientals to learn”.

The heart of India, said Vivekananda, was in religion. He asserted that the fundamental interest of Englishmen was in economics, of Frenchmen in politics, and of Indians in religion. The English resisted their kings when the kings wanted to extort money from them, the French rebelled against their kings who denied them political freedom, and Indians opposed their kings when the kings attacked the religion of the people. The empire of Aurangzib was destroyed because he attacked the religion of the Hindus, but the empire of the English in India was strong, wrote Vivekananda, because they did not touch the religion of the people. As the peoples in the West were interested in politics an European could say whether he was a Conservative or a Radical, an American could say whether he was a Republican or a Democrat, but the Indian peasant, who was interested in religion, had no knowledge of politics. But though ignorant of politics the Indian peasant was, said Vivekananda, more well-informed on religious matters than an average European or American. Vivekananda was convinced that

1. Vivekananda, My Master, p.6. For similar views see Dwijendranath Tagore, Nana Chinta, p.223.
2. Vivekananda, From Colombo to Almora: Lectures, p.8; See also A.K. Coomaraswamy, The Dance of Siva, pp.3-3.
Indians were destined by their history to be a religious nation so that it would be futile for them to attempt to imitate the West in order to make politics and not religion the centre of their national life.

Perhaps Vivekananda did not fully realize that however religiously-minded his countrymen might have been in the past, in future they, and particularly the English-educated section of them, would take an increasing interest in politics, would oppose the continuance of British rule in India even if that rule, unlike the rule of Aurangzeb, did not interfere with the religious life of the people, and would adopt the political maxim of Englishmen that no people should be taxed without the consent of its representatives.

The teachings of Vivekananda himself, who was a great cultural nationalist, stimulated the spirit of political nationalism and it causes no surprise that though Vivekananda vehemently denied that he was a political agitator or that he wanted to preach politics, Aurobindo Ghose, who was considerably influenced by the teachings of Vivekananda, actively participated in political work in the first decade of the twentieth century.

Vivekananda believed that no enduring solution of the problems of men could be attained without a religious or spiritual transformation of the character of men. He said that though the Western peoples had shown great proficiency in industrial and commercial activities they yet failed to create

2. See letter dated September 27th, 1894 (Epistles of Swami Vivekananda, Second Series, p.20.)
happy and harmonious societies. He maintained that so long as men remained fundamentally egoistic and desired wealth and power above all other things, the material interests of men were bound to conflict, and that men could create happy and harmonious societies only if they realized the great Vedantic truth of the unity of all individual selves because of their identity with God.

Of course, a Westerner could rightly argue that a religion of love was preached not only in the Vedanta but also in the Christian Bible. However, Vivekananda was convinced that there were many people in the West whose spiritual doubts were not resolved by the study of Western religions and that they were eagerly waiting to receive the truths of the Vedanta.

In the nineteenth century Schopenhauer, the German philosopher, after studying a Latin translation made by a Frenchman of a not very clear Persian translation of the Vedas, declared that the Vedas were "the fruit of the highest human knowledge and wisdom", and claimed that the Upanishads were the greatest discovery of the century. "In India", he predicted, "our religions will never take root .... On the contrary Indian philosophy ..... will produce a fundamental change in our knowledge and thought".

2. Ibid.
5. Idem, pp.460-61. See also Annie Besant, The Value of the Upanishads to Young India, pp.3-4.
The interest shown in Indian philosophy and religion by Schopenhauer, Deussen, Max Muller and others encouraged Vivekananda to believe that the discovery by the West of Indian religious literature would produce in Europe a revolution of thought, at least, as far-reaching and profound as that which was produced by the discovery of Greek literature. "Up, India! he said, "and conquer the world with your spirituality". The Indian emperor Asoka sought to conquer men not by armies but by religion and spirituality. The mission of modern India, as Vivekananda envisaged it, was the same as the ancient mission of Asoka. In the time of Asoka the lack of the means of communication and of transport effectively prevented the wide diffusion of Indian spiritual ideas throughout the world. But modern Western nations had revolutionized the means of transport and of communication and had made possible the effective diffusion of Indian spiritual ideas throughout the world. Vivekananda was grateful to Western nations for creating the material media which had made possible the spiritual conquest of the world by Indian thought.

Sir Francis Younghusband, in a speech in 1905, approvingly quoted Vivekananda's remarks that the mission of the Hindus was not to seek political greatness or military power but to spread


2. Speeches and Writings of Swami Vivekananda, p.606.


4. Famous British soldier, explorer and author.
spiritual enlightenment throughout the world. He declared that the primary function of Englishmen in India should be not so much to train Indians for political life as to provide them, by maintaining peace and order in the country, with the best opportunity of developing along those spiritual lines for which they were most fitted.

The desire to attain spiritual greatness is an ambition which any nation can legitimately entertain, but statements of Vivekananda such as: "Let foreigners come and flood the land with their armies, never mind. Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality!" if seriously meant, cannot by any means be accepted. Men should seek such military strength as that would enable them to prevent foreign armies from flooding their national territories, and they should seek sufficient political capacity so that they would be able to dispense with the rule of any foreign imperial power. It would have been strange indeed if India sought to conquer the West spiritually and were yet content to remain in the political field a subject and a dependency of a Western power. Furthermore, it is a mistake to suppose that a nation which has little political capacity can attain greatness in the spiritual field. The best kind of politics has a moral aim because it is concerned with the creation of the external conditions of good life.

1. Francis Younghusband, "Our True Relationship with India", The Indian World, July 1905, p.381.
2. Ibid.
nation which seeks spiritual greatness can, therefore, neglect those opportunities of ethical development which the field of politics provides.

**Aurobindo Ghose**

Aurobindo Ghose agreed with Vivekananda in believing that India had a spiritual message to give to the world, and that the aim of Indian nationalism should not be merely political but must be primarily spiritual.

Aurobindo was a great cultural nationalist. He said that Indians should accept what was best in the culture of the West as men who were proud of their history and tradition and not as a denationalized people who sought to Westernize themselves completely. By imitating, India could never become exactly like Europe, for the histories of Europe and India being different their futures were also bound to be different. But even if India succeeded in Europeanizing herself to a large extent India would have gained little because she would have lost her cultural individuality and, in the words of the Gita, Aurobindo declared: "Better the law of one's own being though it be badly done than an alien dharma (way of life) well followed".

Aurobindo complained that in the nineteenth century many educated Indians had forgotten the message of the Gita and had

3. Aurobindo, The Ideal of the Marmayogin, p.15.
lived an imitative, denationalized and Westernized life. But
the resistance to the complete Westernization of the country
by conservative Hindus - "tamashic, inert, ignorant, uncreative"
though they were - prevented a complete cultural denational-
ization of the Hindus.

Spiritually India did not die because there existed men
like Ramakrishna and Dayananda who prevented the Indian people
from forgetting their glorious religious heritage. Ramakrishna,
wrote Aurobindo, "was a man who lived, what many would call,
the life of a mad man, a man without intellectual training, a
man without any outward sign of culture or civilization, a man
who lived on the alms of others, such a man as the English-
educated Indian would ordinarily talk of as one useless to
society". Yet when it was to this man that the educated
people came for enlightenment it was clear that in spite of the
spread of scientific and sceptical ideas from the West ancient
Indian religious ideas had not died from the land.

Aurobindo, Pal and other "extremists" maintained that not
only in the realm of religion but also in the domain of
politics the claim of the Indian genius to live its own life
must be established. They argued that the political philo-
sophy of the "moderates" was foreign in character and in spirit.

1. Ibid.
   pp. 213-214.
The "moderates" wanted to establish a colonial form of self-government. Aurobindo held that the goal of India's political endeavour should be the attainment of full Swaraj, and that India should not remain "an outlying province of the British Empire or a dependent adjunct of European civilization". He thought that India should try to evolve her own political ideals and institutions and not try only to reproduce European political institutions. "We do not believe," he wrote "that our political salvation can be attained by enlargement of councils, introduction of the elective principle, colonial self-government or any other formula of European politics. We do not deny the use of some of these things as instruments, as weapons in a political struggle, but we deny their sufficiency whether as instruments or ideals".

Aurobindo was not much interested in establishing any particular form of government or political institution. A system of government was merely a political machinery which could be worked well or ill by good or bad individuals. Aurobindo said that though some people in Europe set great store by some particular type of political machinery and hoped that the millennium could be brought about by acts of parliament, the Indian nationalist should concern himself not so much with political machineries as with the spirit that would operate such machineries.

As a good body polity could not be organised by merely adopting the political forms of the West, so no good society could be constructed by merely reproducing in India the social institutions of the West. Indians could mechanically imitate the social institutions of the West by substituting class for caste, by introducing inter-marriage, inter-dining and numerous other social changes, but those changes, in themselves, said Aurobindo, would not create a good society in India. It is necessary to point out here that though it is right to say that the mere abolition of caste and the establishment of parliamentary democracy would not solve Indian social and political problems, it is wrong not to state and to emphasize that a good society must, at least, be casteless, and a good polity must, at least, be democratic. No nation can make much ethical progress without good social and political institutions and it appears that in emphasizing the value of good character Aurobindo underestimated the value of good institutions.

Aurobindo thought that Europe set too much value on social institutions and devoted too little energy for the improvement of human character. To him it appeared that modern Europe almost accepted egoism and individual competitive selfishness as the foundation of its society. He was convinced that the people of ancient India, through the joint-family system, the

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1. Ibid.
corporate caste system, and the communal village society, had actually made some attempt, however imperfect, to build a society on a foundation of love. He, however, pointed out that a society based on a foundation of love could only be successfully organized when every man realized in his life the essential truth/the Sanatana Dharma (Eternal Religion), that is the unity of all men because of their identity with God.

The Sanatana Dharma accepted not only the Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darsana, Purana, Tantra, but also the Koran and the Bible as its scriptures. Though the Sanatana Dharma was an universal religion, Aurobindo believed that India more than any other country had been the guardian and exemplar of the truths of the Sanatana Dharma. He was convinced that God was raising the Indian people as a nation so that they could spread the truths of the Sanatana Dharma throughout the world.

Aurobindo said that many Indians in the twentieth century understood that most nationalists in the nineteenth century, under the influence of European intellectual ideas, made a great mistake in not realizing the spiritual mission of the Indian nation. "It has been driven home to us by experience", he wrote, "that not in the strength of a raw unmoralized European enthusiasm shall we conquer ....... It is the East that

1. Ibid.
5. See Aurobindo, On The Present Situation, p. 5.
must conquer in India's uprising. It is the Yogi who must stand behind the political leader or manifest within him, Ramadas must be born in one body with Shivaji, Mazzini mingle with Cavour. The divorce of intellect and spirit, strength and purity may help a European revolution, but by a European strength we shall not conquer. The movements of the last century failed because they were too purely intellectual. Nationalism also has been defective; it has been Indian in sentiment and aspiration, European in practice and actuality. It has helped itself with the intellect, but it has not been sufficiently supported by inspired wisdom. It has attached itself to imagination and idealism, but has not learned to discern the deeper Truth and study the will of God.

It is not true that the best nationalists of Europe were inspired by "a raw unmoralized enthusiasm" and that they sought to gain material strength by sacrificing moral purity. Aurobindo himself recognised the genuinely spiritual character of Mazzini's nationalism.

There was a great similarity between the ideas of Mazzini and that of Aurobindo. Both believed that faith in God was the basis of morality, that politics could not be separated

1. Aurobindo, The Ideal of the Karmayogin, pp. 32-34. C.R. Das similarly said, "With me work for my country is not imitation of European politics. It is a part of my religion. I find in the conception of my country the expression also of divinity". (C.R. Das, India for Indians, Madras, 1918, p.8).
from morality, and that their nations (the Italian, in case of Mazzini, and the Indian, in case of Aurobindo) had a special, moral or spiritual mission for the world. Mazzini said that the mission of the Italians should be to prove that they were "all sons of God and brothers in Him". Italy, he wrote, must "give a pledge of moral progress to the European world" and form "a moral priesthood among the peoples of Europe". Aurobindo similarly declared that it was to spread the message of the *Sanatana Dharma* that India was rising as a nation.

**Mahatma Gandhi**

Mahatma Gandhi agreed with Vivekananda and Aurobindo in believing that India had a spiritual message to give to the world, but he differed from them when in 1908 he denounced all the instruments and institutions of modern Western civilization. Gandhi was opposed to the system of railways which the British had introduced into India. Railways, steamships and other means of modern communication Vivekananda regarded as appropriate media through which Indian spiritual ideas could be diffused throughout the world. Gandhi was completely

1. Annie Besant agreed with Mazzini in thinking that each nation had a special mission and she asserted that the mission of India was to spread the idea of Dharma. (See her presidential address in the Report of the Thirty-Second Indian National Congress, p. 54).


opposed to modern industrialism. Aurobindo criticized various aspects of Western industrial system, but he was not opposed to industrialism as such. He favoured the development of Swadeshi industries in India.

In modern India the British introduced railways, telegraphs and telephones, established large cities, set up modern law courts and popularized European medical science. In 1909 Gandhi wrote that the salvation of India consisted in unlearning most of the things she had learnt from the British.

Gandhi criticized modern civilization not because it was a Western civilization but because he honestly but mistakenly believed it to be a purely materialistic civilization. In December 1916 he said that Western nations worshipped the goddess of Mammon and measured their progress in £.s. d. P.C. Ray, the scientist, rightly maintained that it was not merely because they desired wealth but primarily because they had a spontaneous intellectual curiosity that Europeans could discover the truths of modern science, and he also pointed out that not only in Europe but in India too there could be found many people who worshipped the goddess of Mammon.

Gandhi was opposed to the modern industrial system which had stimulated the money-making propensities of mankind. He

pointed out that men of high ethical stature such as Buddha, Jesus, Sankara and Ramakrishna never sought wealth or riches. He even described Jesus as the greatest economist of his time, and approvingly quoted his saying that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. In a lecture on December 22nd, 1916, Gandhi admitted that he had not read the works of Adam Smith, Mill, Marshall and other eminent economists, but he argued that one could get sounder economic ideas from religious scriptures than from modern economic textbooks.

Gandhi was not impressed by the economic progress made by modern Western countries. He did not believe that the Western peoples by inventing new machinery and by increasing their material comforts had become more civilized or ethically more developed than Indians, who had for centuries managed with the same kind of plough and had lived in the same kind of cottages. He was convinced that economic progress did not necessarily or directly lead to moral progress.

In 1906 in the "Hind Swaraj" Gandhi wrote: "Millions will always remain poor". It appears that he failed to realize that modern science had made it possible that humanity.

1. Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings and Speeches, p. 226.
5. See a letter of Gandhi written to a friend in India in 1909. (Speeches and Writings of M.K. Gandhi, p. 135).
if it so desired, could, for the first time in history, ensure to all men a reasonable standard of living and thereby end that ancient kind of society in which production was so low that, while a very few men could be rich, the huge majority of mankind were compelled to remain poor. Believing that millions of people would always remain poor it was natural that Gandhi should maintain that ancient Indian society, which did not despise poverty, was superior to modern Western society in which most men wanted to be rich.

Industrialism in Europe was associated with urbanization. It was natural that Gandhi who was opposed to industrialism should lament the increasing urbanization of India. He believed that theft, robbery, vice and prostitution would inevitably flourish in large cities, and in 1909 he declared that Bombay, Calcutta and other big cities were the real plague spots of India.

To what extreme lengths Gandhi went in his criticism of modern civilization can be seen from the fact that he denounced modern European medical science. He declared that medical science was "the concentrated essence of Black Magic", and that it was wrong to cure disease "through the instrumentality of the diabolical vivisection" that was practised by European schools of medicine. He even persuaded

1. Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings and Speeches, pp. 95, 222-223.
2. Idem, p. 92; and M.K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, p. 49.
3. M.K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, pp. 94-95; and Mahatma Gandhi: His Life, Writings and Speeches, pp. 93-94.
himself to believe that if there were no hospitals there would be less disease.

Gandhi asked the doctors to give up medicine and to try to mend human souls rather than human bodies. He advised lawyers to give up law and to take up handlooms. He requested educated Indians who lived in modern cities to return to the villages because the villages of India, which were not polluted by railways or touched by modern civilisation, preserved, he believed, all that was best in the ancient Indian civilisation which did not glorify wealth or power but set a limit to man's indulgences.

Unlike Gandhi, most Indian political thinkers, in the period 1885 to 1919, did not want to do away with machineries, railways and cities. They knew that machineries, railways and cities were associated with modern industrialism and they realized that, as in the West, so in India, industrialization could vastly increase the wealth of the people. Like Gandhi, they were aware of the fact that many of the workers in Western industrial countries were underpaid, overworked and had to live in ugly and unhealthy slums but, unlike Gandhi,

1. Ibid.
3. Ibid. It was after reading Ruskin's "Unto this Last" that Gandhi first realized that the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsmen was the life worth living. (An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth, p. 238). Gandhi says that the reading of "Unto This Last" brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation of his life. (Ibid).
they realized that to end this sorry state of affairs it was not necessary to abolish the entire industrial system.

Because in this thesis we are not concerned with Indian political thought beyond 1919, we have so far only considered the views that Gandhi held on modern industrialism up to the year 1919. But after 1919 Gandhi's views changed. In 1924 he declared that he was not opposed to machinery as such, but only against machinery when it was used for the exploitation of others. He said that while modern Western industrialism had led to the concentration of wealth in a few hands, he wanted to distribute wealth as widely as possible by starting numerous small industries in the villages. Provided village industries were run mainly for use and not merely for profit he did not object even to the use of modern machines in those industries. Though generally favouring decentralized production he admitted that in certain cases large-scale centralized production could not be avoided. He, however, insisted that the centralized industries should be under strict social or state control.

Rabindranath Tagore.

Like Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore in some of his writings in 1903-5 emphasised that the cultural impact of the West had,

in certain respects, diminished the spiritual force and strength of Indian life. As a result of the contact with the West the educated youth began to love luxury and to lose the faith of their ancestors in the dignity of renunciation and the strength of poverty. They were so overwhelmed by the pomp of a commercial civilization that they felt utterly discontented with the simplicity of the Indian villages and began to look down upon the poor Indian villagers.

While ambition was at the root of modern Western civilization, the ideal of ancient Indian civilization, wrote Tagore, was contentment. Indian civilization placed a limit to the ambition of everyone and, through the caste system, fixed for each man in society, great or small, the work he should do and the class to which he should belong. It accepted that all men could not be equal and that a very few people could be great. It asserted that in order to avoid the disappointment of the large majority of people who could not be great it was essential that each man, instead of being too ambitious, should find contentment in doing the particular kind of work, big or small, which society had assigned to him. Tagore said that because in Europe everyone wanted to be great but a very small number of people could realize their ambitions, the large majority of

2. See the collection of poems in Tagore’s “Swadeeh” (Calcutta, 1912 B.S.) pp. 85-86.
5. Ibid.
people lived discontented and unhappy lives. He argued that the ancient Indian ideal which valued contentment more than ambition, self-restraint more than self-indulgence, was superior to the ideals that inspired the minds of modern Europeans.

Though in some of his earlier writings Tagore had referred to the harmful consequences that was produced in India due to the cultural impact of the West, in his writings as a whole, and particularly in the later writings, he emphasised the limitations of Eastern as well as Western ideas and institutions, and argued that only a society which combined the best ideals of the East as well as of the West could solve the difficult problems which troubled modern humanity.

Tagore criticized those who regarded everything Indian to be spiritual and praiseworthy and everything Western as material and unethical. Some Hindu revivalists used to assert that while the average European was dominated by the love of personal pleasure, the average Hindu was guided by higher spiritual motives. Tagore pointed out that the highest ideal of the Europeans was the same as that of the Hindus, and that it was

1. Idem. p. 373.
2. Idem. pp. 375-6. For similar views see Brahmabandhav Upadhaya, Samaj, p. 61; and Speeches of Mr. C.R. Das, (Calcutta, 1918), p. 36.
3. Extremely conservative and orthodox Hindus, who were pleased with Tagore’s earlier writings in which he had pointed out the limitations of Western civilization, vehemently denounced Tagore when later he criticized some of the evil customs of Hindu society. (See Amarnath Ray, Rabiana, pp. 52-66).
not pleasure for self but happiness for all and the full development of humanity. There were Europeans who only sought personal pleasure and devoted their lives to rob the wealth and to destroy the happiness of the weaker peoples of the earth, but there were also in Europe great men who sought the good of all mankind. Indians could learn much from the better type of Europeans.

Foreign cultural contacts did not destroy but rather enriched the indigenous culture of a nation. Tagore pointed out that every modern nation knew that it must bring the treasures of its culture in the market-place of the world in order to estimate their worth and value. The coming of the English to India did not appear to him as a meaningless accident of history, he believed that England had a mission in India, and that India would have been shorn of fullness if she had been deprived of the Western contact. He pointed out that the greatest men of India in the modern age, such as Ram Mohan Roy, M.G. Ranade, Swami Vivekananda and others, spent their lives at the task of reconciling the West to the East. Tagore himself

2. Ibid.
6. Ibid. p. 241. For the mistaken opinion that this synthesis could not be achieved except to a small and superficial extent, see P.N. Bose, "Synthesis of Hindu Civilization", The Indian Review, October 1916, p. 681.
believed that the ideal civilization should combine the dynamic spirit of the West with the ancient wisdom of the East.

Tagore said that while in the West the people were too much concerned with the external world, in India the people were too much concerned with the internal world, and that, consequently, the Western peoples suffered from the intoxication of power, and Indians suffered from the intoxication of the spirit. In India the seekers of truth were sometimes tempted to think that the sense-world was an illusion, that the Absolute alone was real, and that, therefore, all attachments to the family, the society, and the nation, which strengthened the bondage of individual selves to an unreal and illusory world, were undesirable. With biting sarcasm Tagore pointed out the folly of believing in this other-worldly and life-denying philosophy.

In 1891 Tagore wrote that while Europe had recognised the greatness and dignity of humanity, in India, where man was overwhelmed by powerful nature, what impressed men's minds most was not the greatness and glory of humanity but the unsubstantiality and insignificance of man and all his endeavours, so that when a great man arose in India he was not regarded as a great human being but as a god. Such a great god-like being being laid down the social laws and people had to live by the words of the great god-like man.

5. Ibid.
Fourteen years before Tagore expressed these views in the
Sadhana. Rajakrishna Mukhopadhyaya, the scholar, had rightly
pointed out that the Hindus who carved Ellora hills and raised
temples, who crossed the perilous seas in order to establish
colonies in Ceylon, Bali, and Java, and who did considerable
work in developing the sciences of mathematics, medicine and
chemistry could not have been completely dominated by natural
forces or impressed only by the insignificance and not the
greatness of human endeavour.

Further, it was not true that in ancient times it was only
in India that men had to live by the words of great god-like men
European society also was once, like Indian society, conservatis
and authoritarian and was dominated by priests and other
religious people. It was only in modern times that in Europe
free thought and reason triumphed, to a large extent, over
religious authority.

In modern times, Europe's belief in reason resulted in the
marvellous development of science, and in the field of social
organisation the same belief found expression in the recognition
that a good society could only be built if the individuals that
composed it were allowed the right of rational self-determination.
It was God's will, wrote Tagore, that the English should spread
in India faith in the scientific spirit and a belief in the
desirability of allowing the right of individual freedom to
every member of the society.

2. R. Tagore, Kalantar, p.75.
In 1894 the Sadhana, which was at that time edited by Rabindranath Tagore, wrote that owing to the spread of English education there had developed an independent attitude of mind among Indians, so that the educated people began to criticize some of the superstitious religious beliefs and irrational social customs that obtained in India. But soon the English-educated people discovered that to change their whole social behaviour for the purpose of putting into practice the liberal ideas which they theoretically upheld it required an amount of social courage which not a few of them lacked. Lacking the courage to reform social evils some educated Indians began to justify their conventional conduct by formulating theories which demonstrated, to their satisfaction, that Indian social institutions were not defective in certain respects but were excellent from all points of view and were actually the best in the world.

Tagore argued that though Indians came into contact with Western liberal ideas in schools and colleges they could not completely accept such ideas because outside schools and colleges they were powerfully influenced by the authoritarian ideas on which Indian society was based. Some educated people while paying lip service to free thought actually believed in the infallibility of the sacred books of the Hindus. They shrank from applying to the sacred books of the Hindus the same rational, scientific and historical tests which they adopted in

1. Sadhana, Magh 1301 B.S. p.263.
estimating the value of Western knowledge. They behaved as if
the laws of reason applied only in the West and not in India.

In the early days of the spread of English education in
India many educated Indians became excessively Westernized, and
they indiscriminately criticized ancient Indian culture and
civilization. Tagore pointed out that it was partly as a
reaction to the excessive Westernization of some educated
Indians that other Indians tried to defend every ancient Indian
institution. In his novel Gora Tagore has described the
psychology of an extreme Hindu revivalist with deep insight and
understanding. Gora believed that owing to the constant
criticisms of Hindu society by Christian missionaries and also
by some social reformers, such as the Brahmo Samajists, many
Hindus were losing all pride in their race and culture. "We
must refuse", he emphatically declared, "to allow our country
to stand at the bar of a foreign court and be judged according
to foreign law. Our ideas of shame or glory must not depend
on minute comparisons at every step with a foreign standard.
We must not feel apologetic about the country of our birth...."
Gora adopted all the practices of an orthodox Hindu. He
religiously bathed in the Ganges, regularly performed ceremonial
worship, and took particular care of what he touched and what
he ate. He proudly proclaimed himself to be a superstitious

1. Ibid.
2. See Rajnarain Vasu, Sekal O Ekal.
3. See R. Tagore, "The Future of India", The Modern Review,
   March 1911, p.242.
4. R. Tagore, Gora, p.19. (Gora was written during the period
   1314 B.S. to Falgun 1316 B.S.)
Hindu, and argued that neither Christian missionaries nor Westernized Hindus could reform Hindu society because real reforms could not come from foreigners and outsiders, who looked at Hindu society only with a critical eye, but they could only come from within, that is, from men who loved and respected Hindu society in spite of all its defects. It cannot be denied that some of the social reformers despised Hindu culture without even understanding it. In Dora Tagore gives us a picture of such a social reformer, Haran, who was an ardent Brahmo Samajist. Though Haran had never read the Bhagavad Gita, he was firmly of the opinion that this and also other similar books, which were favoured by the orthodox Hindus, should be banished from Brahmo households. But he had no objection to the reading of the Bible, and, in fact, among the scriptures of the world religions the Bible was his only support. It is as a reaction to the denationalized social reformers of the type of Haran that extremely conservative Hindus of the type of Gora were produced and vice versa. Tagore was confident that through the conflicting movements of extreme revivalism and extreme Westernization Indians would ultimately be able to effect the proper balance between the ideals of the East and those of the West.

Though Tagore had a great admiration for Western culture he did not fail to notice the limitations of modern Western civilization. He said that Western civilization, in spite of all its

1. Idem. pp. 50, 52.
4. Ibid.
achievements, was yet fundamentally based on conflict: the conflict between the individual and the state, between labour and capital, and between nation and nation. It had built giant organisations in the field of economics and of politics. It had created a vast and complicated industrial system which, though it had increased the material comfort of Western humanity, was yet based on individual and national competitive selfishness, and had given rise to a mechanical and commercial civilization that had destroyed much of the simplicity and beauty of earlier times. In the field of politics it had created mighty nations which had done much good by increasing the spirit of cooperation within the nation but had also done incalculable injury to the world by causing wars and conflicts in Europe, and by giving rise to aggression and exploitation in Asia and Africa.

Tagore very clearly saw the dangers involved in the modern excessive cult of the nation, according to which an individual even while supporting an evil deed done by his national state could feel that he was virtuous because he was patriotic. To remedy the evils of excessive nationalism it was necessary to create the spirit and the institutions on which a real world community could be based. Tagore laid so much emphasis on the

2. R. Tagore, Japan-Jatri, pp.60-63.
value of creating a genuine sense of world community among the nations of the world that he failed to suggest, (and, in fact, he did not care to suggest), on what institutions such a world community could best be founded.

Tagore did not believe that any of the conflicts of modern civilization could be solved by any mechanical changes in the social and political institutions of the world. "I do not put my faith", he said, "in any new institution but in individuals all over the world, who must think clearly, feel nobly and act rightly", and he was firmly of the opinion that the highest ideals of the East which had always emphasized the necessity of a change in the moral nature of men could make a great contribution in the work of elevating the character of men and thereby help to produce the only real and enduring solution of the problems that faced modern humanity.

ANANDA COOMARASWAMY

"The work of Rabindranath", wrote Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, the art critic, "is essentially Indian in sentiment and form. It is at the same time modern". Rabindranath Tagore and other leaders of the Bengali literary movement incorporated the ideas and the spirit of the West in Bengali literature and yet their works did not lose their Indian character and spirit. Coomaraswamy, idem. p.3.

1. Idem. p.3.
rightly remarked that what denationalized men in India was not
depth knowledge of Western culture, but an imperfect under-
standing of it, and that really creative people found in foreign
culture a stimulus not to imitation but to creation.

Coomaraswamy believed that it was by the development of a
national art and not merely by the attainment of political
independence that India could really gain her freedom. In 1911
he said that if Indians, who were culturally dominated by the
West, immediately gained their political freedom they would not
be as free as the Poles who, though politically enslaved, yet
adhered to the language, tradition, and culture of their country.
He maintained that it was not politicians but poets and painters,
sculptors and musicians, that established the status of nations.

Though Coomaraswamy underestimated the value of politicians and
nationalists, especially in a subject country such as India, his
essential thesis that Indians should seek to create an art that
was national in spirit and not completely dominated by the
culture of Europe was fundamentally correct. He rightly pointed
out that as the ideal of nationality was service, Indians would
be judged not by what they successfully assimilated from the
culture of the modern West but what they actually contributed
to the culture of humanity.

In 1909 Coomaraswamy declared that modern Indians instead
of combining the best ideals of the East with those of the West

were forgetting the ideals of the East and were reproducing in India all the worst features of Western civilization. Educated Indians preferred "flaming Brussels carpets, Tottenham Court Road furniture, Italian mosaics, German tissues, French oleographs, Austrian lustres and all kinds of cheap brocades" to the artistic products of the traditional craftsmen of India. They liked English palaces and French villas better than houses built on the Indian pattern. Coomaraswamy lamented that while there existed in India buildings, constructed by Indian architects, which were as noble as any in the world, no Indian politician had demanded that public buildings should be constructed by Indian architects according to the best patterns of Indian architecture. It was because, he said, that Indians ceased to love the cultural traditions of India that they wanted to live in caricatured English villas and attempted to convert India into a suburb of London, Manchester or Birmingham.

He maintained that the English-educated Indians did not even know how denationalized they had become. "Speak to the ordinary graduate", he wrote, "of ..... the ideals of the Mahabharat - he will hasten to display his knowledge of Shakespeare; talk to him of religious philosophy - you find that he is an atheist of the crude type common in Europe a generation ago, and that he is as

5. See the essay "Young India" in A.K. Coomaraswamy's "The Dance of Shiva", pp. 127-128.
lacking in philosophy as the average Englishman; talk to him of Indian music - he will produce a gramaphone or a harmonium, and inflict upon you one or both; talk to him of Indian dress or jewellery - he will tell you that they are uncivilized and barbaric; talk to him of Indian art - it is news to him that such a thing exists; ......". This description was undoubtedly a gross exaggeration and Coomaraswamy hastened to add that he was describing only the extreme products of English education.

Those who derived their inspiration only from the West could produce art that was merely imitative and not genuinely creative. When the art schools were first started in the cities of Calcutta and Bombay, the models that were used there were almost exclusively Western models. Most prominent among those who painted Indian subjects on the Western style was Raja Ravi Varma. But because his work was merely imitative, it reached only a second-rate standard of excellence.

As a result of the work of H.B. Havell, the Principal of the Calcutta School of Art, and of Abanindranath Tagore, the painter, there came into existence a new school of art known as the Bengal School of Painting. Havell disposed of the collection of much of the European paintings which belonged to the Calcutta School of Art and replaced them by the best Indian paintings of the seventeenth century. But so strong was the common belief that Europe could be the only source of artistic inspiration that this change, at first, provoked the opposition

of the Indian students and the nationalist press. The Bengal School of Painting sought their inspiration from Indian sources from the paintings in the caves of Ajanta, and from Rajput and Mughul paintings. Because the Bengal School derived their inspiration from traditional Indian sources it produced art that was real and creative.

In recent times Western artists had taken an increasing interest in Eastern art. Through Japan the West first discovered the beauty of Eastern art and then it discovered the beauty of the art of Persia and of India. Coomaraswamy was convinced that European artists would increasingly look towards the East for new sources of artistic inspiration, and he himself did much to draw the attention of Western artists to the beauties of Indian art.

While maintaining that in future the scientific West would increasingly be influenced by Eastern artistic (and spiritual ideas) Coomaraswamy also pointed out that contact with the scientific West had aroused among Indians a greater awareness of the material and practical world.

HAR DAYAL

The necessity of learning the natural sciences of the modern West was emphasized by most Indian thinkers in the period 1885 to 1919. No Indian thinker, however, emphasized this point with more vigour or greater dogmatism than Har Dayal.

1. Idem. p.128.
Har Dayal's opinions in this matter are contained in a number of remarkable articles which he sent from America in 1912-3 to The Modern Review. He pointed out that it was not because Europeans were religious or spiritual but because they were scientific that they had made considerable progress in the modern world. A little of science, he said, brought greater happiness to Western humanity than did all the philosophy and the un instructed piety of the middle ages. It was modern medical science and not the piety and the penance, the fasting and the ringing of church bells of the middle ages, that cured human diseases. Pasteur and Kock were not so religious or ethically so great as St. Francis, St. Dominic and other moral giants which the religious middle ages produced but Pasteur and Kock, by their scientific discoveries, did more good to mankind than the men of religion had ever done.

Har Dayal maintained that modern Indians could improve their material and cultural position immeasurably if instead of learning the Vedas and the Vedantas they learned the natural and social sciences of the West. The real Vedas of the modern age were the five fundamental sciences of chemistry, physics, biology, psychology and sociology. There was no use in discussing the subtle questions of Hindu metaphysics, for in this modern age the Indians would have to answer not metaphysical but political and economic questions, such as whether democracy was better

2. Idem. p. 49.
3. Ibid.
than dictatorship, and whether a social service state was better than a laissez faire state. To answer such questions Indians must read the works of European thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Voltaire, Marx, Haeckel, Tolstoi, Ruskin, Comte and Spencer. It was futile for them to go on editing and re-editing the ancient Indian scriptures. What would have happened to modern Europe if Frederic Harrison, Bebel, Anatole France, Haeckel, Giddings and Marshall instead of trying to solve modern social problems devoted their energies to compiling treatises on Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas?

Har Dayal said that every educated Indian should learn one or other of the European languages and not spend all their energies in the study of Sanskrit and Persian, and that they should go on pilgrimage to London, Paris, Berlin, Rome, Geneva and other centres of European intellectual thought and not waste their time in going to Puri, Benares and other so-called Indian holy cities. He lamented that instead of coming into close contact with the natural and social sciences of the West, some Indians wasted their energies in religious practices such as solitary contemplation and samadhi (eighth stage of yoga), emotional worship and religious pilgrimages. He pointed out that Indians honoured men of religion too much and respected

5. Har Dayal, "The Wealth of the Nation", The Modern Review, July 1912. In his characteristic extreme manner Har Dayal wrote that to look upon samadhi or trance or the process of swooning away as the height of enlightenment was a folly reserved for Indian philosophers.
statesmen, economists, and scientists too little. He maintained that Aurobindo, the politician, was a greater man than Ramakrishna, the saint. He believed that Ramakrishna was an incomplete man because Ramakrishna did not understand the Indian currency problem and perhaps did not know the difference between a representative and a despotic form of government. A complete man must not only be disinterested and saintly, he must also have a sound knowledge of the natural and social sciences, which the peoples of the modern West had largely developed.

India did not need metaphysicians and saints, such as Ramakrishna and Rama Tirth, she needed secular and practical men such as J.C. Bose, Sayajirao Gaekwar, Tilak and Aurobindo. (Aurobindo however later became a mystic). Har Dayal was so interested in secular problems and so doubtful about the value of metaphysics that he declared that there was "more wisdom in one of Tilak's political speeches than in all the Upanishads".

Har Dayal's fundamental thesis that to solve their problems Indians must learn modern natural and social sciences was absolutely correct. It was unfortunate that in supporting this thesis Har Dayal criticized metaphysics as such and characterized it as a child's toy. He said that the sciences were the modern Vedas and that metaphysics was a luxury which modern

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2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
Indians could ill afford. But metaphysics is a subject which has and will always interest human thinkers. Har Dayal asked Indians to read Plato, Aristotle, and Spencer, but these thinkers were not indifferent to metaphysics. Further, Har Dayal was not quite correct in saying that metaphysics was the curse of India and had encompassed her ruin. True, some Indians in the past developed an excessive interest in metaphysics, but it cannot be said that metaphysics alone could bring about the decline of any country, for Germany, which was one of the most advanced countries in the modern world, was famous, among other things, as a country which had produced a large number of metaphysicians.

LAJPAT RAI

Like Har Dayal, Lala Lajpat Rai spoke strongly against the religiosity of Indians. Though in 1919 Lajpat expressed the extremely one-sided view that the fundamental basis of all the national weaknesses of the Indians was that they were too much dominated by an other-worldly attitude towards life he was right in strongly criticizing those who excessively praised the virtues of sadhuism or renunciation and ascetism. Lajpat was glad that as a result of the spread of English education some Indians realized the evils of sadhuism more clearly than they

1. Idem. pp. 46, 49.
3. For a criticism of Har Dayal's views see H.V. Divatia's interesting note, "Mr. Har Dayal on Metaphysics", in The Modern Review, August 1912, pp. 199-200.
had ever done before. He considered that the primary duty of the modern Indian reformer was to spread the gospel of life, to make the people realize the glory of humanity and the evils of excessive idealization of asceticism and renunciation, and for this, he was convinced, Indians should come in close contact with the secular and humanistic spirit of modern Western culture.

Lajpat constantly urged Indians to learn the natural and social sciences of the West. He pointed out that by learning them Indians would not become absolutely Westernized but that they would become modern-up-to-date Indians, and he rightly denounced that small minority of Indians who believed that a system of national education could only be based on a complete rejection of modern Western thought. Indians could not completely replace modern medicine and surgery by old Indian medical methods so that thousands should die in order that they might remain truly national. In military matters, it would have been disastrous for Indians if they relied for their defence on the ancient and indigenous bows and arrows, swords and spears, and refused to learn the modern science of arms. In economics, they would have remained ignorant if they only studied the old Arthashastra and neglected the newer and fuller

1. Ibid.
5. Book on economics or politics.
fuller *Anthasastra* written by European thinkers. In law it would have been unwise for them if they took the laws of Manu Narada, and Apastamba as their guides and rejected all the statute-made laws of modern India which were more in harmony with the spirit of the times. Lajpat argued that it would not be wise for Indians to refuse to learn natural and social sciences simply because in modern times those sciences had largely (though not exclusively) been developed by non-Indians.

In the period 1885 to 1919 there was a large number of Indian thinkers who realized that it was essential that Indians should learn all that was best in the culture of the West. In December 1903, Gokhale fairly expressed the attitude of nationalists of the "moderate" type towards Western culture and English education thus: "In the present circumstances of India all Western education is valuable and useful .... to my mind, the greatest work of Western education in the present state of India is not so much the encouragement of learning as the liberation of the Indian mind from the thraldom of old-world ideas, and the assimilation of all that is highest and best in the life and thought and character of the West." The "moderates" were strongly in favour of the spread of higher Western learning in India. In a speech at a student's meeting in Lucknow in 1913, Pandit Bishen Narayan Dhar said that "books like Lecky's *Historia* ...

1. Ibid.
of Rationalism and European Morals, Guizot's History of Civilization, Maine's Ancient Law, Spencer's Study of Sociology, Mill's Liberty and Representative Government, Sir Alfred Lyall's Asiatic Studies, Morley's Compromise, Lives of Cobden and Gladstone, ... Bagehot's Physics and Politics, Seeley's Expansion of England and Lectures in Political Science, ought to form part of every under-graduates private studies". The "moderates" wanted their countrymen to learn not only the social but also the natural sciences of the West, and one of their major criticisms of the system of education that obtained in India was that it did not make sufficient provision for instruction in Western science and technology. Even the "extremists" who were particularly interested in establishing a system of national education did not want to banish Western science and Western culture from national schools. The National Council of Education that was started in Bengal during the Swadeshi movement did not exclude Western knowledge. One of the main objects of the National Council was stated in its Memorandum of Association thus: "To impart education, literary and scientific as well as technical and professional, on national lines and exclusively under national control, ..... attaching special importance to a knowledge of the country, its literature, history and philosophy, and designed to incorporate with the best Oriental ideals of life and thought the best assimilable ideals of the West, .....".

3. See the speech (15th August 1906) of G. Banerjee for the inauguration of the National Council of Education. (Reminiscences, Speeches and Writings of Sir Gooroo Dass Banerjee, Part II, p.208).
CHAPTER IX
WESTERN INFLUENCE IN INDIAN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC THOUGHT

A. CASTE AND DEMOCRACY

In social matters contact with Western thought helped to give rise to movements against the undemocratic institution of caste which in the past was criticized by Indian religious reformers such as Buddha, Mahavira, Ramanuja, Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak and others.

For a Hindu birth determined a man's caste for life. Every Hindu had a function in society but not the freedom to choose that function. Duty in this social scheme was more important than rights. Some Hindus believed that the superiority of the ancient Hindu social ideal over the modern European social ideal lay in the fact that ancient Hindu thinkers, unlike modern European thinkers, emphasized the duties that a man owed to society and not the rights that he could claim against it. It is true that the ideal of duty that was implied in the concept of caste emphasized that an individual should live for society and not for himself. But in the exaltation of society caste denied the great truth that only by the exercise of the power of free and rational self-determination could individuals realize their moral perfection.

Caste assumed that birth once for all determined a man's capacities and powers. It denied the possibilities of education and of improvement within this life. Necessarily, therefore, it

developed the theories of natural superiors and of natural inferiors.

P.N. Bose, the author of "A History of Hindu Civilization During British Rule", wrote that the principle of heredity on which the institution of caste was based really anticipated the modern science of eugenics. Radhakamal Mukhopadhaya argued that the inequalities of caste were not artificially created by society, but rather they were natural inequalities, because they were based on the facts of birth. Hindu society was founded on the assumption that birth was a better indication of one's qualities than education. This assumption, said Radhakamal, could be proved to be correct on the basis of the modern science of eugenics as developed by Karl Pearson and others.

Karl Pearson believed that no final solution of almost any social problem could be reached so long as men remained ignorant about the relative importance of nature and of nurture in settling the character of the next generation. He said that as a result of his investigations he had come to the conclusion that environment was not one-fifth, possibly not even one-tenth, as important as heredity from the point of view of race improvement.

1. P.N. Bose, The Illusions of New India, p. 190. It is not suggested here that P.N. Bose was a complete defender of the caste system. He strongly protested against some of the inequalities of the caste system, such as the provision that the Shudras, unlike the higher castes, had no right to spiritual knowledge. (P.N. Bose, Essays and Lectures, pp. 77-8).


5. Idem. p. 27.
He criticized the advocates of social legislation in Britain who thought that better environment meant race progress. He maintained that the policy of philanthropists and of social legislators of emphasising environment and of disregarding parentage had led to a state of affairs in which the inferior members of the community were reproducing themselves at a greater rate than that of the superior members.

Pearson's theory that nature was more important than nurture naturally appealed to those who defended the institution of caste in which a man's status in life was determined by birth. Pearson's theory, however, is not accepted by all competent eugenists. Further, Pearson's theory was not designed to prove the superiority of the Brahmans. It could not demonstrate that every Shudra was inferior to every Brahmin, neither could it provide any justification for the institution of untouchability.

Radhakamal Mukhopadhaya wrote that Hindu society did not accept Rousseau's doctrine that all men were born equal, on the contrary, it recognised that men should have different rights because of their natural inequality. P.N. Bose said about Rousseau's doctrine of natural equality of men that a "doctrine less founded upon facts, or more mischievous in its influences... has never obtained a wider currency".


Rousseau did not maintain that all men were born equal in every respect. He did not deny the obvious fact that men were physically or naturally unequal, that is, they differed in age, health, bodily strength and the qualities of mind and soul, but he maintained that the inequalities that existed in society were not proportionate to the physical or natural inequalities of men. Men who were most wealthy, powerful, and honoured in society were not men who deserved, due to their inherent worth and merit, such wealth, power, and honour. Social reformers rightly pointed out that the privileges that the high-caste men enjoyed were more than proportionate to their ability.

Some Hindu thinkers affirmed that Hindu society accepted that all men were equal in the spiritual, though not in the material, sense. The Upanishad asserted that Brahma existed in all men, high or low, or, as the Bhagavat Gita more emphatically put it, to one who wisely saw, the Brahmin with his sanctities, the unclean dog, and the outcast gorging dogs' meat were all one. While living in society each man belonged to different castes, but in old age when the individual became a Sanyasin (mendicant) or reached the stage of Vanaprastha (the last stage of life), there existed no inequality of castes. In the stage of Vanaprastha all men were equal. It must not be

1. J.J. Rousseau, A Discourse upon the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind, p.6.
4. The Song Celestial or Bhagavad Gita (tr. Edwin Arnold), p.31
forgotten that this spiritual equality was realized not in the beginning, nor in the middle, but only at the end of one's life.

Some Hindu thinkers maintained that while the achievement of spiritual equality was good, there was no particular virtue in the realization of equality in the material conditions of life, and that the widespread belief in the doctrine of material equality had produced harmful consequences in European countries. Bhudev Mukhopadhaya, an influential Hindu social thinker, who held this view did not deny that the doctrine that everyone should have an equality of opportunity of progressing in the material world had aroused among the lower classes a new consciousness of their rights and had helped to destroy many unjust social privileges which the higher classes enjoyed, but he maintained that this doctrine had also done great harm by making the people excessively ambitious. P. N. Bose pointed out that the importation in India of the Western idea that everyone should have equality of opportunity in life had increased the aspirations and wants of ordinary Indians, and had thereby made the struggle and competition in Indian economic life more acute and intense than it had ever been before. Defenders of the caste system argued that if society did not restrain the material ambitions of men but allowed everyone an "equality of

opportunity" then the few able men would become rich and powerful so that under the cover of the doctrine of equality a small minority of men would monopolise all wealth and power; and they stated that, as a matter of fact, in some of the democratic Western countries where an equality of opportunity was supposed to exist for all, only a few men were rich and powerful and the vast majority of people were poor and unhappy. They maintained that the caste system which restrained the ambitions of men and assigned to each man a fixed place in society could make all men reasonably happy and contented.

When caste was condemned as an undemocratic institution they pointed out that the ideal of human equality had not been fully realised even in advanced European countries. Bhudev Mukhopadhaya drew attention to the fact that though Christian nations theoretically believed in the doctrine of the brotherhood of men, it was only in recent times that they abolished the institution of slave-trade. In Europe the French revolutionaries sought to destroy the inequalities between men by the use of violent methods, but they could not build up a really egalitarian society. Bepin Pal said that under the inspiration of French democratic thought Indians once believed that they could construct a democratic society by destroying caste, but later they discovered that in place of a caste system based on birth of

heredity they were reproducing in India, on the Western model, a class system based on wealth.

It is true that economic and social democracy was not realised in any of the political democracies of Europe. The son of a poor man in democratic Britain had, by no means, the same opportunity of development as the son of a rich man. Social and economic distinctions in Britain were not based exclusively on merit or ability. But the inequalities of the class system, though great, were generally less than the inequalities of the caste system, as is clear from the fact that under the caste system the Shudras were denied even some of the elementary human rights.

The first important reforming movement of Hinduism, the Brahmo Samaj, which arose largely owing to contact with modern Western thought, attacked some of the evils of the caste system. Devendranath Tagore appointed Keshub Sen, a non-Brahmin, as the acharya or religious minister of the Samaj. Keshub went further than Devendranath and demanded that no one who had not repudiated caste altogether should be appointed to the ministry of the Samaj. He also gave his blessings to inter-caste marriages.

The Brahmo Samaj was supposed to be too much Westernized and its popularity decreased as the influence of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, who were closer to Hinduism than were the leaders.

3. B. Pal, Brahmo Samaj and the Battle of Swaraj in India, pp.36-37.
of the Brahmo Samaj, increased. Vivekananda said that the ideal conception of jati or caste implied that each man should be allowed to do that for which he was most fitted. The development of a rigid caste system based merely on the distinctions of birth really prevented men from developing according to their nature or jati. Vivekananda pointed out that one important reason why the peoples of America and of Europe were progressive was that they were not prevented from developing according to their nature or jati by any rigid caste system.

Brahmabandhava Upadhaya, a Hindu social and political thinker believed in the necessity of a flexible caste system, and like Vivekananda, attacked the existing rigid caste system. He said that Indians must accept the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity from Europe, and that they must seek to apply those ideals in their social system by breaking up the rigid caste system and by developing a real caste system based not on birth but on quality or ability.

Dayananda Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj, who had no English education and whose ideas were derived largely from Indian, and not Western sources, declared that if the Shudra was as qualified and accomplished as a genuine Brahmin then the Shudra

2. Idem. p. 43.
must be treated as a Brahmin. Annie Besant, the Theosophist leader, worked from 1893 to 1903 for the development of a flexible caste system, but later she began to doubt whether it was at all practicable to develop such a system. In 1913 she realized that caste had outlived its utility and that it must go.

Social reformers pointed out that the undemocratic institution of caste was not compatible with political democracy. Rabindranath Tagore stated that because politics in the West had dominated Western ideals many Indian nationalists made the mistake of thinking that merely by securing political freedom Indians could become free. He pointed out that nationalists could not "build a political miracle of freedom upon the quicksand of social slavery." It was out of the narrowness of sympathy that Indians had denied the inferior castes their social rights, and so long as Indian society remained unjust, there could be no justice in politics.

Sankaran Nair, in his presidential address to the National Social Conference in 1904, said that English democratic institutions could work successfully only in those countries where the institutions of society were more or less democratic.

4. Ibid. See also Suresh Chakravarti, "Shaktimana Dharma", Subuj Patra, Magha 1524 B.S. pp. 556-560; and Ajit Kumar Chakravarti, "Mashkabari", Bharati, Poorn 1524 B.S. p. 392.
5. R. Tagore, Nationalism, p. 123.
If Indians who were dominated by the caste system had democratic political institutions then, though they would be able to put an end to the political privileges that the British enjoyed in India, there might yet remain the danger that the superior castes would use their political power in order to safeguard their social privileges.

Bankimchandra Chattopadhaya pointed out that, for the oppressed, oppression by high-caste countrymen was not less galling than oppression by arrogant foreigners. M.R. Jayakar, in his presidential address to the Bombay Provincial Social Conference in 1917, declared that the rule of a selfish and proud Brahmin might be as bad as the rule of an arrogant and unsympathetic European Collector. He rightly pointed out that the tyrannical Anglo-Indian bureaucrat and the autocratic Brahmin did not differ in kind, and that a people which wanted to dispense with the rule of the former must also dispense with the rule of the latter.

Pramathanath Chauduri, the famous Bengali writer, said that it was clear that those nationalists who wanted political liberty but were frightened when the principle of liberty was applied in social matters really did not believe in the doctrines of liberalism, but merely paid lip service to them. He quoted

1. Ibid.
L.T. Hobhouse's definition of liberalism: "Liberalism is the belief that society can safely be founded on ... (the) self-determining power of personality, that it is only on this foundation that a true community can be build, .... Liberty then becomes not so much a right of the individual as a necessity of society". Pramathanath said that though Indian nationalists believed in the right of national self-determination, some of them had no faith in the cardinal principle of Liberalism, that is, the principle that every individual should have the right of rational self-determination. It was clearly inconsistent for nationalist leaders to profess that they believed in the ideals of liberty and of equality and yet take up a vacillating attitude towards the Patel Bill (1913) which sought to legalise the right of inter-caste marriage. Pramathanath went so far as to say that those who did not support the Patel Bill had no right to use the words "liberty" and "equality" in their political speeches.

Critics of the Hindu social system emphasized that if the high-caste educated Indians really wanted home rule or political freedom they must grant social freedom to the low-caste men. When in 1916 many Congressmen began to demand home rule they actually felt the incompatibility between the realization of political

2. Ibid.
liberty and the maintenance of extreme caste privileges. In 1917 the Congress passed a resolution urging the people of India to remove all disabilities that were imposed by custom upon the depressed classes. In supporting the resolution B.J. Desai pointed out that it would be utterly inconsistent for Indians to demand the full rights of British citizenship and yet to deny some of their own countrymen the common rights of humanity. Asaf Ali said that Indians had been crying shame upon the autocratic action of British bureaucrats but the time had come for the depressed classes to cover with shame those high-caste Indians who enjoyed unjust social privileges.

Social reformers wanted the higher and lower castes to have equal rights in law, education, politics, and in every other matter. In ancient Hindu law books regular systems of punishments were worked out on the basis of the gradations of caste. Bankimchandra Chattopadhyaya said that it was one of the benefits of British rule that under it the Brahmin as well as the Shudra had equal status in the law courts. Some old Sanskrit law-texts declared that the Shudras had no right to read the Vedas. To impart English education among the lower classes, should be,

2. Idem. p.130.
3. In the Institutes of Vishnu (tr. Julius Jolly, Oxford, 1900 pp.33-34) it is stated that if a Chandala intentionally defiled a twice-born caste-man by touch then he should be put to death. But a Brahmin, said Manu, (The Ordinances of Manu tr. Hopkins, London 1884, p.238), should not be killed even though he had committed every sort of crime. Kautilya however allowed that in extreme cases the Brahmin could be drowned. (Kautilya's Arthashastra, tr. R. Samasatry, Myso: 1923, p.277).
said Sankaran Nair, one of the fundamental aims of the social
reformers. He wanted the Brahmin scholars also to have an
English education so that they could appreciate the ideal of the
equality of men. Most nationalist leaders, even those who
belonged to the Brahmin caste, favoured the policy of educating
the masses. Further, Congressmen wanted that every Indian
irrespective of his caste, should enjoy the common political
rights. Congressmen, who wanted to introduce Western representa-
tive institutions into India, could not and did not demand that
the right of franchise should be limited to members of the higher
caste, they maintained that this right should rest on no narrower
basis than that of the equality of man with man.

There were some people who believed that because Indian
society was, and would continue to be, dominated by the institu-
tion of caste it would neither be possible nor desirable to try
to establish a democratic political structure. A.M.T. Jackson,
of the Indian civil service, wrote that in ancient Hindu states
the power of government was vested in certain sections of the
community and that the modern European idea that all the people
should have a voice in the government of the country found no
place in ancient Hindu political thought. He said that the
generality of the Indian people who believed in traditional ideas
did not desire the introduction of a democratic form of govern-

1. S. Nair, Two Notable Lectures, p.13.
George M. Chesney similarly wrote that it would be absolutely impossible for Indians, who had for centuries been accustomed to the undemocratic institution of caste, to develop a sudden enthusiasm for Western democratic ideals. Sir Henry Cotton believed that, because of caste, Indians were eminently fitted for an aristocratic and not a democratic form of government. Cotton had no sympathy with those who, under the inspiration of Western democratic ideas, sought to destroy caste. The destruction of caste would mean a too violent and revolutionary break with the past. India needed "the hierarchical leadership of caste". Internal order could best be maintained by a "patrician aristocracy" who were traditionally accustomed to control and lead the lower classes.

Some people believed that even if a nominally democratic form of government was introduced, parties in India, unlike those in Western democratic countries, would be formed not on the basis of political differences, but on the basis of caste. Sir Herbert Risley who apprehended the development of a caste party system said that parties formed on the basis of caste would be more organised and more efficient than any other party in the world, for the caste panchayet (committee of five) would be able to secure the adoption of any conceivable ticket by asking the

3. Ibid.
trader, the priest, the washerman and the barber to boycott the recalcitrant voter.

In the period 1885 to 1919 the most important nationalist groups, "moderates", "extremists", "terrorists", and the home rulers, were formed because of political, not caste, differences. Even the depressed classes associations, which were formed mainly on the basis of caste but which attacked caste privileges, did not strengthen but really weakened the institution of caste. Though a large number of Indians still suffer from the inequalities of the institution of caste, it cannot be denied that under the impact of modern forces the institution of caste is breaking down. Further, it does not appear that the existence of caste can prevent the development of a political democracy in India. It is expected that every adult Indian, irrespective of his caste, would have the right of electing the members of the Indian parliament from the time that the new constitution of the Indian Union would come into operation.

... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ... ...

B. MODERN INDUSTRIALISM

In economic matters, contact with Western thought helped to give rise to movements in favour of industrialism.

In 1907 in the third Indian Industrial Conference T.K. Gajjar said that without material prosperity no progress was possible and he asked Indians to learn from England, Germany, and America the methods of industrial and material progress. Gajjar pleaded for a radical change in the outlook of Indians towards

1. H. Risley, The People of India, p.286 (Risley was Census Commissioner from 1899-1902).
the mundane affairs of life and he urged them to establish colleges and polytechnics so that they would outnumber all the temples and mosques which were supposed to minister to the spiritual needs of the people. In his presidential address to the Fourth Indian Industrial Conference in 1908, R.N. Mudholkar said that the prevalence of an ascetic ideal of life had in the past encouraged the best Indians to despise wealth so that very few had devoted all their energies for the development of the industrial resources of the country. He asserted that the decline of Indian arts and industries was as much due to the economic competition of industrially advanced Western countries and the fiscal policy pursued by the British rulers, as to the prevalence of an ascetic, non-industrial outlook towards life on the part of Indians. Though this was an exaggeration, Mudholkar was absolutely justified in criticizing all those ascetic ideals which stood in the way of the development of an industrial outlook among Indians because without the development of such an outlook and the adoption of Western industrial methods Indian industries would never have been able to compete successfully with the developed industries of Europe.

Many Indian thinkers who favoured industrialism, however,

3. It is generally admitted that up to the end of the eighteenth century the industrial development of India was not inferior to that of the more advanced European nations. (Report of the Indian Industrial Commission, 1916-18, para. 1). This could not have been possible if Indians were always dominated by a non-industrial outlook towards life.
warned their countrymen against imitating the West in her "feverish pursuit of wealth". The Gaekwar of Baroda said in the second Indian Industrial Conference in 1906 that he hoped that India would be able to adopt modern Western industrial methods without completely forgetting her ideals of economic simplicity. Radhakamal Mukhopadhyaya stated that, unlike the peoples of the modern West who generally glorified wealth and believed in the multiplication of wants, in ancient India the people idealized poverty and believed in the limitation of wants. (In ancient India the work of the accumulation and the holding of wealth was reserved primarily for the second and the third castes, and the highest caste, the Brahmins, were supposed to live a life of poverty). Annie Besant maintained that the peoples of the West could be more happy if instead of ceaselessly trying to devise new objects for the satisfaction of their ever-increasing material needs, they limited their wants, and she believed that in learning the art of simplicity the West could take valuable lessons from India. In 1913 Bepin Pal declared that the style of living of the Western working-man was as much responsible for his economic servitude as the greed of his employer, and he argued that in order to ensure that the Western working-man gained his economic freedom it was not enough that there should be a more equitable

distribution of wealth between the employer and the worker, it was also necessary that the worker should limit his wants.

It is not possible to see how it could be reasonably asserted that the working men should limit their wants, for at the time when Pal was writing, in the West, and even more so in India, the necessary and reasonable wants of the common men were not generally satisfied. Despite all that could be said in favour of the ideal of economic simplicity most Indian thinkers had to recognize this fact. In order to increase the national wealth they, therefore, wanted to industrialize the country, even with state aid and protection.

The British rulers of India generally believed in the theory of laissez faire. According to the laissez faire theory every man by acting without state help and assistance and by merely pursuing his own economic self-interest was led by an invisible hand to produce the maximum amount of national wealth. As early as 1892 M.G. Ranade pointed out that the theory of laissez faire depended on assumptions that were not valid for all times and all countries, and he drew particular attention to the fact that this theory had been challenged by new economic schools and especially by the German Historical School.

In 1877 K.T. Telang argued that while Indians were denied the benefit of the British political theory that a people should not to be taxed unless their representatives consented to such

1. B. Pal, Nationality and Empire, p. 199.
taxation there was no reason why the economic theory of *laissez faire* which prevailed in Britain should necessarily be adopted in India. He also pointed out that not all English economists believed that the theory of *laissez faire* was applicable under all circumstances. John Stuart Mill conceded that in countries where the people were poor, ignorant, unenterprising, and lacked the spirit of cooperation it might be necessary and desirable that a progressive government should take an active part in the development of the national economy by building roads, works of irrigation hospitals, schools, printing presses, etc. Arguing on the above lines K.T. Telang maintained that in a backward country like India there could be no great industrial development without state aid and assistance, and he declared that the adoption of a policy of *laissez faire* would prove as harmful in India as it had proved beneficial in Britain.

From the assumption of direct rule by the Crown in 1858 till the end of the nineteenth century the government of India persisted in pursuing the doctrinaire policy of *laissez faire* in the industrial field. "It was thought inevitable", writes Vera Anstey, "that India should remain predominantly agricultural, whilst the government wished to avoid both the active encouragement of industries that (like the cotton mill industry) competed


3. K.T. Telang, *Select Writings and Speeches*, pp.147-149.
with powerful British interests, and increased state expenditure."

Up to the end of the nineteenth century all that the government did to assist the development of industries was to make very limited provisions for imparting technical and industrial education and for disseminating industrial and commercial information.

In the first decade of the twentieth century the Madras government actively participated in the development of industries. The active participation of the Madras government in the industrial development of the province was regarded by the local European commercial community as "a serious menace to private enterprise and an unwarrantable intervention on the part of the state in matters beyond the sphere of government". Morley substantially agreed with this point of view, and, in a dispatch on 29th July, 1910, while conceding that state funds could be spent in order to familiarize Indians with the scientific methods of production which were prevalent in the advanced European countries, he yet strongly deprecated, in accordance with his doctrinaire laissez-faire creed, any active participation of the government in the development of industries. This dispatch had a "deadening effect on the progressive industrial policy of the Madras government.

2. Ibid.
4. It is interesting to note that when Morley asked Hardinge if he would like to succeed Minto as Viceroy of India, the only question he put to Hardinge was whether he was a free-trader. Hardinge replied in the affirmative. (The Reminiscences of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, pp.3-4).
6. Ibid. p.4. Lord Crewe, who succeeded Lord Morley as Secretary of State for India, however, said that the Madras government put a too limited construction on Morley's dispatch. (Ibid. para. 108).
Upto the first great war the Indian government did not take any active or any great part in the development of industries. During the war it became abundantly clear that the industrial backwardness of India had greatly weakened the military strength of the British empire, and that, even from the purely British point of view, it was unwise for the government not to take steps in order to remove the industrial backwardness of India. In 1916 the government appointed the Indian Industrial Commission which wisely recommended that the government should take an active part in the industrial development of the country.

Indian publicists had for a long time demanded not only state aid but also state protection for indigenous industries. Telang argued that the question whether free trade was better than protection could not be decided by considering the principles of political economy alone. Free trade may be an economically sound policy but it might be better, from the point of view of national defence, to build up, by means of state protection, the basic, key and defence industries, even at the cost of some economic sacrifice. Similarly, inspite of some economic loss, state protection of certain industries for building up a balanced and diversified economy might be desirable. Telang and Ranade further pointed out that even J.S. Mill had conceded that temporary

3. K.T. Telang, Select Writings and Speeches, p.98.
6. Idem. p.556-7
protection of an infant industry in an undeveloped country could in certain cases, be ultimately beneficial even from the economic point of view.

Some Indian nationalists believed that the government of India refused to grant protection to Indian industries primarily because it sought to safeguard the interests of those British industries which exported their goods to India. This belief was strengthened by a knowledge of the fact that in the eighteenth century and in the early part of the nineteenth century Britain, in order to safeguard the interests of her industries, had imposed heavy protective duties against Indian goods. Stating that Indians could not protect their industries because of British imperial policy, some nationalists argued that under British rule Indians suffered from economic domination even more than from political domination, and they asserted that if they had to choose between political and economic Swaraj they would choose economic Swaraj.

Indian publicists used to draw attention to the fact that state aid and protection had facilitated the industrialisation of

1. K.T. Telang, Select Writings and Speeches, pp.170-7; M.G. Ranade, Essays on Indian Economics, p.25. See also Dadabhai Naoroji, Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, p.62; and The Indian World, September 1905: Editorial Notes, p.88.

2. See a speech of D.V. Krishna Rao in the Report of the Twenty-Fifth Indian National Congress, p.49.


Germany and the United States of America, that the British colonies, such as Australia and Canada, had raised protective duties even against the goods of their mother country, and that even in Britain faith in free trade had declined for Chamberlain had advocated a policy of imperial preference and Balfour had supported a policy of retaliation. Further, the success of Japan in adopting Western industrial methods with the help of state aid and protection did much to sustain and to strengthen the nationalist belief in the desirability of industrialization and in the necessity of state aid and protection.

In 1918 the Montagu-Chelmsford Report drew attention to the fact that the theoretical free trader hardly existed in India. In 1919 the Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament recommended that India should be granted, with certain reservations, the same fiscal freedom which Britain or the


2. See speeches of A.C. Mazumdar and V.V.J. Pantulu in the Report of the Twenty-Seventh Indian National Congress, pp.81-82; and the views of R.C. Dutt in "The Swadeshi Movement: A Symposium" (Published by G.A. Natesan, Madras) 2nd ed. p.92.


self-governing British colonies enjoyed. In 1923 the government of India adopted the recommendation of the Indian Fiscal Commission that a policy of "discriminating protection" should be introduced into India.

Though most Indian economists and politicians were in favour of state-aided industrialization, not all of them liked every aspect of the modern industrial system. Rabindranath Tagore criticized Western commercial industrialism on the ground that it had made the cities ugly and had destroyed the beauty of the countryside. He further maintained that by providing very little opportunity to the workers for the exercise of their artistic abilities, modern machines had taken much of the pleasure of work away from them. Poets like Tagore, philosophers like Radhakrishnan, art critics like Coomaraswamy, though they were not opposed to machinery as such, agreed more or less with the opinion of William Morris that modern industrialism necessarily resulted in "utilitarian ugliness" and that it was "founded on the art-lacking or unhappy labour of the greater part of men".

Coomaraswamy agreed that the industrial revolution was

virtually inevitable in Europe and that the broad outlines of the industrial system would have to be reproduced in India; but he argued that while the method of large-scale factory production should be applied for the manufacture of goods which required merely a mechanical skill, it was desirable that the handicraft system of production should be retained for the production of goods which required an artistic skill and which served an artistic purpose. In the manner of William Morris he asserted that the handicraft system of production, unlike large-scale mechanical and commercial method of production, recognised that men were more important than machines and that industry without art was always degrading.

Radhakamal Mukhopadhaya argued that the preservation of many of the old cottage industries would be profitable not only from the artistic but also from the economic point of view. He conceded that in certain fields, such as mining and railways, the establishment of large-scale industries partly on the Western model could not be avoided, because in those fields any other method of production would be economically unprofitable; but he believed that in most other fields it was possible and desirable to preserve the traditional cottage industries. The efficiency of the ancient cottage industries could be increased

by adopting the latest discoveries of Western science, such as by introducing cheap power looms in the cottages, or by distributing electricity to the cottages from a central village electricity depot which might be jointly owned by the villagers. Radhakamal suggested that the position of the small artisans could be strengthened if cooperative societies, which had proved successful in various Western countries, were introduced into India.

Even in this age of large-scale industrialism it is not economically unprofitable to retain certain small scale industries for the making, for example, of artistic goods "such as painting sculpture, embroidery, wood and ivory carvings, damascene work etc". But though certain small scale cottage industries can be preserved, the large majority of Indian industries could only be regenerated by the adoption of modern Western industrial methods. Coomaraswamy's criticisms of Indian politicians because they advocated the introduction of power-loom mills was not justified. P.N. Bose rightly argued: "It would ..... be as reasonable to expect our weavers with the hand-loom and our smelters with the primitive furnace to compete successfully with the cotton manufacturers and iron smelters of the West under existing conditions as it would be to expect people armed with muzzle-loaders to successfully defend themselves against enemies".


armed with quickfiring long-range rifles".

In the "Hind Swaraj" in 1908 Gandhi advised Indians to abandon completely the path of Western industrialism. He wrote: "Machinery has begun to desolate Europe .... Machinery is the chief symbol of modern civilization; it represents a great sin." In his later writings Gandhi explained that he was not opposed to machinery as such, but that he was opposed to the modern industrial system which had led to the unjust exploitation of human beings and to the concentration of wealth in a few hands.

Though the large majority of Indian economists and politicians rightly rejected the views on industrialism which Gandhi expressed in the "Hind Swaraj", they were not unaware of the defects of the modern industrial system. Bepin Pal, Annie Besant, Radhakamal Mukhopadhaya, Lajpat Rai and others drew attention to the fact that the majority of labourers in Western countries lived under unsatisfactory economic and social conditions. P.N. Bose argued that in spite of the fact that the increase in the national wealth of advanced Western industrial countries had improved somewhat the economic condition of the Western working-man, because the newly-created wealth was very inequitably distributed between the worker and

1. See a speech in 1911 (P.N. Bose, Essays and Lectures, pp. 83-4).
2. M.K. Gandhi, Hind Swaraj, p. 85. See also pp.262-3 above.
3. Selections from Gandhi, ed. Nirmal Kumar Bose, pp. 57-60. See also p. 265 above.
4. B.C. Pal, Nationality and Empire, p. 199.
the capitalist the relative poverty of the Western working-man had increased while his actual poverty had not. This enormous inequality of wealth gave rise to a serious class conflict between the labourer and the capitalist and threatened the very foundations of Western industrial societies.

Bepin Pal believed that in democratic countries such as Britain, France, and the United States of America this class conflict might be ended peacefully and constitutionally by the adoption of some form of State Socialism, but he doubted whether this class conflict could be ended peacefully and constitutionally in countries such as Germany and Austria – Hungary where there did not exist any democratic political structure. In Russia, where there existed no political democracy, the Bolsheviks came to power by pursuing revolutionary methods. In 1919 Pal asked the rulers of India to consider whether in India, where the people were very poor and where there existed no political democracy, there might not break out a violent Bolshevik revolution if vigorous and timely measures were not taken to increase the political liberties and to improve the economic condition of the Indian masses.

4. Pal said that at first he fought shy of the word "Bolshevism", but later after a visit to Europe, where he could study the literature of Bolshevism, he came to realise that the aim of Bolshevism, which was a powerful and growing force in Europe, was to emancipate the working men from the rule of the capitalists. (Idem, pp. 22-5).
In 1913 Pal drew attention to the fact that there had arisen a powerful group of thinkers in Europe who had realised that so long as there existed grave economic inequalities the establishment of a political democracy alone would not secure the freedom of the common people; and he pointed out that though representative government had theoretically transferred all political power from kings and aristocrats to the common masses, as a matter of fact, the real rulers in modern political democracies were the wealthy capitalists, who with the help of the educated middle classes, really controlled the democratic parliaments.

In 1919 Lajpat Rai declared that many Indian nationalists were afraid of attacking the privileges of the territorial aristocrats and the industrial magnates, and were willing to maintain an economic system in which a small minority of people possessed the greater part of the national wealth. He rightly maintained that it was not enough to fight against the domination of foreign rulers, it was also necessary to fight against the privileges which the Indian capitalists and land-lords enjoyed. He declared that India needed leaders like Keir Hardie and Lansbury who would not be afraid to attack the privileges of the men of property and who would fight for the establishment of a real democracy where there would exist

equality of opportunity for all.

Lajpat and Pal, who criticized various features of the capitalist system, did not advocate that the democratic state should own all the instruments of production. They were not socialists. They wanted to improve the capitalistic system by the development of a strong trade union movement and by various other means.

In 1919 Lajpat wrote: "We know we cannot fly the flag of Socialism. We do not understand Socialism. We have never studied it". In the period 1885 to 1919 very few educated Indians come in contact with socialist thought. This was natural. The great motive force of socialism is labour, but labour was not yet a power in Indian politics. This is clear from the fact that prior to the first great war the trade union movement had hardly developed in India.


3. Lajpat Rai, India's Will to Freedom, pp. 36-7.
CHAPTER X

SOME CONCLUSIONS

Early Congressmen wanted not to terminate British rule, but to liberalize it. In 1837 Congressmen widely distributed among the people some pamphlets which pointed out various defects of British rule and rightly insisted that British rule should be liberalized by the gradual introduction of Western representative institutions.

Raja Siva Prasad, a representative of the conservative landed aristocrats, who believed that a person used inflammatory language if he said that England owed her greatness to the principles of democracy or that there were many virtues in the republican form of French government, unwisely asked the government to put a stop to the distribution among the people of those pamphlets which contained serious criticisms of British rule.

Vigorous political propaganda by the Congress raised the question whether it was wise to concede to dependent India that freedom of political expression which existed in Britain. George Chesney, Lepel Griffin, Theodore Morison and others argued that the freeing of the press in India on the assumption that what was good for democratic Britain was good for despotic India was a great mistake and that owing to the existence of a free press the government of India was faced with a mass of irresponsible criticism.

As early as 1822 Munro had said that a free Indian press would teach the people to free themselves from the rule of foreigners. Early Congressmen, however, wanted to liberalize British rule and not to end it. They could liberalize it by
means of constitutional agitation and for conducting such agitation it was necessary that the press should be free. Though the early Congressmen had very great faith in the liberal instincts of their British rulers they realized that their rulers would not, of their own free will, grant Indians wider political rights unless Indians ceaselessly agitated for those rights through the press and the platform.

The political demands of the early Congressmen were quite moderate. They claimed that the English-educated and other enlightened classes should have a wider share in the administration of the country, but they did not demand the immediate introduction of manhood suffrage and of a responsible parliament on the English model.

Unlike the English-educated Congressmen, the landed aristocrats generally held undemocratic and unprogressive views. The Raja of Bhinga asserted that the landed aristocrats could not welcome any measure that gave power to a man of "lower" caste over a man of "superior" caste, and that they were utterly opposed to the attempts of Congressmen to introduce gradually the democratic institutions of the West in a conservative country such as India.

Like the Raja of Bhinga, Saiyid Ahmed said that men of "low" birth should not have authority over men of "high" birth. But the real reason of Saiyid Ahmed's opposition to the Congress was that he was afraid that if a parliamentary democracy on the English model was introduced then the majority community, the Hindus, would establish a government English in name but Hindu in reality. To safeguard Muslim rights in the legislative councils
the 1889 Congress wisely suggested that each community should be represented in the councils in proportion to its numbers. For representation to the legislative councils Saiyid Ahmed opposed the introduction of the elective principle and Salisbury, the British Prime Minister, originally criticized the principle by stating that it was not an Eastern idea. Yet, happily, at least a quasi-elective system was introduced by the Councils Act of 1892.

This Act could not fully satisfy moderate Congressmen. But though the "moderates" criticized British rulers for not giving Indians greater political rights they yet believed that British rule alone stood between order and anarchy in India, and that Indians could learn to work Western parliamentary institutions more quickly under the rule of the British than under any other foreign imperial rule. Britain was the political guide and moral preceptor of the "moderates". They took pride in the fact that they were British subjects. They claimed every political right that Englishmen enjoyed in Britain as their birthright and sought to achieve their political rights with the help and co-operation of the British nation.

It is natural for a present-day Indian nationalist to criticize the "moderates" for their tendency to claim greater political freedom sometimes as a boon and not always as a right, and their fond hope that the holders of power would voluntarily surrender power. Though there is much truth in these criticisms, it must also be remembered that it was because, in the early years
of the Congress, the nationalist sentiment was very weak that from a sense of sheer helplessness many "moderates" came to develop a pathetic reliance on the British sense of justice.

But as the strength of nationalist sentiment increased there came into prominence, in the first decade of the twentieth century, a party of "extremists" who had no faith in the British sense of justice and who were dissatisfied with the rate of political progress that the "moderate" method of agitation had secured. The Japanese victory over Russia in 1905 and the development of movements for self-government in Eastern countries such as Turkey, Persia and China, on the one hand, and Curzon's unpopular policies, on the other, greatly stimulated and strengthened nationalist and "extremist" sentiments.

"My own belief", wrote Curzon in 1900, "is that the Congress is tottering to its fall, and one of my great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise". Unfortunately, in Curzon's conception of Indian politics there was little room for the English-educated class which aspired to lead the masses. He offered no political concession to them, and being a firm believer in the superiority of Englishmen over Indians he proclaimed the necessity of reserving the higher ranks of civil employment in India mostly for Englishmen. Naturally therefore his declaration that instead of thinking of India for Indians, Indians and Englishmen should work in a spirit of refined and cosmopolitan patriotism was ill-received by many Indian nationalists.

Some of the "extremists" went so far as to say that they
preferred the rule of Curzon to that of Ripon because while the latter satisfied Indians with political concessions the former clearly revealed to Indians the dependent and unsatisfactory position that they occupied under British rule. As a protest against Curzon's policy of partitioning Bengal some of the "extremists" asked the people to boycott British goods as well as the British government. The "extremists" were the first important Indian non-cooperators, the forerunners of Mahatma Gandhi.

Though, like the Irish Sinn Feiners, the "extremists" asked the people to leave the government severely alone and advised them to establish, in every sphere of national life, national institutions such as schools and colleges, law courts and industries, which would be independent of government aid and assistance, they warned the people not to oppose the government violently. They said that any violent attempt, at that time, to challenge British rule was bound to lead to a demoralizing failure. The "terrorists", on the other hand, who were willing to kill and were prepared to die, under-estimated the strength of British power in India and during the first great war some of them even cherished the delusivé hope that with German help they would be able violently to overthrow British rule.

The "terrorists" turned to the history of Russian "terrorism" to find justification for their activities, and they persuaded themselves to believe that such justification could be found even in the Bhagavad Gita and in Bankimchandra's Anandamath. Some of the "terrorists" believed in the anarchism of Bakunin, some entertained vague socialistic ideas, some others accepted the social
ideal of Vivekananda, but most "terrorists" had no firm positive political philosophy. In place of British rule they wanted Indian rule but, unlike their more moderate and Westernized countrymen such as Surendranath and Gokhale, they did not insist that that rule must be democratic.

For suppressing "terrorism" and sedition the soldier Minto sometimes favoured the adoption of more severe repressive policies than the Liberal Morley could easily approve. Though Morley originally approved of Minto's action when he deported certain persons without trial, he later pressed Minto for releasing the deportees at an early date and wisely reminded him that by packing-off train-loads of suspects without trial to Siberia the Russian Tsar could not save himself from the Duma. Congressmen, while condemning "terrorism", drew attention to the significant fact that "terrorist" movements generally flourished in despotic countries such as Russia and not in free countries such as Britain. They also maintained that it would be unwise to suppress the Indian press completely in an attempt to check "terrorism". Morley himself pointed out that, to be consistent, such a policy of suppression would involve the passing of an Explosive Books Act which would make the possession of unlicensed books on freedom such as those of Mill, Burke, Macaulay and Bright as illegal as the possession of a bomb.

Lord Curzon, Lord Cromer, and Lord Lamington believed that English education was greatly responsible for the growth of unrest in India. Sir J.D. Rees, Justice Beaman and others asserted that
the English-educated Indians were disloyal to British rule. Morley knew that unrest in India could not be checked by merely criticizing the English-educated Indians as being disloyal or by saying that they did not count because they constituted a small minority of India's total population. He admitted that the rule of a cast-iron bureaucracy could not go on for ever and he realized that the government would have to satisfy some of the political aspirations of the English-educated class by introducing political reforms.

Though the Morley-Minto reforms liberalized the legislative councils, for the representation of Muslims, instead of creating territorial constituencies of the British type, they introduced separate communal electorates. The authors of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report clearly saw that the creation of communal electorates was a violation of the principles of liberal democracy, but unfortunately in Morley's ideas of imperial government there was no room for the development in India of parliamentary democracy of the English kind. Morley even harboured the vain hope that as a result of his reforms some of the "moderates" might give up the ideal of colonial self-government. But Congressmen clearly saw that the Morley-Minto reforms would help to develop parliamentary institutions and to establish eventually a colonial form of self-government in India. Surendranath exaggeratedly proclaimed Morley to be the Simon de Montfort of the future parliament of India.

Five years after the reforms, when war broke out in Europe,
the "moderates" as well as many "extremists" asked the people to help Britain in her war-effort against Germany. Gandhi clearly perceived that by learning the use of arms, through their participation in the defence of the British empire, Indians would hasten the day when their country would be admitted as an equal partner in the "British" commonwealth.

The contribution of India to the war-effort evoked the gratitude of British statesmen, and in 1915 Tilak and Besant started a home rule movement claiming greater self-government for Indians not as a reward for their war-services but as a natural right which they could claim as a nation. Happily, by the announcement of August 20th, 1917, responsible or parliamentary government as distinct from "good government"—which in the past was claimed by Congressmen but repudiated for India by Kimberley, Curzon, Morley and Crewe—was accepted by the British government as the goal of British policy in India.

The Montagu-Chelmsford Report proposed the establishment of a limited measure of responsible government. Some heads of the provinces, such as Reginald Craddock and Michael O'Dwyer, argued that Montagu and Chelmsford, under the inspiration of British constitutional doctrines and under the influence of Curtis, the Round Table theorist, had suggested the establishment of a limited measure of responsible government for which Indians by their history and tradition were totally unfitted. O'Dwyer was firmly of the opinion that the reforms would put control over a part of the administration into the hands of a small, unrepresentative, and inefficient English-educated class.

1. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, India As I Knew It, pp. 369, 373.
Montagu realized that the fact that education had not spread among the masses could not be made into an argument for denying the legitimate political aspirations of the English-educated and other enlightened classes. Even Curzon, who had once been the most prominent advocate of the idea of "good government" as distinguished from that of self-government, realized that when Allied leaders had talked freely about the ideals of democracy and national self-determination, the introduction into India of a certain measure of political reforms could not be avoided, no matter whether as a result of it the standard of administration somewhat deteriorated or not. (It does not appear, however, that as a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms the standard of administration deteriorated).

Congressmen were not fully satisfied with the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. It was natural that when their hopes for self-government had been raised, among other things, by President Wilson's inspiring declarations that the world must be made safe for democracy and that, in future, the governments should be based on the consent of the governed, they would be disappointed with the reforms which did not introduce any measure of responsible government in the centre and which even in the provinces established only a very limited measure of responsible government.

After the public agitation over the Punjab tragedy, the Khilafat question, and the Rowlatt Bills, the special Congress in 1920 asked the people not to cooperate with the reformed councils, the government educational institutions, and the British law-courts.
Further, in December, 1920, the Congress adopted the ideal of Swaraj and eliminated its previous declared adherence to the British connection. From 1920 the Congress, which was originally founded by men of moderate views, who were loyal to the British crown and the British empire and who pursued only strictly constitutional and gradualist methods, increasingly became a revolutionary body.

... ... ... ... ... ...

Above we have considered the influence of Western political ideas on the minds of Indian nationalists. But, of course, even outside the field of politics, narrowly defined, Indian nationalists were influenced by Western ideas. The first important reaction of educated Indians to the contact with Western thought resulted in the foundation by Raja Ram Mohan Roy of the religious reform movement of the Brahmo Samaj. The Raja boldly spoke in favour of the introduction of English education. Idolatry and polytheism, which Christian missionaries criticized, were denounced by the Raja, as being inconsistent with the teachings of the Upanishads.

Dayananda, like the Raja, sought to preserve Hinduism by reforming it, and he courageously denounced many evil social practices because they were un-Vedic. Even some orthodox Hindus could accept the salutary reforms advocated by him because they felt that by so doing they would only revive the golden age of the Vedas and not denationalize or Westernize themselves.

Like Ram Mohan and Dayananda, Vivekananda stimulated the pride of Indians in their ancient culture. But though Vivekanada
was a great cultural nationalist he also asked his countrymen to learn from Europeans their scientific methods and their liberal ideas of social organisation. But convinced as he was that in the East as well as in the West no enduring solution of human problems could be achieved without a spiritual transformation in the character of men, he warned his countrymen not to forget or to neglect that body of spiritual knowledge which Indians had accumulated throughout the centuries.

Aurobindo also asked his countrymen to uphold the Sanatana Dharma and argued that by reforming their institutions and by establishing, in imitation of Britain, a casteless society and parliamentary democratic polity, they would not necessarily change men. It appears that in emphasizing the value of good character Aurobindo underestimated the value of good institutions. Be that as it may, Aurobindo declared that India was rising as a nation to preach the message of Sanatana Dharma and, like Mazzini, he proclaimed that the aim of nationalism should be primarily spiritual and not merely political.

Like Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi believed that India had a spiritual mission. But unfortunately in the Hind Swaraj (1908) Mahatma Gandhi, who wanted to revive an ancient Indian "spiritual" civilization, criticized modern Western civilization as being completely materialistic and denounced all its instruments and institutions such as big cities and modern industries, and railways and hospitals.

Rabindranath Tagore did not criticize everything Western as being unspiritual. He was anxious that Indians should come
in close contact with the dynamic culture of the modern West, and he clearly perceived that the spread of Western scientific and liberal ideas had helped to develop among Indians a spirit of free enquiry and an anti-authoritarian attitude of mind. Though appreciating the best elements of modern Western culture, Tagore did not fail to draw attention to some of the glaring evils associated with competitive and commercial industrialism and aggressive nationalism, and he declared that an ideal society could only be created by combining the highest ideals of the East as well as the West.

Contact with Western thought helped to give rise to movements against the undemocratic social institution of caste, which in the past was criticized by Indian religious reformers such as Buddha, Mahavira, Ramanuja, Ramananda, Kabir, Nanak and others. Most Indian reformers realized that the inequalities of caste based on birth were worse than the inequalities of class based on wealth which existed in the democratic countries of Europe. They further realized that the caste system, which was based on the principle of heredity, could not be defended as a beneficial institution merely by saying that Karl Pearson and some other European eugenists had stated that for race improvement heredity was far more important than environment.

Social reformers such as Tagore, Sankaran Nair, Jayakar and others clearly saw that it was inconsistent for a people who were opposed to the despotism of an European Collector to submit willingly to the social despotism of the Brahmin. They welcomed the equality in the eye of law of all castes that the British
introduced, and they also favoured the spread of English education among the "high" as well as the "low" castes. The some men, such as Sir Henry Cotton, thought that the orthodox Hindu would not accept the European idea of political democracy and that India needed the hierarchical leadership of castes, and though others, such as Sir Herbert Risley, mistakenly believed that the introduction of Western parliamentary institutions might lead to the development of a caste party system, Congressmen wisely demanded equal political rights for men of all castes.

In social matters contact with Western thought helped to give rise to movements against the undemocratic caste system, and in economic matters it helped to give rise to movements in favour of industrialism. Indian nationalists generally attacked the English classical theory of *laissez faire* and free trade because they wanted to industrialize the country with state help and protection. They found support for their views in John Stuart Mill's argument in favour of protection for infant industries. They noticed that even after Britain became a free trade country the British colonies raised tariff walls against the goods of their mother country, and they emphatically stated that if Indians were politically free then they would have granted state protection to their infant industries as the free 1 Americans, or Germans, or Japanese had done.

Tagore and Coomaraswamy lamented, in the manner of William Morris, that modern industrialism had resulted in "utilitarian

1. Not till 1921-22 did the government of India adopt the principle of "discriminating protection" for Indian industries.
ugliness"; and Lajpat Rai, Bepin Pal and Motilal Nehru complained that it had encouraged extreme inequalities of income and wealth between the labourer and the capitalist. They, however, rightly realized that these evils of modern industrialism could be remedied or, at least, much lessened, and that it was not necessary to abandon completely the path of modern industrialism.

To sum up, Indian nationalists were influenced, in certain respects, by Western political ideas. The "moderates" were particularly influenced by English constitutional theories, the "extremists" by Irish Sinn Fein ideas, the "terrorists" by the methods of the Russian "terrorists", and the home rulers by the declarations of Woodrow Wilson on national self-determination and democracy. Further, progressive Indian nationalists and social reformers asked their countrymen to learn the natural and social sciences of the West, to fight against the evils of the undemocratic caste system, and to adopt modern Western industrial methods in order to increase the wealth of the country.
A NOTE ON THE IDEAL OF SWARAJ WITHIN THE BRITISH EMPIRE (1914 - 1919)

Those who sought to terminate British rule by revolutionary means did not think that it was ever possible to attain self-government within the British empire. The Sandhya, a revolutionary organ of Bengal, wrote: "We want complete independence. The country cannot prosper so long as the veriest shred of the Feringi's supremacy over it is left". During the first great war the revolutionaries tried to secure material assistance from the Germans in order to overthrow British rule.

But the "moderates", and even the "extremists", supported Britain in her war against Germany. In a letter that appeared in the Mahratta on 30th August 1914 Tilak, the "extremist" leader, exhorted his countrymen to rush to the defence of Britain who had "been compelled to take up arms in defence of weaker states". In December 1914 the Congress, which was at that time a completely "moderate" body, passed a resolution declaring its "firm resolve to stand by the Empire at all hazards and at all costs". In supporting this resolution

1. An opprobrious epithet for the British.
4. See Bhupendranath Basu's pamphlet "Why India is Heart and Soul with Great Britain".
5. Quoted in the article "Bal Gangadhar Tilak" by "Nationalist in The Indian World, March 1918, p. 222.
Surendranath Banerjea said, "We are loyal because we are patriotic ... because we feel that with the stability and permanence of British rule are bound up the best prospects of Indian advancement ..... because we feel that under the aegis of British protection we are bound, in the ordering of Providence and in the evolution of our destinies, to enter that confederacy of free states rejoicing in their indissoluble connection with England and glorying in the possession of her free institutions".

Nationalist leaders were not oblivious to the grave defects and failings of British rule, but many of them felt that India would not gain anything if British rule was replaced by German rule. N.C. Kelkar asked Indians not to forget that a prolonged process of exploitation of India had, on the one hand, satisfied, to a large extent, Britain's economic hunger and, on the other, had roused and awakened her moral conscience in the matter of her economic dealings with the Indian people, and that if British rule was replaced by any other foreign then the rule/the prolonged process of exploitation would start all over again.

It appears that some nationalists also believed that "the success of Germany would mean an Empire of Force", and that the


2. N.C. Kelkar, The Case for Indian Home Rule, p. 112. For similar views see also a speech of Tilak on June 1st, 1916 (Lok. Tilak's Speeches on Home Rule, p. 80).

Allies were "fighting for the emancipation of mankind". Ambica Charan Mazumdar wrote that democrats in India had always denounced the propagation of the theory that Germany was the chosen race and that she had a right to spread her "superior" culture throughout the world by means of force and violence. He admitted that "the masses know as much of the Germans as of the man in the moon, and if German militarism were to win, they would settle down as quietly under the 'mailed fist' as they are securely ensconced behind the British Lion", but he maintained that the educated classes believed that Britain "stood in defence of Freedom's cause and the just rights of other nations".

It seems that Mazumdar over-emphasised the ideological reasons why Indian nationalists supported the war-effort. R.G. Pradhan wrote that very few of the politically minded Indians believed that Britain went to war solely for the purpose of ensuring that the cause of freedom would ultimately triumph in the world. He explained that Indians accepted the liberal declarations of British statesmen during the war at their face value so that they could use those declarations later in order to lend force to argument in favour of Indian freedom. Jawaharlal Nehru narrates that though during the

1. The Presidential Address of the Hon'ble Akhila Chandra Datta at the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Chinsura on 30th March 1918, p.1.


first great war there was no love for Germany, Indians—both
"moderates" and "extremists"—learnt with satisfaction of
German victories because they wanted to see their rulers
humbled. After a visit to India, Josiah C. Wedgwood wrote
(1921) that though Indians wanted Britain to win, they did not
wish her to win by too much because they felt that it would be
extremely difficult to secure political concessions from a
proud and completely triumphant Britain.

Many Indians supported the war-effort because they
believed that the easiest and straightest way by which self-
government could be achieved was by participating in the
defence of the British empire. In June 1918 M.K. Gandhi said
that unless Indians could defend themselves without the help of
Englishmen they would not be admitted as equal partners in the
British empire. He asked Indians to learn the use of arms
and to crowd the battlefields of France. India's future was
to be decided on those battlefields and not in the official
buildings of Simla and Whitehall. "The gateway to our freedom"
wrote Gandhi in a letter to Srinivasa Sastri, "is situated on
the French Soil .......

2. J.C. Wedgwood, The Future of the Indo-British Commonwealth,
p. 125.
3. Gandhi's recruiting appeal to the people of Khaira.
(J.K. Mazumdar, Indian Speeches and Documents on British
Rule pp. 185-186).
4. Ibid. See also Gandhi, "An Autobiography or The Story of
My Experiments With Truth". (tr. Mahadev Desai).
Ahmedabad, 1945, pp. 359-361.
5. See Gandhi's letter to V.S.S. Sastri in "India's Goal:
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Chelmsford Scheme", Madras p. 134.
The freedom that was desired by Indian politicians or home rulers, who supported the British war-effort, was freedom within the British commonwealth. Even Tilak who in 1907, as an "extremist" leader, had said that Swaraj was a higher ideal than colonial self-government, declared, during the home rule movement, that "Indians did want English people, English institutions, English liberty and the Empire". "The meaning of Swaraj". he said on 31st May 1916, 'is the retention of our Emperor and the rule of the English people, and the full possession by the people of the authority to manage the remaining affairs". Or to put it more simply: "The Swaraj of today is within the Empire and not independent of it". This opinion was shared by other home rule leaders such as A. Besant, Subramaniam Iyer and C.R. Das.

In a speech in October 1917 Das said that Indians must remember that India was a part of the largest empire that the world had ever seen. There had never been in history an empire which represented so many creeds, cultures, races and

1. See p. 133, above. Even as an "extremist" leader, however, Tilak had once said to Henry Nevinson that though there existed a small party which desired immediate independence his remote ideal was nothing more than "a confederacy of the Indian provinces, possessing colonial self-government, with all Imperial questions set apart for the central government in England". (H.W. Nevinson, The New Spirit in India, p. 72).


5. A. Besant, India and the Empire, p. 64.

6. Speeches and Writings of Dr. S. Subramaniam Iyer, p. 53.

nationalities as did the British empire. C.R. Das believed that if the federation of all humanity was to be realized it would probably come through the federation of this vast empire.

Bepin Pal, in his later years, came to cherish the ideal of imperial federation. From 1905 to 1908 he had emphasized the ideal of complete Swaraj and not the ideal of imperial federation. He believed that in order to rouse the national consciousness of the people and to demonstrate to the British rulers the strength and force of nationalist sentiment it was essential that in the early years of the nationalist movement the former and not the latter ideal should have been emphasized.

But since 1911 he began to argue that because the nationalist sentiment of the people had already been roused it was necessary, at that time, to tell the people that the ideal of exclusive national sovereignty was an incomplete ideal.

He said that the empire-idea was larger and nobler than the nation-idea. A number of nations could gain much if they formed parts of a cooperative imperial federation than if they lived their separate national lives in isolation from one another. He, however, did not fail to make it clear that India could associate with Britain in a cooperative imperial federation only if she was given as much self-government as any other British Dominion.

2. Ibid.
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