The Ideological Differences between Moderates and Extremists in the Indian National Movement with Special Reference to Surendranath Banerjea and Lajpat Rai 1883-1919

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Daniel Argov

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ABSTRACT

Surendranath Banerjea was typical of the 'moderates' in the Indian National Congress while Lajpat Rai typified the 'extremists'. This thesis seeks to portray critical political biographies of Surendranath Banerjea and of Lajpat Rai within a general comparative study of the moderates and the extremists, in an analysis of political beliefs and modes of political action in the Indian national movement, 1883-1919. It attempts to mirror the attitude of mind of the two nationalist leaders against their respective backgrounds of thought and experience, hence events in Bengal and the Punjab loom larger than in other parts of India.

"The Extremists of to-day will be Moderates to-morrow, just as the Moderates of to-day were the Extremists of yesterday."

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, 2 January 1907

ABBREVIATIONS

B.N.N.R. Bengal Native Newspaper Reports

I.N.C. Indian National Congress

I.O.L. India Office Library

Prog. Proceeding(s)

P.N.N.R. Punjab Native Newspaper Reports

EUR. MSS. European Manuscripts

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INTRODUCTION

The Ilbert Bill controversy and the Anglo-Indian Defence Association gave impetus to the National Fund in Bengal, which culminated in December 1883 in the National Conference, and in December 1885 in the establishment of the Indian National Congress.

During its early years, the main struggle of the Congress was a struggle for recognition by the Government. The Congress endeavoured to present an image of respectability and loyalty, and its watchwords were moderation and caution. An exclusive body of Englisheducated Indians, whose principle desire was to assimilate Western political institutions, the Congress kept aloof from the masses.

The Congress directed its main effort towards

England and pinned its hopes on the Liberal party. It
justified its requests for Indian representation in the

British Government of India on the basis of England's
pledges to India. The concept of England's pledges, built

upon declarations of Thomas Munro, Macaulay, Henry

Lawrence, and above all upon Queen Victoria's Proclamation,

was enhanced by Ripon's pro-Indian policy; yet from the
end of Ripon's Viceroyalty to 20 August 1917, successive

viceroys and secretaries of state for India emphatically

repudiated the feasibility of introducing English political

institutions to India. "A time may conceivably come ... to leave India to herself but for the present it is necessary to govern her as if we were to govern her for ever" - proved to be the consummation of England's pledges and their delayed fulfilment.

The growth of the extremist party in India was explained by Bipin Chandra Pal as follows: "Lord Ripon was a kind Viceroy but one who acted as a baby-comforter and we had been brought up for too long a period upon political lollipops; Lord Curzon threw the baby-comforter away and thus made us feel our hunger for Swaraj." At the same time it was the failure of the moderates to gain reforms by persuasion which resulted in the extremists' determination to force the Government to yield power by coercion.

Both the moderates and the extremists came from the middle class, both were reacting towards British rule, and both voiced Indian grievances. The moderates claimed social equality and a share in the British Government of India on the grounds that they were British subjects; the extremists demanded social equality and political emancipation as their birthright. The moderates appealed to Englishmen in England and placed their reliance on English history and English political ideas; the extremists drew sustenance from India's

^{1.} Sir John Seeley, The Expansion of England, London 1883, pp.193-194.

^{2.} B.C.Pal, Speeches at Madras, Ganesh, Madras 1907, p.6.

heritage and appealed to Indians by invoking religious patriotism. The moderates emphasised the need for political apprenticeship under the providential guidance of British rule; the extremists rejected the idea of England's providential mission in India as an illusion. They disparaged the constitutional agitation of the moderates as 'mendicancy', and their stress on apprenticeship as an acceptance of ceaseless political servitude. Instead, they called for self-reliance and self-apprenticeship through Swadeshi, Boycott and Passive-Resistance. In contrast, the moderates stressed that their constitutional agitation was practical statesmanship, that emotional idealism was fraught with peril, that rashness was not courage, that British rule would not come to an end because of Boycott, and above all that the removal of British rule would result in chaos and anarchy.

The present tendency to depict the early history of the Indian National Congress as 'The History of the Freedom Movement' ignores the fact that the moderate leaders of the Congress constantly harped on the theme of securing the permanence of British rule in India. For Banerjea, Swaraj meant self-restraint; while Sinha and Gokhale said, on different occasions, that if the British were to leave

^{1.} Surendranath Banerjea, A Nation in Making, Oxford University Press, 1925, p.125.

India, Indians would call them back before they reached Aden. 1

The moderates reconciled loyalty to England with Indian patriotism, believing that the two were necessarily compatible and complementary. For the extremists, Indian patriotism and loyalty to British rule were two diametrically conflicting entities. The moderates tenaciously sought gradual reform and could see no half-way-house between order and revolution. The extremists held that revolution was but rapid evolution, and that peace and order under British rule amounted to national stagnation. The moderates used English political ideas as their weapons for arguments and petitions. The extremists bolstered up India's past and advocated militant struggle, not debate. The moderates sought Hindu-Muslim unity, and maintained a secular view of politics; the extremists fostered Hindu pride and thus antagonized the Muslims. The moderates solicited constitutional reforms on the basis that the British Government of India was not an alien government but an administration which could transform itself through gradual stages into an Indian national government. The extremists regarded the British Government of India as a system of

^{1.} Sinha to Lady Minto, Mary Countess of Minto, India:
Minto and Morley, London 1934, p.298.
Gokhale to Lord Hardinge, Lord Hardinge, My Indian
Years, London 1948, p.115.

despotic alien rule. The moderates aspired to attain Indian self-government within the British Empire. The extremists regarded the British Empire as imperialism based on capitalism, and strove to free India from British rule.

Thus the differences between the moderates and the extremists were not confined to different methods of agitation, but were fundamental differences in aim and methods. This thesis seeks to outline the change in India's reaction to British rule from the period when the British Government of India was regarded as a providential government ordained to fulfil a mission, to the time when it was viewed as a Satanic government.

With the exception of S.A.Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale (University of California, 1962), standard works on the Indian national movement (i.e. H.C.E. Zacharias, Renacent India from Ram Mohan Roy to Mohandas Gandhi, London 1933 or, Andrews and Mukerji, The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India 1938, or, C.Y.Chintamani, Indian Politics since the Mutiny, London 1940), provide a general history of the Indian National Congress without sufficiently emphasising the mental conflict between the moderates and the extremists. S.A. Wolpert's comparative study of Tilak and Gokhale portrays the role of the two best known representatives of the moderates and the extremists, yet it might lead the unsuspecting reader to draw the conclusion that the two Maharashtrian leaders were the only ones, or that

Maharashtra alone exemplified the history of the Indian national movement. While there are political biographies of Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Aurobindo Ghosh, and numerous studies of Tilak, no full study has been written on Surendranath Banerjea, while Lajpat Rai has been virtually neglected. Thus the choice of contrasting Surendranath Banerjea with Lajpat Rai has been made in order to present a comprehensive study of Surendranath Banerjea, and to fill the gap on Lajpat Rai.

When Gandhi led the Non-Co-operation movement
Banerjea became an anachronism and was charged with national treason, hence his personality does not appeal to Indian historians of the freedom movement. At the same time
Banerjea's autobiography A Nation in Making is regarded as an adequate exposition of his political career, and therefore kept off others from an analysis of his character and ideas; yet since the main purpose of Banerjea's autobiography was to vindicate himself against the charge that he became a traitor, it is mainly one-sided. The present thesis supplements Banerjea's autobiography with his speeches and his newspaper the Bengalee as well as with views of his contemporaries, and seeks to present an impartial critical assessment.

Lajpat Rai has been hitherto virtually ignored mainly because Tilak appeals to historians as the main exponent of the extremists. In addition, it would appear

that some of Lajpat Rai's papers are kept closed in Delhi by his former secretary, thus discouraging publications on Lajpat Rai. This research attempts to piece together the scattered articles, speeches and writings of Lajpat Rai into a cohesive narrative. Two unpublished works of Lajpat Rai have been used: his autobiographical fragment entitled The Story of My Life (1867-1907), and his Recollections of his life and work for an independent India while living in the United States of America and in Japan 1914-1917, for which I am indebted to Mr. V.C. Joshi, Assistant Director National Archives of India. Furthermore, use has been made of the available extracts from Lajpat Rai's newspaper the Punjabee.

The thesis is based on the writings and speeches of the moderates and the extremists through which they speak for themselves. Official records and reports include extracts from the newly opened Curzon papers. The Reports of the Indian National Congress, newspapers and periodicals, biographies and recollections, have been extensively used.

CHAPTER I

THE EARLY CAREER OF SURENDRANATH BANERJEA, THE NATIONAL FUND AND THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE 1871-1885

"It is impossible to imagine the Nationalist
Movement in India without Mr. Banerjea."

Born in 1848, Surendranath Banerjea received his early
education at Doveton College - an institution which was
mainly restricted to Anglo-Indians² - where he was taught
by his English teachers English and Latin literature.

Surendranath's father was influenced by the teaching of
David Hare and by the ideas of Henry Derozio. He became a
successful medical practitioner in Calcutta and wholeheartedly accepted Western ideals and modes of behaviour.

At the same time Surendranath belonged to a Kulin Brahman
family in which his grandfather maintained strict observance
of Hindu orthodoxy.³

Thus Banerjea's later marked Anglophilism is to be traced to his school days at Doveton College and to his father's Westernization; but throughout his career he proudly stressed his Kulin Brahmanism.

^{1.} The Indian Nation Builders, Madras 1921, 7th edition, p.56.

^{2.} Throughout this work the term Anglo-Indian(s) is used to denote Englishmen resident in India.

^{3.} Surendranath Banerjea, A Nation in Making, Oxford University Press, London 1925, p.2.

These two forces moulded Banerjea's character. He claimed that he grew up within the framework of these different trends without being affected by their potential incompatibility. While Jawaharlal Nehru defined his position as "a queer mixture of the East and the West, out of place everywhere, at home nowhere", Banerjea fitted into Macaulay's prediction that as a result of Western influence, English-educated Indians would become "Indians in blood and colour but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect."

Having graduated from Doveton College, Banerjea was sent to England in March 1868 to compete in the examinations for the Indian Civil Service. He passed the examinations successfully, returned to Calcutta in 1871, and was posted to Sylhet in Assam where he was appointed Assistant Magistrate. Two years later Banerjea was dismissed from the Indian Civil Service for carelessness in discharging his judicial duties.

but the case was bad." EUR.MSS C144 No.9 February 1874.

See also Banerjea's exposition, In Re Surendranath Banerjea Calcutta 1873, and A Nation in Making, pp.28-29.

^{1.} Ibid.

^{2.} Jawaharlal Nehru, Toward Freedom: Autobiography. London, 1942, p.353.

Macaulay's Minute on Education, 2 February 1835.
4. He was charged with lack of accuracy in supplementing written records bearing later dates to correspond retrospectively with oral judgements, and with deliberate intent to conceal the fault. Home Prog. Public 1 to 3, September 1873, pp.2089-2149.
He was found guilty of "gross carelessness and dishonesty", Home Prog. Public Vol. 516 no.6443, 20 December 1873.
Northbrook to Argyle "you will receive by this mail our opinions upon the conduct of Mr. Banerjea one of the Native Civil Servants. My desire was, if possible, to come to the conclusion that he might be retained in the service,

He returned to London in April 1874 to appeal against his dismissal but was informed that the decision could not be rescinded. His attempt to be called to the Bar, for which he fulfilled the required conditions, met with equal failure as an outcome of his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service.

Banerjea's expulsion from the Civil Service proved to be the decisive turning point in his career. He described his position in the following words: "The whole of my official prospects were blasted... From the Civil Service I had been dismissed. From the Bar I was shut out. Thus were closed to me all avenues to the realization of an honourable ambition... I felt that I had suffered because I was an Indian, a member of a community that lay disorganized, had no public opinion, and no voice in the councels of their Government. I felt with all the passionate warmth of youth that we were helots, hewers of wood and drawers of water in the land of our birth." He returned to Calcutta in June 1875, and "began at once to take part in public affairs."

Banerjea's education in Doveton College and in London, his admiration for British institutions, and his religious inclination towards Christian ideals, give reason to assume that had he remained in the Indian Civil Service he would

^{1.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.31-33.

^{2.} Ibid., p.34.
3. "An Englishman once publicly declared that I was more English than most Englishmen." Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.21.

^{4.} Banerjea's association with the Brahmo Samaj is discussed below in Chapter III, pp. 115-116

have been a most loyal I.C.S. man. His subsequent official career in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1913, his appointment as Minister of Local Self-Government and his knighthood in 1921, prove the feasibility of this assumption. Seen from this viewpoint, Banerjea's role as a public agitator was a roundabout means whereby he agitated his personal rehabilitation into Government service. He was forced against his own plans to channel his career through 'public affairs', and he sought to re-enter the very Government which he was obliged to criticise in his role as a public agitator. Throughout his career as a public agitator Banerjea was fundamentally projecting his own personal grievances from the public platform.

In 1876 Banerjea set upon the task of stirring political interest among Bengali students. He lectured on 'Mazzini', on 'The Study of Indian History', 'England and India', and on 'Indian Unity'. His recurrent theme in these lectures stressed Indians' loyalty and gratitude to British rule side by side with a rallying cry for Indian patriotism and unity. Although he discarded Mazzini's revolutionary doctrine, he projected 'Young Italy' as an inspiring example for a self-reliant united India. 3 He urged the formation of political associations modelled on the Catholic Association

See below, p. 21. Indian Mirror, 8 February 1883.
 Speeches of Babu Surendranath Banerjea, ed. R.C.Palit, Vol.I (henceforth Speeches).

^{3.} Ibid., Vol.I, p.21. April 1876.

of Daniell O'Connell, and mooted the idea of establishing an annual meeting of leading representatives from different provinces of India to foster Indian national unity. 1 A testimony to the effect of these lectures is provided by Bipin Chandra Pal who noted that he and his fellow students were greatly inspired by Banerjea's oratory, formed secret societies, and took "secret vows of service and devotion to the motherland". 2 Similarly, Lajpat Rai as a student was "deeply moved" by reading Banerjea's speeches, particularly on Mazzini.

Having established himself as a reputable political speaker, Banerjea "began seriously to consider the advisability of forming an Association to represent the views of the educated middle-class community and inspire them with a living interest in public affairs."4

On 26 July 1876, an important public meeting was held at the Albert Hall, Calcutta, which led to the establishment of the Indian Association. Banerjea was the principal organizer of the meeting and was placed first on the list of the Association's executive committee. Other members of the committee included lawyers, journalists, medical men, and literateurs. 5 The Indian Association set as its object

^{1.} Tbid., Vol.I, p.20.
2. B.C.Pal, Memories of My Life and Times. Calcutta, 1932,

^{3.} Lajpat Rai, The Story of My Life. New York, 1914, p.96.
4. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.40.

^{5.} J.C. Bagal, History of the Indian Association. Calcutta, 1953, p.7.

"to represent the people, to form a healthy public opinion, and to promote by every legitimate means the political, intellectual and material advancement of the people." The most important issue on which the Indian Association deliberated was the India Office regulation of 24 February 1876 which lowered the maximum age limit from 21 to 19 for candidates to the competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Service. 2 The regulation was regarded by the members of the Indian Association as a deliberate act which aimed to curtail the chances of Indian infiltration into the Civil Service, and it was this issue which prompted the foundation of the Indian Association. On 24 March 1877, the Indian Association resolved to send a petition to Parliament to raise the maximum age limit to twenty-two and to hold the competitive examinations simultaneously in London and in India.

Banerjea was again among the leading organizers of the meeting and was appointed 'Special Delegate' to organize similar protest meetings in Northern India. During May to November 1877, he visited Delhi, Agra, Lucknow, Cawnpur, Allahabad, Lahore, Amritsar, Merut, Surat, Poona, Bombay and Madras. He organized public meetings which adopted the Indian Association's resolution, promoted the appointment

Ibid., p.16.
 See, Hira Lal Singh, Problems and Policies of the British in India, London 1963, p.26.
 Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.44; and J.C. Bagal,

History of the Indian Association, p.19.

of local committees to collect signatures for the petition to Parliament, and helped to form branches of the Indian Association in Lahore and Allahabad.

Banerjea's tour was the first attempt of its kind to unite English-educated Indians from different provinces on a common political issue. Significantly too, three portentous characteristics emerged from the early activity of the Indian Association: firstly, it restricted its agitation to "legitimate means"; secondly, it directed its agitation to Parliament in Westminster and by-passed the Government of India; thirdly, it resolved to raise a fund for the purpose of establishing a permanent deputation in England "to place before the British public the views, sentiments, and aspirations" of the Indians. These were to form the axioms of the yet unborn Indian National Congress.

On 1 January 1879, Banerjea became the proprietor and editor of the <u>Bengalee</u>. He had previous experience in journalism as an occasional reporter of the <u>Hindoo Patriot</u> — the organ of the British Indian Association which represented the views of the zamindars. Under Banerjea's editorship the <u>Bengalee</u> became the semi-official newspaper of the Indian Association. Journalism enhanced Banerjea's reputation as

^{1.} J.C. Bagal, <u>History of the Indian Association</u>, pp.22-31 and Banerjea, <u>A Nation in Making</u>, pp.45-50.

Indian Association meeting at Calcutta's Town Hall on 3 September 1879, Banerjea's speech "Establishment of Deputation in England". Speeches, Vol.I, p.172.
 Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.68-69.

a public figure. His editorials in the Bengalee during 1881-1882 supported the activity of the Indian Association. notably its propagation of the Civil Service issue, and its attempt to form affiliated ryots' unions in the mofussil to check cases of oppression by zamindars.

On 30 January 1883, the Indian Mirror² put up the following suggestion in an editorial entitled 'The Ryots Representative in the Viceroy's Legislative Council' - "As the zamindars are likely to be more than fully represented in the Viceroy's Legislative Council in the discussion on the provision of the Rent Bill, the Government should in common fairness appoint some gentleman who might do the same good turn for the inadequately represented ryots."3 The suggestion started a journalistic controversy which centred on the question of nominating the potentially best qualified representative for the ryots. The Statesman put forward the candidature of Banerjea. The Indian Mirror W.C. Bonnerji and disparaged Banerjea's candidature on the grounds that his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service stigmatised his character. 5 Letters to the editor of the Indian Mirror challenged its view on Banerjea and argued that Banerjea's dismissal from the Indian Civil Service

^{1.} J.C.Bagal, History of the Indian Association, p.54. 2. Edited by Narendranath Sen, the then most influential

Indian daily newspaper.

3. The Rent Bill was to check zamindars' absentee land ownership.

^{4.} A liberal Anglo-Indian newspaper.

^{5.} Indian Mirror, 3 February 1883.

should not "heap upon him damnation", since "his subsequent good conduct entirely blots out the spot" with which the editor of the Indian Mirror branded him. 1 Notwithstanding, the Indian Mirror continued to attack Banerjea and wrote. "A clamour has been raised ... advocating the claims of Surendranath Banerjea. A capital has been made of his sympathies for the people. All his past life up to the point of his expulsion from the Civil Service will however be searched in vain for any indication of them. Emerging from Doveton College as Mr. S.N. Banerjea B.A., he continued a thorough Sahib, until by the pressure of adverse circumstances he was thrown into the arms of the public to retrieve his reputation." In reply to this attack, more letters to the editor of the Indian Mirror asserted confidence in Banerjea, arguing that "his dismissal from Government service is a positive gain to us, for were it not so, we would have been deprived of his sympathy and effective support in almost all our public movements."3

Nothing came out of the suggestion to appoint a representative for the ryots, but the controversy which revolved over the nomination of Banerjea illustrates that Banerjea was regarded as an opportunist who was forced to pursue his career through public affairs.

^{1.} Indian Mirror, 6 February 1883.

^{2.} Ibid., 8 February 1883.

^{3.} Ibid., 11 February 1883.

On 28 April 1883, Banerjea wrote and published an article in his Bengalee which criticised Justice Norris of the Calcutta High Court. Banerjea relied on an article published in the Brahmo Public Opinion on the 26th, which accused Justice Norris of offending Hindu religion by his order to bring into court a Saligram (a household stone idol), in order to decide its disputed ownership. Having quoted the article, Banerjea described Norris's order as "an act of sacrilege" committed by "a raw and inexperienced judge who was ignorant of the feelings of the people and disrespectful of their most cherished rights." On the following day Banerjea was charged with contempt of court for publishing "contemptuous and defamatory matters concerning Justice Norris."2 In fact, Justice Norris ordered to bring the idol only to the corridor of the court after ascertaining that thus far it would not defile Hindu religious rules.3 Banerjea's accusation was therefore completely unfounded. In court Banerjea pleaded that he was misled by the article of the Brahmo Public Opinion and regretfully apologised for his mistake. W.C.Bonnerji feebly defended Banerjea, and merely asked the court to deal with his client "as leniently as the lordships may think proper." He refused to support

Bengalee, 28 April 1883 (The date 2 April 1883 in Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.74 is a mistake).
 Home Prog. Judicial Vol. 2045 May 1883, proceedings 382-

^{396;} also Indian Mirror, 4 May and Bengalee, 12 May 1883.

Banerjea's request for an adjournment in order to clarify the legality of the court's jurisdiction on contempt of court, committed outside the court. In his summing up, the presiding Chief Justice Sir Richard Garth remarked that as a former member of the Indian Civil Service, Banerjea should have been more cautious and responsible. He was found guilty of contempt of court and sentenced to two months imprisonment.

The trial and sentence of Banerjea unexpectedly aroused an unprecedented Indian reaction, as it became the nucleus of judicial, religious, racial and political implications which were connected with the fervent controversy over the Ilbert Bill.

Lord Ripon's introduction of Local Self-Government expressed his attempt to enforce English liberalism into the British administration of India. Englishmen in India, with few exceptions, resented Ripon's intentions since they believed that the Indian Government should be an efficient administration for the Empire and less for Indian interests.² The conflicting views clashed over the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Bill, better known as the Ilbert Bill. Its main principle was the removal of the stratagem which

S. Gopal, The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon. Oxford, 1953 and W.C.Blunt, Ideas About India, London, 1885.

^{1.} Ibid. There was mutual reluctance between W.C.Bonnerji and Banerjea to present the latter's defence. W.C. Bonnerji agreed only when no English lawyer was willing to defend Banerjea. The ill-feelings between them are attested in B.C.Pal's Memories of My Life and Times, p.13.

2. For Local Self-Government and Englishmen's reaction see

disqualified Indian judges from trying Englishmen in the mofussil. The proposed Bill became a battlefield on which Englishmen rejected the right and capability of Indians to act as their judges.

After the Mutiny, Englishmen became estranged from Indians. The increasingly better communications in India, and the quicker and steadier steamship communication with England through the Suez Canal, strengthened Englishmen's collective consciousness and broke their sense of isolation in India. The increasing arrival of Englishwomen, further contributed to their estrangement to Indians. The Club, the English Press, their exclusive residential areas, were additional factors which accentuated their self-consciousness, while Evangelical ardour, Victorian self-confidence and the implication of Darwinism promoted their general feelings of superiority over Indians. In particular, they despised the English-educated Baboos of Bengal.

On 28 February 1883, an 'Indignation Meeting' was held in Calcutta's Town Hall in which English lawyers, merchants, officials, and planters, protested against the proposed Ilbert Bill. The principal speaker, Mr. Keswick, voiced the opinion of the meeting when he said; "Would native judges by three to four years' residence in England

^{1.} The total number of Englishmen in India in 1881 was 89,798, of these 77,188 were men and 12,610 women. Statistics of British born subjects recorded in the census of India February 1881. Quoted in S.Gopal, The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, p.145.

become so Europeanised in nature and in character that they would be able to judge Europeans as if they were European themselves. Can the Ethiopean change his skin or the leopard his spots?" The fundamental cause in the protest of Englishmen was their fear of the principle of equality of merit irrespective of race which lay behind the Ilbert Bill. Englishmen in India were most sensitive to the implications of this principle since they realised that it would jeopardize their hitherto entrenched privileges and prestige. While this was the general reaction to the proposed Bill, the tea planters in Assam were especially resentful of the possibility of their being tried by Indian judges. They feared that the Bill would check their arbitrary attitude to their coolies.² They argued that "occasional upset with the 'niggers' was inevitable; that English judges 'understood' the relationship between the planters and their coolies; and that if they would be under the jurisdiction of Indian judges they would be constantly arraigned for assault."3

Expressing the general disapproval of officials to the proposed Ilbert Bill, J. Ware Edgar, Officiating

^{1.} Englishman, 1 March 1883, also Parliamentary Papers Vol.LX (c.3952, 1884.

The harsh treatment of coolies in Assam and their deplorable conditions are analysed by Banerjea in a Report of the Indian Association to the Government of India dated 12 April 1888 and entitled 'Tea Garden Labour in Assam'. See also B.C.Pal, Memories of My Life and Times, pp.53-54.
 W.C.Blunt, Ideas About India, pp.63-64.

Commissioner of Presidency Division, referred to Banerjea's appointment as Assistant Magistrate in Sylhet in 1871 and wrote: "I was at Shillong when this happened and met there many planters from Assam, particularly from Sylhet and Cachar districts. The planters expected that Mr. Surendranath Banerjea would in a short time be made a Justice of the Peace and they looked with great dread at the prospect of his being able not only to fine them heavily but to commit them to the High Court. Their uneasiness and even alarm were very great. More than this, they assumed that there would be henceforth a regular yearly influx of Native Civilians ... and they prophesised that the consequence would be little short of ruin to the tea industry."

The Commissioner of the Burdwan Division, John Beames wrote: "There has been growing up of late years a class of natives who though numerically few, have become by their extravagant pretentions and excessive self-conceit, by their unreasonable and unsatisfied longing for power, and by their morbid discontent and disloyalty, a serious danger to the stability of our rule in India. It is we who have created these men, and we have now to fear lest as the poet writes 'we perish by the people we have made'."²

2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p.197 letter No.204 dated 7 May 1883.

^{1.} Parliamentary Papers Vol.LX. 1884, pp.155-156, letter No.34 dated 26 April 1883. Enclosure to F.B.Peacock, Officiating Secretary to Government of Bengal.

The Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, H.L.Johnson, wrote:
"When an Englishman says 'I will not be tried by a Bengali',
he has history, science, even the apostle Paul on his side.
His assertion of his race superiority is specially justified
by the fact that the Bengali belongs to a race he has
conquered."

A satirical pamphlet entitled 'India in 1983' argued that any encouragement to the Bengali Baboos would result in nothing less than the complete extinction of British rule; that a self-governing India would prove an abortive parliamentary democracy which would run into chaos and become subjected to military dictatorship.²

The <u>Pioneer Mail</u> warned that English capital and enterprise will be driven out of India if the Ilbert Bill and the policy it represented were to be carried out.³

On 7 March 1883, the <u>Englishman</u> announced the formation of an 'Association for the protection of political and material rights, individual and collective, of Europeans and Anglo-Indians'. It soon developed as 'The Anglo-Indian and European Defence Association', set up local committees in the mofussil, and organized numerous protest meetings, the most important of which were held by the Chamber of

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.354 letter No.1005 dated 11 May 1883.

^{2. &#}x27;India in 1983', Calcutta, 1883 3rd ed. I.O.L. Tract 10.A.9.

^{3.} Pioneer Mail editorial 'Jurisdiction over Europeans', 21 February 1883.

Commerce of Bombay, Madras and Calcutta. 1

The Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, Sir Richard Garth was hostile to Lord Ripon's liberal policy and strongly opposed the proposed Ilbert Bill. Justice Norris, against whom Banerjea wrote the offending article, was particularly known for his abusive attitude towards Indian vakils and for his participation in the Town Hall 'indignation meeting', while his wife was a prominent member of the 'Ladies' Committee' against the Ilbert Bill. 3

It was amidst this strife that Banerjea was tried for his criticism of Justice Norris, and sentenced by Sir Richard Garth to two months imprisonment. It will be recalled that Banerjea was misled in relying on an article of the Brahmo Public Opinion which originated the accusation, and that he fully apologised for his mistake. However, while no proceedings were taken against the editor of the Brahmo Public Opinion, Banerjea, who had become a popular public figure, was sentenced to two months imprisonment. The immediate reaction to Banerjea's arrest was demonstrated by the students of Calcutta who booed the judges and threw stones at the windows of the court and at the carriage of Justice Norris. On the other hand, an effigy of W.C.

^{1.} Englishman March to April 1883.

^{2.} S. Gopal, The Viceroyalty of Lord Ripon, pp.120-121.
3. Home Prog. Judicial Vol. 2045 May 1883, proceedings 146-

^{147;} also <u>Bengalee</u> 19 May 1883. 4. Bhubon Mohan Das, father of C.R.Das.

^{5.} Indian Mirror 9 May 1883.

Bonnerji was burnt in Calcutta by students "for having defended Surendranath Banerjea unsatisfactorily". 1 These were the first acts of open rowdyism in Calcutta by Bengali students.

Previous to the imprisonment of Banerjea, the Indian press took pains to maintain a moderate tone in the Ilbert Bill controversy. It refrained from aggravating Lord Ripon's exertion to turn the proposed Bill into law, since it realised that any form of retaliation to the insults of the Englishman and the Pioneer would have only intensified the Anglo-Indian agitation. But the trial and imprisonment of Banerjea served as an expedient outlet through which the restrained feelings of Indians were unleashed, especially since the Englishman provoked the Bengalis in its following comment on Banerjea's trial: "Babudom must remember that by insulting our judges, they are insulting the Queen and the whole British nation."2 The Bengalee championed Banerjea's case and argued that while the Englishman could attack even the Viceroy, an editor of an Indian newspaper was jailed merely for attacking an unpopular judge. 5 The Madras Native Opinion wrote: "It is impossible ... not to set down the punishment inflicted on Babu Surendranath Banerjea to race feelings and race prejudice."4 It will be recalled that in February 1883, the Indian Mirror disparaged Banerjea on

^{1.} Indian Mirror, 13 May 1883. 2. Englishman, 10 May 1883.

^{3.} Bengalee Special Supplement, 12 May 1883. 4. Indian Mirror, 18 May 1883.

account of his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service; yet in view of his imprisonment, it joined in championing Banerjea's case and wrote that the reference of Sir Richard Garth to Banerjea's former experience in the Civil Service, was calculated to put a slur on the Indian members of the Civil Service. 1 It attributed the unwillingness of English lawyers to defend Banerjea to "the bitterness of race feelings" which was shared by the English members of the Calcutta Bar. 2 It protested against the unprecedented heavy punishment inflicted on Banerjea and suggested that the decision of the judges was influenced by the current hostile feelings of the Calcutta High Court to the Ilbert Bill. 3 Letters to the editor of the Indian Mirror urged that Lal Mohan Ghosh, who had been sent by the Indian Association to England to express Indian grievances in the Indian Civil Service issue, should expose the injustice of Banerjea's sentence and also counteract the agitation of the Anglo-Indians in England.4

On 8 May 1883, the Students' Association of Calcutta held a meeting to express its sympathy for Banerjea and decided to start a fund to finance an appeal to the Privy Council in London. 5 Although Banerjea expressed his apology to the Court, the students of the Free Church Institution

^{1.} Indian Mirror, 8 May 1883.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, 4 May 1883. 3. <u>Ibid.</u>, 6 May 1883. 4. <u>Ibid.</u>, 9 May 1883.

(where Banerjea was a teacher), held a meeting which projected Banerjea's remarks on Justice Norris as "an honest desire to protect those national interests which he [Banerjea] has so long been the faithful representative."

In Poona and Allahabad, public meetings of Englisheducated Indians expressed "profound regret and sympathy" for Banerjea.²

At Santipur, a meeting was held by the local zamindars in sympathy with Baneriea.

At Kadihathy - a village north of Dum Dum - an openair meeting was organized and attended by the local peasants.4

A newly founded 'Ladies Association' held a meeting in Calcutta in which "seventy ladies, wives of gentlemen who occupied high position in native society", decided to send Mrs. Banerjea a letter of sympathy. Both the Indian Mirror and the Bengalee commented that this novel feature was an index to the wide-spread stir of the community's feelings. 5

An open-air mass meeting was held in Calcutta on 16 May in which an estimated number of 20,000 people were present. Most of the shops in several Bazars were closed as an expression of protest against Banerjea's imprisonment.

^{1.} Indian Mirror, 12 May 1883.

¹³ May 1883.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>. 4. Ibid.

[,] and Bengalee, 19 May 1883. . 17 May 1883.

At Aligarh, a meeting was presided over by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, which regarded Banerjea's arrest as "a national calamity". It resolved to send Banerjea its sympathy and to send a telegram to the Viceroy to pardon him. 1

On 13 May a meeting of Indian members of the Bar was held in Naral, which described Banerjea as "a martyr for the cause of the country and religion".²

Although Banerjea was known as an ardent advocate of the Brahmo Samaj and as a 'London-return' who shunned observance of Hindu orthodoxy, a meeting of the Pandits of Bhataparah (a reputed place of Sanskrit learning in Bengal) resolved to send Banerjea the following telegram: "The Pandits of Bhataparah have been deeply touched by the recent conduct of one of the judges of the High Court of Calcutta, and they consider such conduct as interference with the principle of religious neutrality."

Similarly, a public meeting held in the temple of Kali at Kalighat, resolved that "the religious feelings of the Hindu community have been wounded by the production of a Saligram into court."

Within three weeks of Banerjea's imprisonment, the Bengali reaction spread to numerous places throughout North

^{1. &}lt;u>Indian Mirror</u>, 17 May 1883.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{4. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., 30 May 1883.

India.1

The following resolutions of the public meeting held in Lahore, typified the resolutions of other meetings.

- 1. The residents assembled in this meeting record their deep sense of grief for the sentence of imprisonment recently passed on our distinguished countryman and patriot Babu Surendranath Banerjea, and express their heartfelt sympathy with him in prison.
- 2. This meeting is of opinion that the bringing of the Saligram into the corridor of the Calcutta High Court, even with the consent of the parties, was a sacrilege upon the religion of the Hindus throughout India.
- 3. The exercise of the undefined and unlimited powers which the High Court had assumed in the case of Babu Surendranath Banerjea was a severe blow to the liberty and freedom of the Indian press and consequently to the progress of the country at large.²

The Lahore meeting expressed the significance of the Indian reaction when its principal speaker, Dewan Narendra Nath said: "We never united together for a common cause, that spirit of keeping aloof died away and now Punjabis and Bengalis shake hands with each other as brothers. Surendra Babu's imprisonment contributed towards the consumation of

A full list of places in which public meetings were held is compiled by Ram Chandra Palit, The Great Contempt Case, Calcutta, 1883.
 Bengalee, 2 June 1883.

Indian unity, hence I call it an occasion for national rejoicing rather than national mourning."

The newspapers kindled this feeling. The Tribune of Lahore wrote: "The Ilbert Bill ... has brought together the people of India of different races and creeds into one common bond of union ... the growing feeling of national unity which otherwise would have taken us years to form, suddenly developed into strong sentiments."2

In its special supplement on Banerjea's imprisonment, the Bengalee described the Indian agitation in terms of "a revival of national feelings" and added "the excitement in the native community is nothing short of that produced among the Europeans by the jurisdiction Bill."3

The Punjab Times wrote: "We have learnt to disregard our petty provincial differences and are slowly feeling a new life, the life of Indian nationality."4

A reflection on this development is attested by the rapid growth of cheap vernacular newspapers whose circulation reached for the first time thousands of readers. 5 While contributions were donated to Banerjea's appeal fund, a central committee headed by Narendranath Sen was appointed to collect the money and acknowledge its receipt in the India Mirror.

Bengalee, 2 June 1883.
 Tribune, 7 May 1883.
 Bengalee, 12 May 1883.

^{4.} Punjab Times, 31 May 1883. 5. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.80.

Tarapada Bannerjee, a vakil in Krishnagar, first suggested in a letter to the <u>Indian Mirror</u> that a public meeting should be convened to establish a 'National Fund'. He proposed that the committee which had been appointed to collect the subscriptions to Banerjea's appeal fund, should be enlarged to include fifteen representatives from different provinces of India. The enlarged committee would then form a committee for the National Fund which will be employed for various issues "affecting the whole nation". Tarapada Bannerjee corresponded with Surendranath Banerjea while the latter was in jail about the proposed National Fund. Banerjea supported the idea and sent from jail letters to "friends in different parts of India to contribute their mite towards the great object."2 The <u>Indian Mirror</u> strongly supported Tarapada Bannerjee's proposal and wrote: "We must struggle hard and long and at the same time remain strictly faithful and loyal before we can become independent again. But so long as we do not provide ourselves with a political organization and a National Fund we shall never be able to do permanent and substantial good to our country."3 emphasised that Indians should take the example of the 'Anglo-Indian and European Defence Fund', that the widespread agitation over Banerjea's imprisonment proved Indians'

Indian Mirror, 22 May 1883.
 Ibid., 22 August 1883, letter dated 5 June 1883.

^{3.} Ibid., 30 May 1883.

capability to unite, and urged that this advantageous opportunity should be taken up to form a national political organization which would be supported by the proposed National Fund.

Tarapada Bannerjee followed his suggestion and outlined the following plan and objectives of the National Fund:-

- a) To keep a permanent delegate in England to counteract
 the agitation of Englishmen in India which endeavoured
 to frustrate the social and political progress of Indians.
- b) To adopt suitable means for the purpose of imparting political education to the people of India.
- c) To encourage national trade and industry.
- d) To unite the different religious sects of India.
- e) To establish branch associations of the National Fund in different parts of India.
- f) 'National Fund Boxes' should be made available in marriage ceremonies, as well as in every law court where Indian lawyers would ask their winning clients to donate contributions.

His proposed scheme closed with the following words: "The 4th of May, the day of Surendranath's imprisonment, ought to be commemorated in his honour and every good son of India ought to contribute on that auspicious day something to the National Fund. The 4th of May should be observed as

the day on which the seed of National life was sown."1

These proposals resulted in a public meeting convened by the Indian Association, which announced the inauguration of the National Fund. 2 Baneriea (who was released on the 9th of July) moved the following resolution: "The National Fund should be raised with a view to secure the political advancement of the country by means of constitutional agitation in India and England and by other legitimate means; and that the other provinces be invited to join in the movement."3 The executive committee of the Indian Association appointed five trustees for the National Fund among whom were Banerjea and Narendranath Sen. Banerjea was also appointed the secretary of the National Fund. 4 From the first of August, the contributions to Banerjea's appeal fund were acknowledged side by side with donations to the National Fund. The fund for Banerjea was transferred on August 4th to the balance of the National Fund. Thus, Banerjea's imprisonment served as an expedient cause which galvanized the Indian counter reaction to the Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill. It led to the formation of the National Fund and strengthened the Indian Association.

While contributions were being sent to the National

Indian Mirror, 14 July 1883.
 Ibid., 18 July 1883.
 Ibid., and Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.85.
 Bengalee, 4 August 1883 and Indian Mirror, 29 July 1883.

^{5.} It fetched the sum of Rs.6.955.

Fund, 1 it was suggested that the fund should be employed to finance the education of the masses in the villages and that agricultural banks should be established to lend ryots money on favourable terms. 2 In his speech on the National Fund, Banerjea emphasised its national wide range objectives and urged the need to improve the conditions of the ryots. These suggestions aroused the opposition of the zamindars to the Indian Association and to its management of the National Fund. The zamindars detected in the objectives of the National Fund a threat to their class interests, and the Hindu Patriot expressed their apprehension in writing that if the zamindars were to contribute to the National Fund, they will be virtually "giving money to buy a knife to cut their own throat."4 Due to this objection, letters to the editor of the Indian Mirror urged that the National Fund should be taken away from the control of the Indian Association and be placed under a new organization to be called the 'National Association' or the 'National Assembly'. The new organization would have branches in every province and would regularly meet from year to year. 5

These developments brought about the meeting of the first 'National Conference' which was held on 29 December

^{1.} It fetched the sum of Rs. 20,000.

^{2.} Indian Mirror, 15 August 1883.
3. Speeches, Vol.II, p.45 "The National Fund", Calcutta, 27 July 1883.

^{4.} Indian Mirror, 27 July 1883.

^{5.} Ibid., 3 August and 4 August 1883.

1883 at Calcutta. Surendranath Banerjea and Ananda Mohan Bose were its leading organizers. The composition of the National Conference was a far cry from the name it assumed, since its 'delegates' were self-appointed, selfrepresentative men who came to Calcutta primarily to visit the International Exhibition, which was held at the time. Nevertheless, the participants of the National Conference were representatives in the sense that they came from different provinces and deliberated jointly on common political grievances. Significantly, the National Conference was depicted by A.M.Bose as the first stage towards the formation of a National Indian Parliament. Baneriea moved the resolution on the National Fund. He urged the conference to take up the example of the Anglo-Indians' efficient and uniformed organization which succeeded in defeating the proposed Ilbert Bill, and to break away from their status of "hewers of wood and drawers of water."2

It was the 'Civil Service Question' which received the major attention of the conference. It recommended to abolish the Indian Civil Service and replace it gradually by

W.C.Blunt, <u>Ideas About India</u>, p.114.
 Bengalee, 5 January 1884.
 On 29 March 1883, the following advertisement was published in the Englishman: "Wanted - sweepers, Punkah coolies [fan movers] and Bhisties [water carriers] for the residents of Saidpur. None but educated Bengali Baboos who have passed the Entrance Examinations need apply. Ex-Deputy Magistrates (Bengali) prefered." The 'prefered qualification' could have applied only to Banerjea.

a service entirely composed of Indian officials. To hasten this process, the conference urged the need to hold simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil Service in London and in India, and to raise the age limit of candidates to twenty-two. The conference expressed its protest against the compromise reached by the Government of India and the Anglo-Indians over the Ilbert Bill, and concluded in requesting the Government to introduce representative assemblies "for the advancement of the people of India."

While the National Fund and the National Conference were primarily the outcome of the Indian counter reaction to the Anglo-Indians' agitation, they were at the same time inspired by the pro-Indian policy of Lord Ripon. Ripon upheld the idea that British rule in India was ultimately designed to fulfil a special mission. His liberalism and his religious convictions led him to describe England's mission in the following words: "If England is to fulfil the mighty task which God has laid upon her and to interpret rightly the wondrous story of her Indian Empire, she must lend her untiring energies and her iron will to raise in the scale of nations the people entrusted to her care ... to rule them not for her own aggrandisement nor for the mere profit of her own people, but with constant unwearied

^{1.} Bengalee, 5 January 1884.

endeavouring to promote their highest good... their political training and their moral elevation."

The idea of England's mission in India was of course not new. In 1824, Thomas Munro asserted that the ultimate aim of British rule was to prepare the Indians to govern themselves. 2 In 1833, Macaulay declared: "It may be that the public mind in India may expand under our system till it has outgrown that system, that by good government we may educate our subjects into a capacity for better government; that having become instructed in European knowledge, they may, in some future age, demand European institutions... whenever it comes it will be the proudest day in English history."3 In 1844, Henry Lawrence wrote: "We cannot expect to hold India for ever. Let us so conduct ourselves... as, when the connexion ceases, it may do so not with convulsion but with mutual esteem and affection and that England may then have in India a noble ally, enlightened and brought into the scale of nations under her guidance and fostering care."4

Thus, while British rule was being extended over India, British rulers and administrators declared that the

^{1.} Ripon's reply to an Indian public meeting held in his honour before his departure from Bombay. Bengalee, 27 December 1884.

^{2.} Munro's Minute of 31 December 1824 - "The ultimate problem of British rule in India", Reginald Coupland, India: A Re-Statement. Oxford University Press, 1945, p.291.

July 1833, Hansard XIX (1833) 536.
 Sir Henry Lawrence, Essays. London 1859, Reginald Coupland, India: A Re-Statement, p.293.

whole process of establishing British paramountcy was motivated by the desire to accomplish a mission directed at the elevation of Indians to higher standards of Western civilization.

It would seem, then, that Ripon's idea of England's mission in India was not a novel innovation. However, when Thomas Munro and Henry Lawrence thought about the elevation of their Indian subjects to political self-determination, they took it for granted that the future Indian political leaders would come from the 'natural leaders' of Indian society, the Maharajas and the zamindars. When Macaulay foresaw in 1833, the day when Indians will demand English political institutions, he shared the belief that Indian political leadership would be drawn from the princes and great landlords of India and his belief in this potential political graduation was necessarily only a pointer to "some future age". Macaulay, Munro and Lawrence made their declarations about England's mission before the Mutiny, and at a time when the vast economic and political importance of the Indian Empire could not have been fully appreciated.

When Ripon reasserted the duty of implementing England's mission, in 1884, the Indian political leaders were forthcoming not from the 'natural leaders' but from the new middle class English-educated Indians who were no

longer potential trainees but were beginning to reach the stage which was envisaged by Macaulay. Furthermore, Ripon supported their political aspirations to participate in the administration of the British Government of India, when the economic and political importance of the Indian Empire were becoming increasingly more apparent. He emphasised that Queen Victoria's Proclamation was the guiding principle for Her Majesty's Government of India. He asserted that the Proclamation gave pledges to Her Majesty's Indian subjects; pledges, which were the duty of Her Majesty's representatives to redeem. In support of Ripon's assertion, Gladstone assured an Indian deputation in London that "the Proclamation ... may be looked upon as affording a solemn guarantee for all the future proceedings of England in her relations with India."2 Yet, in spite of these assurances, the Ilbert Bill - regarded by the Indians as an instalment of the Proclamation and a test case for the implementation of 'England's mission' - was mutilated. The opposition of the Anglo-Indians against it forced Lord Ripon to a

^{1.} The Proclamation (1 November 1858) contained the following clause: "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other subjects; and those obligations, by the Blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil. And it is our further will that, so far as it 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."

2. Bengalee, 1 March 1884.

compromise, by which European and British subjects in India could claim trial by jury composed of at least one half European members. 1 Although Ripon did not succeed in passing the Bill, he was lauded by Indians as the Viceroy who "realised the great mission of England in India and who sought to fulfil it."2 Indeed, the very fact of Ripon's inability to pass the Bill, coupled with the fierce attacks of the Anglo-Indians on his pro-Indian policy, further enhanced his popularity among the Indians. In his reply to the address of the British Indian Association in Calcutta, Ripon emphasised that in the absence of representative institutions, the Indian Press and the various Indian Associations should function not only as passive instruments through which the Government could ascertain public opinion on its administrative measures, but as vehicles which should exercise discriminating criticism on the policy of the Government in the interests of the Indians.

The tour of Ripon through Northern India before his departure evoked a series of enthusiastic public demonstrations in which Indians expressed their gratitude to

^{1.} Describing the powerful influence of the non-official English community, Sir Henry Cotton observed: "Their numbers have augmented, their interests in industries like jute and tea, coal and cotton, have extended, and the Chambers of Commerce at Presidency towns are now a power which is able to withstand the Government and too often leads and dictates its policy." Sir Henry Cotton, New India or India in Transition, London, 1904, p.54 (first edition 1885).

^{2.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.85.

^{3.} Bengalee, 13 December 1884.

the retiring Viceroy. These public demonstrations which were held wherever the Viceroy's train stopped, were described as a "grand national demonstration" in which vast crowds cheered the Viceroy with chants of "Lord Ripon ki jai", while banners in Calcutta waved slogans of "Liberty, Equality - Lord Ripon the just" and in Poona "India for the Indians".2

Banerjea described these celebrations as the "beginning of a united national life and the birth of a new spirit". Even the Pioneer commented, "this outburst of feeling has a deep political significance ... proving that Native opinion is at last a power in the country". 4 On the other hand, referring to the successful Anglo-Indian agitation against the Ilbert Bill, the Englishman wrote: "If the lesson ... read to Lord Ripon serves to show to future rulers of this country that an ounce of practice is worth a ton of theory and that cheap popularity hunting is not the way to reconcile the natives to British rule, it will not have been read in vain."5

^{1.} Wilfried Blunt was told by Subramanya Iyer - Editor of the Hindu - that hitherto people in the villages have only known the local Collector, but Lord Ripon was not only known by name but was regarded as a new incarnation of God. W.C.Blunt, India under Ripon. London, 1909, pp.37-38.

^{2.} Bengalee, 6 December 1884. Indian Mirror, 3 December 1884, Golden printed issue in honour of Ripon.

^{3.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.88. 4. Pioneer, 20 December 1884.

^{5.} Englishman, 25 September 1884.

This lesson implied that regardless of Ripon's declarations about England's mission, and in spite of his attempts to remove Englishmen's superiority over Indians before the law, the pressure of events and factors in India defeated his intentions. Moreover, the lesson implied that while Gladstone and Ripon declared "We plead our main title for our presence in India the good of India" - by which they meant the good of the Indians - the outcome of the Ilbert Bill proved that in fact the Indians were not Her Majesty's equal subjects, but second-rate subjects who could at best serve in second-rate functional posts in the government of British India.

Banerjea ignored the pragmatic conclusion drawn by the Englishman and drew sustenance solely from the concept of 'England's mission' in India as it was reasserted by Ripon. In his speech on the proposed National Fund, he declared that it should be raised to secure the political advancement of the Indians by means of constitutional agitation in India and in England. He defined constitutional agitation as "an agitation which must be carried only within the limits of the law". He asserted that Indians should hold public meetings or send deputations and petitions to protest against acts of the Government, but he qualified the form of the protest by emphasising, "We may do nothing which

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.II, p.43.

^{2. &}lt;u>Tbid</u>.

even remotely has the appearance of illegality about it. We take our stand upon the ... basis of the law and constitution. There we stand and there we intend to remain. We shall not permit ourselves to be dislodged from it, or be provoked to quitting it and we shall discountenance all proceedings calculated even remotely to bring about a violation of the law. We may lose today we may lose the day after, but if our cause is based on justice and truth it is bound to succeed in the long run." He concluded. "for the maintenance of our rights and for the preservation of the credit of the Government it becomes our duty to practice moderation."2 In expounding this concept of constitutional agitation - which was later to form the pivot of the Congress - Banerjea stressed that the Indian counter agitation, which reflected the discontent and dissatisfaction of Indians in cities and mufussil, should not be allowed to get out of hand and develop revolutionary tendencies. Banerjea urged the formation of more Associations in order to "unite the middle and upper middle classes in every province" and assured the meeting of the National Fund that through the pursuance of constitutional agitation, India will ultimately attain the status of equality with the self-governing colonies of the Crown. 3

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.II, p.44.

^{2. &}lt;u>161a</u>.

In a resumé of the events of the year 1883, Banerjea wrote in the <u>Bengalee</u> of 5 January 1884, that the National Fund, the Contempt Case, and the Indian counter-agitation had evoked national aspirations, which he went on, "we trust in God will continue to deepen till at last by our patriotic efforts we shall be in a position to claim what belongs to us, to place our country on footing of equality with regards to political rights and privileges with the other possessions of the English Crown, to the benefit of India and the glory of England."

On 26 April 1884, the <u>Bengalee</u> published the following editorial, "The members of the Legislative Council in Jamaica are to be elected and not nominated and they are to exercise control over the finances. Is our political degradation to be perpetual? Are we to understand that we are even less fitted for self-government than the Negroes?"

The term self-government was used by Banerjea as early as 1876 when he thus addressed the first meeting of the Students' Association of Calcutta: "The great struggle, the constitutional struggle for our rights and privileges has commenced ... the struggle which must end in the achievement of self-government for the people of this country." Banerjea was thus the first Indian professional

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.I, p.63, July 1876.

political agitator who promulgated the idea of selfgovernment. But it should be immediately pointed out that in Banerjea's terminology 'self-government' was never synonymous with independence, in the sense of India becoming a sovereign state. On the contrary, Banerjea could only envisage that when India would eventually attain a status of self-government comparable to that of the self-governing Dominions, this stage would "mark the perpetual union" between England and India. He repeatedly stressed that the aim of attaining self-government for India was to secure the permanence of British rule "upon the broad basis of the nations' affection."2 He explicitly contended, "It is not severance that we are looking forward to, but unification, permanent embodiment as an integral part of that great Empire which has given the rest of the world the models of free institutions." When Banerjea wrote or spoke hypothetically about a time in the future when the ties between England and India might cease, he always qualified this remark with - "May God avert that day of our calamity!"4 In his oration on "England and India" he pathetically described India prior to the arrival of the British as a country which "sat bathed in tears, sending forth dolorious cries of lamentation before the great Dispenser ... but it

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.I, p.226, May 1880.
2. Ibid., p.7, April 1876.
3. Ibid., Vol.V, p.85. Presidential speech at 1895 Indian National Congress.

^{4.} Ibid., Vol.I, p.72, 28 April 1877.

was not long before the heavenly response came. Britain appeared as the ministering angel, bearing messages of peace and joy, the glad-tidings of progress and civilization." Banerjea earnestly believed that British rule in India was Providentially ordained for the salvation of India. 2 He firmly believed that the declarations of Macaulay, Munro, Lawrence, Ripon and Gladstone about England's mission expressed the raison d'être of Britain's rule in India and the guiding spirit behind its government. When Banerjea spoke about the need for Indian unity, he endeavoured to echo Macaulay and stressed that England's mission in India was "to save, regenerate, emancipate from the chains of ignorance, error and superstition, 250 millions of human beings, to heal the wounds that have been inflicted on them by the rapacity of their former rulers, to develop in them a self-reliant, energetic character, to spread through the land the great blessings of peace, contentment and happiness, but above all it is England's noble mission to help towards the consummation of Indian unity." At the height of the Ilbert Bill agitation, Banerjea repeated this theme and emphasised that "England is here ... to make India once again the home of a

3. Speeches, Vol.I, "Indian Unity", March 1878, p.108.

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.I, p.67, April 1877.
2. Banerjea's declaration: "I regard British rule as Providential, as one of the dispensation of the God of history" - is a typical example. Speeches, Vol. II, p.49, July 1883.

civilization even nobler than what had marked the dawn of her early history. To a government with such a purpose and with such a destiny we cannot be unfaithful or disloyal."1 This belief in the providential mission of British rule in India was for Banerjea axiomatic and it formed the basis for his political moderation. Above all Banerjea relied on Queen Victoria's Proclamation. Although the Proclamation stressed that English-educated Indians were not to be barred from the Civil Service of the British government of India with the reservation of, "so far as it may be" - a stipulation which in its substance merely reaffirmed the Charter Act of 1833 2 - Banerjea interpreted the Proclamation as a Royal pledge to safeguard the general rights of the Indians.

When the title of 'Empress of India' was conferred upon Queen Victoria in 1876, he did not regard it merely as a sentimental gesture but declared that henceforth Indians were no longer the conquered subjects of England, but the "incorporated citizens of a free Empire". He accepted the view put forward by Sir John Seely, 4 which explained the

^{1.} Speeches, Vol. II. "The Civil Service" Lahore, 8 May 1884, p.67.

^{2.} The 87th section of the Charter Act said: "No native of the said territories [India] or any natural born subjects of His Majesty resident therin, shall by reason of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Company."

^{3.} Speeches, Vol.I, p.145, April 1878. 4. Sir John Seely, The Expansion of England. London, 1884, p.208.

establishment and growth of British rule in India as an internal process in which locally-settled English traders in India rose to power due to their superiority over other indigenous contestants, and added that since British rule did not result from an external conquest, it was not an alien rule but one which was based on an organic and indigenous Indian growth. He further deduced that the Indians elected the English as their rulers, and opined that by doing so "they were not unwise in their choice". When Lord Ripon was greeted by the cheering crowds of Calcutta, Banerjea compared the reception given to Ripon to that of Rama's legendary return to the city of Ayodhya.2

To resolve the contradiction between the theory of England's mission and the failure of Ripon's exertion to implement its spirit, Banerjea contended that the Indian Civil Service showed, in its opposition to the Ilbert Bill, that it was officialdom which defied the idea of England's mission and paid no heed to the Queen's Proclamation. Hence, while he urged the pursuance of constitutional agitation in India, he emphasised that its main efforts should be directed towards England. It followed from his assertion that since the Government of India was not a representative Government, Indians could by-pass the Government of India and appeal directly to the English

^{1.} Bengalee, 26 April 1884. 2. Ibid., 20 December 1884.

people and to Parliament in England. In his speech on the Ilbert Bill he complacently assured his listeners that "England the mother of free nations is ever foremost in her sympathy with those who are struggling for their rights. The same measure of sympathy will be extended to us as has been extended to others if we earnestly appeal to England." Thus, he complacently assumed that if Indians were to appeal to Englishmen in England, the latter would respond in a way which will bring about the abolition of racial discrimination in India and the elevation of the Indians to the equal status of British subjects.

When Banerjea made a second tour through Northern India during May to June 1884, he stressed in public meetings in Benares, Allahabad, Cawnpur, Lucknow, Agra, Aligarh, Delhi, Ambala, Amritsar, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi, the need for wider employment of Englisheducated Indians in the I.C.S. and the introduction of representative institutions, but he emphasised that the National Fund should be deployed to maintain a permanent Indian delegate in England to represent the Indian view before the English public.²

At the same time it followed that if Indians could gain the support of Englishmen in England, Englishmen with their power of the vote would act as a lever for Indian

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.II, p.60, January 1884.
2. Bengalee, Tribune of Lahore, Maratha of Poona, 21 June 1884.

representation in Parliament. Banerjea upheld Parliament as the key to the solution of Indian grievances. When Lal Mohan Ghosh became the first Indian candidate to contest an election to Parliament on behalf of the Liberals, Banerjea described the event as "a question of national honour". Narendranath Sen, editor of the Indian Mirror, shared the same view and urged that "the Indian Council should be swept away to enable Indian affairs to be brought under the direct control of Parliament." Parliamentary inquiry into the administration of India and the abolition of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, were to form the first and second Resolutions of the first Indian National Congress.

During the years 1883-1884, the Indian counter reaction to the Anglo-Indian agitation over the Ilbert Bill, developed into a movement which was centred on the National Fund, through which the hitherto provincial self-centred English-educated Indians became united for the first time by a common cause. The National Fund was initially concerned with urging the wider admission of English-educated Indians to the I.C.S. and the introduction of representative institutions. It soon exceeded its initial purposes and developed into a wider popular movement when the villagers of Bengal were stirred by the Indian Association to express

^{1.} Bengalee, 27 September 1884.

^{2.} Indian Mirror, 7 November 1884.

within the framework of the National Fund movement, their general grievances arising out of hardships in the villages. But since the National Fund was primarily organized by urbanised middle class English-educated Indians, its objects were bound up with the interests of its promoters and hardly with those of the Indian peasants. As soon as public meetings in the villages showed that they might possibly develop into something more active than vocal protests, Banerjea, the principal figure around whom the Indian agitation revolved, halted the progress of this development by manoeuvering it into constitutional agitation, which was intelligible and meaningful only to the English-educated urban middle class Indians. The 1883-1884 National Fund movement contained within itself potential elements which could have developed into a wider and more popular movement; yet it was curbed by the intellectual character of the constitutional agitation and lost its wider appeal.

In the Indian Association, National Fund, and National Conference, Banerjea served passively and actively as the principal figure. From being a scapegoat at the Calcutta High Court he stumbled into Indian martyrdom. His own apology was dismissed by the judges and ignored by the Indians. Though he was known to be a Brahmo 'free thinker', he was artificially and intentionally made up to act the role of the defender of Hindu religion. While the Indian

press magnified Banerjea's 'contempt case', the <u>Pioneer</u> wrote: "Had Surendra done something courageous ... that bore the impress of nobility and manliness, one could understand that he should find many sympathisers among his countrymen; as it is, one can only wonder unfeignedly at the extraordinary choice they have made of a hero." As a result of his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service, Banerjea channelled his career to 'public affairs' and became an Indian hero in his role as a public agitator. His speeches, his tours through Northern India, his activities in founding the Indian Association, his journalism — all combined to build around him a reputation of a public figure. His trial and imprisonment in the atmosphere of the Ilbert Bill controversy, unexpectedly shot him up into a position of a national leader.

The reaction to Banerjea's arrest revealed the strength and weakness of the Indian response to the Anglo-Indian agitation; while it also set a pattern in the development of Indian organization. It had evoked for the first time a political rowdyism of the Calcutta students which later developed in one form to terrorism. It led to the first open-air meetings in which ryots took active part, and to Town Hall meetings in which the procedure of proposing, seconding and passing high-sounding resolutions

^{1. &}lt;u>Pioneer</u>, 18 June 1883.

was developed by self-appointed leaders. It revealed that the zamindars detected in the popular aspect of the National Fund a threat to their vested interests. It showed that in 1883, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan thought about Banerjea's arrest in terms of "national calamity".

While the National Conference was the precursor of the Indian National Congress, it typified the activities of the Congress as far as 1905 in its character and context. It adhered to pursue the political advancement of Englisheducated Indians through legitimate means and constitutional agitation. It fostered the idea that it was first essential to win the support of public opinion in England, and it directed its petitions and resolutions to Parliament in Westminster instead of bringing pressure on the Government of India in India. But, above all, it revealed what the Anglo-Indians were sensitive to note, that a political organization which fostered Indian unity, would inevitably press forward requests or demands for a larger share in the administration of the government, until it would claim some form of self-government.

CHAPTER II

THE CHARACTER AND IDEAS OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS 1885-1895

On 28 December 1885, the first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay. It coincided with the second National Conference at Calcutta. While the National Conference of 1883, was organized by the Indian Association, the 1885 National Conference had a wider representation of delegates from the Indian Association, the British Indian Association and the Central Mohamedan Association. Baneriea had been appointed secretary of the Indian Association on 1 March 1885,² and was the leading organizer of the second National Conference. 3 The Conference reiterated the resolutions passed in the 1883 National Conference, and urged the reform of the Legislative Councils to allow election of Indian representatives.4

In explaining his absence from the first meeting of the Indian National Congress, Banerjea wrote that he had been invited by W.C. Bonnerji but had to excuse himself on account of his commitment to the Calcutta National

Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.98.
 Bengalee, 7 March 1885.
 Tribune of Lahore, 12 December 1885. Banerjea issued a circular to all political associations in which he invited their participation in the National Conference in order to adopt "a common programme as the basis for united action on behalf of the different bodies scattered throughout the country."

^{4.} Bengalee, 20 March 1886.

Conference. This version is refuted by the following statement of Bipin Chandra Pal: "It should be placed on record, before those who know it pass away, that some of the most prominent members of the first National Congress, deliberately kept Surendranath out of it."2 Baneriea's dismissal from the Indian Civil Service and his imprisonment during the Ilbert Bill controversy, were a record which the ultra-cautious organizers of the first Indian National Congress, in particular Alan Octavian Hume, did not favour. Hence they preferred not to associate him with the first Congress. In the presidential address of the first Congress, W.C. Bonnerji described the Congress as the 'National Assembly of India', and explained that it would promote Indian national unity by projecting from a single platform the common interests of Indians throughout India. He argued that although the participants of the first Congress were not elected in the same manner as the members of the House of Commons, they were nevertheless the selected representatives of the major provinces and towns of India, and could therefore claim to be the representatives of the people of India. He asserted that they were following a course which was modelled on the English constitution,

Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.98-99.
 B.C. Pal, Indian Nationalism: Its Principles and Personalities. Madras 1918, pp.97-98.

^{3.} Hamendranath Das Gupta, The Indian National Congress, Calcutta 1946, p.129.

which justified the representation of their views to the Government. He concluded in emphasising that Congressmen desired the permanence of British rule in India, and that their ultimate aim was only to gain a share in the administration of its government.

The Congress was conceived as "the germ of a Native Parliament". 2 It was to prove that English-educated Indians were fit to have representative institutions through which they would be able to participate in the British Government of India, and it pledged to pursue the accomplishment of this objective strictly by constitutional methods.

In its resolutions, the first Congress recommended that a Royal Commission should be appointed to examine the Indian administration; that the Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished so that Parliament would take direct control of the Government of India; that the Legislative Councils should be reformed to enable admission of Indian elected members, and that the competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Service should be held simultaneously in England and in India. Dadabhai Naoroji expressed the main contention which underlined these resolutions when he declared: "We are British subjects, we can demand what we are entitled to ... if we are denied Britain's best institutions what good is it to India to be

^{1.} Report of the first I.N.C. Bombay 1885, pp.7-8.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.3.

under the British sway? It will be simply another Asiatic despotism."1

Like Banerjea, W.C. Bonnerji and Dadabhai Naoroji believed that prior to the establishment of British supremacy in India, their country suffered from a perpetual state of political anarchy. Although they paid lip service to their Indian heritage, they were avowed admirers of Western political values. They held the concepts of equality before the law, of freedom of speech and Press, and the principle of representative government as incomparably superior to their traditional Hindu polity which they generally termed as 'Asiatic despotism'.

When the second Congress convened in December 1886 at Calcutta, its organizers realised that Banerjea's exclusion from the session would arouse a strong protest from his supporters in Bengal. Hence, Banerjea and his followers in the Indian Association were incorporated within the Congress. In the presidential address of the second Congress, Dadabhai Naoroji rhetorically asked if anyone could have imagined that a meeting of Indians from different parts of India could assemble to speak as one nation even in the most glorious days of Hindu rule. This, he went on to say, was possible under British rule and under British rule only.

Report of the first I.N.C. Bombay 1885, p.26.
 B.C.Pal, <u>Indian Nationalism</u>: Its Principles and <u>Personalities</u>, p.98.

He attributed the very existence of the Congress to England's providential mission, declaring that "the people of England were sincere in the declarations that India was a sacred charge entrusted to their care by Providence and that they were bound to administer it for the good of India, to the glory of their own name and the satisfaction of God."1 He stressed that Congressmen were "loyal to the backbone" to the British Government because they appreciated the benefits of English education which revealed to them that "kings are made for the people, not people for their kings" - a lesson which they have learnt "amidst the darkness of Asiatic depotism only by the light of English civilization."2 Congressmen were so anxious to express their sincere gratitude and loyalty to the British Government that they spontaneously responded in chorus to Naoroji's exclamation "is this Congress a nursery for sedition and rebellion" with cries of "no", "no" and with "yes", "yes" to "is it another stone in the foundation and stability of the Government?"5

But while Congressmen believed that British rule in India was destined to accomplish its providential mission, they argued that the British Raj was 'more Raj and less British' in the sense that it fulfilled the fundamental

^{1.} Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, p.52.

^{3.} Ibid., p.52.

functions of Hindu kingship in preserving external and internal peace, but that it was reluctant to introduce English parliamentary institutions. The implicit faith of Congressmen in the efficacy of England's mission and their expectancy to benefit from its results was expressed by Madan Mohan Malaviya thus: "Representative institutions are as much a part of a true Briton as his language and his literature. Will ... Great Britain deny us, her free born subjects, the first of these when by the gift of the two latter she has qualified us to appreciate and incited us to desire it."1 Throughout the second session, Congressmen complained that their admiration for England's representative institutions remained sterile because their aspirations to have a share in the government of their country were denied them by the very government which aroused these aspirations.

In 1883, Banerjea claimed 2 that on the basis of Queen Victoria's Proclamation and her title 'Empress of India', Indians were British subjects who constituted in India the responsible Opposition of Her Majesty to the Indian Civil Service, which proved in its defeat of the Ilbert Bill its defiance against the Proclamation. The Congress followed this theme. It endeavoured to justify its claims to benefit from the introduction of representative institutions, by insisting that the English-educated members of the Congress

^{1.} Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, p.107. 2. Speeches, Vol.II, pp.42-43.

were British subjects who were entitled to the same rights of Englishmen in India and in England. Hence, the dual character of the Congress - a self-regarded replica of the British Parliament and at the same time a vehicle for the expression of the grievances of its members against the British Government of India. In other words, an organization which regarded itself as an unofficial parliamentary opposition to the Government of India, which was seeking at the same time to become an official part of the same government.

Supporting the resolution which urged the election of Indian representatives to the Legislative Councils as a step towards self-government, Banerjea declared: "It is not a question of the abdication of the Government, it is a question of the association of the people in a partial and modified form in the Government of the country." He expressed his conviction that as long as India remained under British rule, the development of the principle of representation was assured, but cautioned that this development ought to be gradual.²

In its resolutions, the second Congress proposed that not less than one half of the members of the Legislative Councils should be elected. It suggested that the proposed Councillors would be elected by members of municipalities,

^{1.} Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, p.99.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.103.

district boards, chambers of commerce, and the universities, or "of all persons possessing such qualifications, educational and pecuniary as may be deemed necessary."1 is evident that Congressmen did not think in terms of universal franchise and that they excluded the non-Englisheducated, and the masses.

Explaining the proposals of the Congress for the reform of the Legislative Councils at the twelfth annual meeting of the Indian Association in 1888, Banerjea asserted that the proposed Councillors could not be elected by "people unfit to exercise the franchise - the ignorant peasantry of the country."2

While the Indian Association tried in 1883 to enlist the support of the masses in the villages of Bengal, the Congress was conceived as a safety valve 3 to forestall a possible revolutionary outbreak and was primarily interested in establishing an image of respectability and loyalty. It disassociated itself from the masses and avoided any issues which might have either damaged its own loose frame of collective unity, or arouse hostile criticism from the Anglo-Indians or from the Government.

However, the first serious criticism and opposition

^{1.} Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, Resolution IV. 2. Speeches, Vol. III, p.62, "The Present Political

Situation", 26 July 1888.

^{3.} W. Wedderburn, Allan Octavian Hume, Father of the Indian National Congress, London 1913, p.77. See Chapter III below, p. 113.

to the Congress came from Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Addressing a Muslim meeting in Lucknow on the 28th of December 1887 the day when the third Congress was convening in Madras -Sir Syed Ahmed Khan told his Muslim co-religionists to go and join the Congress in Madras if they were willing to let India groan under the yoke of a future Hindu rule. He argued that if the programme of the Congress would be implemented, the reformed Legislative Councils would inevitably have a majority of Hindus with hardly any Muslim representatives. He asserted that the Congress aimed to advance the exclusive interests of the Hindus, that it was an organization which was promoting civil war, 2 and advised Muslims to hold themselves aloof from "this political uproar" - i.e. the Congress. The election of Budrudin Tyabji to the presidency of the third Congress, in December 1887 at Madras, was deliberately designed to demonstrate that the Congress was also representative of the Muslims. Tyabji stressed this point in his presidential address and declared that he was moved to preside over the session in order to encourage Muslims to co-operate with Hindus for their common benefit.4

In this connection Banerjea wrote: "We were straining

^{1.} Speeches and letters of Syed Ahmed Khan. Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1888. "On the present state of Indian Politics", I.O.L. Track 733.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.27. 3. <u>Ibid.</u>, p.52.

^{4.} Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887, p.71.

every nerve to secure the co-operation of our Mohamedan fellow-countrymen ... we sometimes paid the fares of Mohamedan delegates and offered them other facilities." In his appeal to the Muslims to join the Congress, Banerjea argued before a Muslim meeting in Dacca 2 that even Sir Syed Ahmed Khan described India as a bride whose two eyes represented the Hindu and Muslim communities. Banerjea claimed that throughout the period of Muslim rule in India, Hindus and Muslims had lived as brothers who worked jointly for the advancement of the interests of their common country. He denied that the programme of the Congress sought to secure the higher appointments in the Indian Civil Service exclusively for the Hindus, and attempted to refute the view that the Hindus would dominate the proposed reformed Legislative Councils. Assuring his Muslim listeners that they stood to gain from the Congress, Banerjea challenged them by arguing that if the Congress had any shortcomings they should better join it instead of criticising it from the outside.

Attempting to act as an all-round mediator, Banerjea tried also to justify the programme of the Congress before Englishmen. In a public meeting of Englishmen and Indians held in Calcutta's Town Hall to protest against the annual migration of the Government to Simla, one of the speakers,

^{1.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.108. 2. Speeches, Vol.III, p.86, 1 October 1888.

Sir Alexander Wilson, proposed a resolution which condemned the annual transfer of the Government on the grounds that it entailed the waste of public time and money, and that the Government should be permanently located in Calcutta where it would be best able to act in the event of an internal emergency. Supporting this resolution Banerjea said that when the Mutiny broke out, the Commander-in-Chief was in Simla and before he could descend into the plains "the flames of the Mutiny had ... enveloped the whole country in a dreadful conflagration." He suggested that had there been prompt action India "would have been spared the greatest catastrophe it has passed through in modern times."2 In Banerjea's opinion the significance of the meeting was not merely in its protest against the annual transfer to Simla, but in its demonstration that the bitter memory of the Ilbert Bill controversy was forgotten. He appealed to Englishmen and Indians to share their "common interests" and to work in harmony for Indian political advancement and Indian representation. The Ilbert Bill proved the hostility of the English community towards Indians' advancement. Banerjea's assumption that they would sympathise with the programme of the Congress was complete self-deception. In spite of Congressmens' profuse profession of loyalty to British rule, the Congress was bitterly attacked by

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.III, p.17, "Exodus to the Hills" July 1886.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.11-12.

Englishmen. In his <u>Essays on Indian Topics</u>, Theodore Beck, principal of Aligarh Muslim College, argued that the Congress would inevitably develop into a "deadly engine of sedition". He accused Congressmen of using deceptive language in giving assurances that they only wanted the reform of the Legislative Councils when their main object was to have their own parliament. He warned the Government that if it would allow the Congress to spread its propaganda, the result would be "the massacre of Englishmen, their wives and children." He argued that Congressmen's talk of constitutional agitation when there was no constitution, was a perversion of language which would ultimately lead to mutiny and bloodshed.

Sir John Strachey attacked the whole concept of the Indian National Congress by asserting that there was no such country as India, and that there were no Indians in the sense of a united people who were bound by racial, cultural or linguistic ties. Hence he claimed, there could be no Indian nation or any representation of Indian nationality. Like Theodore Beck, he accused the Congress of being a seditious organization which was veiled under expressions of loyalty, and contended that since the ignorant masses could

^{1.} Theodore Beck, Essays on Indian Topics. Pioneer Press, Allahabad 1888. "In what will it end?", p.105.

^{2.} Ibid., p.109.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.117 & 119.

^{4.} Sir John Strachey, India. London 1888, p.2; (also Bengalee, 22 December 1888).

not follow the intricate limitations of constitutional agitation, they would only be excited by the Congress to bring about a revolution. In the same vein, a remarkable pamphlet bearing the name of its author as Oday Pertab Singh, 2 the Raja of Bhinga, argued that the so-called Indian National Congress could not pose as the spokesman of the Indian people as it neither represented the peasantry, nor the majority of the zamindars, nor the Muslims. The Congress, the pamphlet continued, was an organization of Anglicised Indians, pseudo-imitators of English institutions, who were out of touch with the masses. It further argued that British parliamentary democracy could function properly only in England and could not be transplanted to India, since there was no instance of popular government in Indian history, and the people of India were separated by profound racial, religious, and social divisions. It repeated the warning that unless the activities of the Congress were checked, the result would be revolution and massacre. The pamphlet urged the Government to cease its attempts to rule India on democratic principles since they were neither suitable to the country nor desired by the masses. It concluded by pointing out that "all that England could do for India is to give her wise and just governors and to let them govern",

Ibid., Appendix pp.356, 357 and 377.
 Democracy Not Suited to India 1888. It was written Sir Auckland Colvin. See "India not for Indians" in It was written by Proceedings of Legislative Council of the Governor-General, 1887. Dufferin Papers. Vol.XVL, p.163.

and that the Government should better rule the people through their "chosen and natural leaders" who were the true loyalists of the Government unlike the "flatulent orators and the seditious editors."

These arguments represented the general opinion of Englishmen on the Congress. Above all, the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, publicly dismissed Congressmen as a "microscopic minority" and expressed his opinion that the application of democratic methods of government or the adoption of a parliamentary system to India would be a "very big jump into the unknown." Having been rebuffed in India, the Congress directed its main appeals to England. It was a basic assumption of Congressmen that in England, Englishmen were not only unbiased towards their aspirations, but that if Englishmen would realize the merit of the moderate requests of the Congress, they would support its programme. Congressmen identified their constitutional agitation with their reading of England's constitutional history. As zealous admirers of English parliamentary democracy, Congressmen believed that if they were to succeed in arousing the sympathies of the English electorate, Englishmen with their power of the vote would exert pressure on their elected representatives in Parliament, who in turn would press the Secretary of State to direct the Government of India to meet the political aspirations of the Indians.

^{1.} Lord Dufferin, Speeches Delivered in India, November 1888, p.239.

The majority of Congressmen were either lawyers or men who had studied law. Coupled with their belief that Englishmen were essentially adherents of fair play and justice, they regarded England as their High Court of appeal and complacently thought that if they were to put their case before the bar of English public opinion, Englishmen would be convinced of their just requests and support the Congress.

In addition, they strove to promote their cause by penetrating into English party politics. As early as 1879, Banerjea advocated the establishment of a permanent Indian agency in England. He then argued that Indians were to gain full rights only if Indian questions became important factors in the programme of party politics in England. 1 1883, during the Ilbert Bill controversy, the Indian Association deputed Lal Mohan Ghosh to England to win Englishmen's support for the Bill, and he stood on behalf of the Liberals as a candidate for Parliament. He did not succeed. In 1886, Dadabhai Naoroji also attempted as a Liberal candidate to be elected to Parliament. Having failed, he began to act in 1887 as the representative agent of the Congress in London. W.C.Bonnerji joined him in 1888 and an Indian Political Agency was established in London with William Digby as its secretary. The agency circulated the Report of the third Congress which was prefaced with

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.I, p.166, "Deputation in England", 3 September 1879.

OF

ENGLAND'S PLEDGES TO INDIA.

Act of Parliament of 1833.

That no native of the said territories (India) nor any natural-born subject of His Majesty resident therein shall, by reason only of his religion, place of birth, descent, colour, or any of them, be disabled from holding any place, office, or employment under the said Government (Act 3 and 4 Wm. IV., c. 85, s. 87, 1833.)

Her Majesty's Proclamation of 1858.

We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian Territories by the same obligations of duty which bind us to all our other Subjects; and those obligations, by the Blessing of Almighty God, we shall faithfully and conscientiously fulfil.

And it is our further will that, 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.

Lord Northbrook, at Birmingham, on Indian Affairs.

"There is one simple test which we may apply to all Indian questions; let us never forget that it is our duty to govern India, not for our own profit and advantage, but for the benefit of the Natives of India."

Lord Lytton's Speech, at the Delhi Assemblage, on 1st January, 1877.

"But you, the Natives of India, whatever your race, and whatever your creed, have a recognised claim to share largely with your English fellow-subjects, according to your capacity for the task, in the administration of the country you inhabit. This claim is founded in the highest justice. It has been repeatedly affirmed by British and Indian statesmen, and by the legislation of the Imperial Parliament. It is recognised by the Government of India as binding on its honour, and consistent with all the aims of its policy."

Lord Ripon, in the Viceregal Legislative Council.

"The document (Her Majesty's Proclamation) is not a treaty, it is not a diplomatic instrument, it is a declaration of principles of Government which, if it is obligatory at all, is obligatory in respect to a to which it is addressed. The doctrine, therefore, to which Sir James Stephen has given the sanction his nathority, I feel bound to repudiate to the utmost of my power. It seems to me to be inconsistent with the character of my Sovereign and with the honour of my country, and if it were once to be received an acted upon by the Government of England, it would do more than anything else could possibly do to strike a the root of our power and to destroy our just influence. Because that power and that influence rests upon the conviction of our good faith more than upon any other foundation, age, more than upon the valour of our soldiers and the reputation of our arms."

Lord Dufferin's Speech, on the occasion of Her Majesty's Jubilee, in 1887.

"Glad and happy should I be if, during my sojourn among them (the people of India), circumstance permitted me to extend, and to place upon a wider and more logical footing, the political status which was so we by given, a generation ago, by that great statesman, Lord Halifax, to such Indian gentlemen as by the influence, their acquirements, and the confidence they inspired in their fellow-countrymen, were marked out useful adjuncts to our Legislative Councils."

citations from the Act of Parliament of 1833, from Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, and from speeches of Lord Northbrook, Lord Lytton, Lord Ripon and Lord Dufferin, under the heading "Some of England's Pledges to India".1 This document prefaced all the reports of the Congress until 1908, when it was then replaced by the constitution of the Congress. It constituted the proof of the Congress for its arguments and resolutions which called for the redemption of these 'pledges'. A cover letter to the Report of the third Congress, dated May 1888 and signed by W.C.Bonnerji, Dadabhai Naoroji and Budrudin Tyabji, as presidents of the three Congress sessions, explained that the resolutions of the third Congress showed that the Reform (of the Legislative Councils) which was called for by the "law abiding conduct of the people, will be striven for by constitutional means only", that the Indian people as a whole and their leaders in particular were loyally bound to the British Government and were convinced that the granting of their demands would increase the strength of the Government as it would add to the prosperity of the people. The cover letter claimed that the Report of the Congress proved, especially by its list of delegates, that the Congress represented the Indian people, not by self-elected delegates, but by representatives who were appointed either at open public meetings or by political and commercial associations. It further claimed, falsely,

^{1.} See enclosed copy.

that "no party of India nor any section of its varied communities failed to have its appropriate representation." It implored the recipients of the Report to acquaint themselves with the state of their "Indian fellow subjects" and render the Congress their active support. This support, the authors of the letter explained, had in each vote of an English electorate more direct control over the destinies of India than the whole of India's 250 million subjects. The letter ended with the following plea: "We know that without your co-operation we are quite helpless. The only way to Indian Reform runs through the British Parliament."

It is significant that the cover letter endeavoured to appeal to Englishmen by using the terms 'Reform', 'party representation', and 'Indian Fellow subjects'. In the introduction to the Report, the Congress alluded to itself as: "The soundest triumph of British administration and the crown of glory to the British nation." In support of the proposed reform of the Legislative Councils, Banerjea's declaration read: "To England we may appeal with confidence. When Italy was struggling for liberty, England stretched the right hand of sympathy. When Greece was endeavouring to assert her right place among the nations, England was there, the foster mother of freedom responsive to the call. We are not Italians or Greeks. We are something better. We are British subjects." The main purpose of the Report of the

^{1.} Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887, p.86.

Congress was thus intended to serve as a manifesto of loyalty and moderation in an appeal to its prospective English readers.

While the Congress requested the reform of the Legislative Councils as a right based on England's pledges, it demanded the enlistment of Indians to the Volunteer Corps as a duty to qualify for equal citizenship. Yet this was belittled by the assertion that "the raison d'être of English volunteers in India was the protection of the European community in times of trouble against the attacks of the ill disposed portion of the natives."1

Speaking in Calcutta on 26 July 1888, Banerjea declared: "Deep and unswerving loyalty to the British Crown and constitutional agitation for our rights are the words which are graven on the heart of every Indian patriot."2 Banerjea had no difficulty in reconciling the loyalty of Indians to England with Indian patriotism, and explained: "We are loyal and we are patriotic. We are loyal because we are patriotic, because we know and firmly believe that through the British Government and the British Government alone, can we hope to obtain those cherished political rights which English education and English influences taught us to hanker after." His typical declaration, "God grant

^{1.} Sir Lepel Griffin, "Indian Volunteers and Indian loyalty" The Asiatic Quarterly Review, January-April 1889, p.9.
2. Speches, Vol.III, p.65, July 1888.
3. Ibid., Vol.III, p.85, October 1888.

that the future may deepen our loyalty, stimulate our patriotism and consolidate our imperial connection with England", expressed his sincere conviction that Indian patriotism, loyalty to England and the consolidation of British rule were essentially complementary to each other.

In reply to the critics of the Congress and especially to Theodore Beck's "In what will it end", A.O. Hume wrote:
"We look forward to a time, say fifty or seventy years hence, when the government of India will be precisely similar to that of the Dominion of Canada, when each province and presidency will have its local parliament for provincial affairs and the whole country will have its Dominion Parliament for national affairs and when the only official sent out to India from England will be the Viceroy."²

While this bold assertion of Hume expressed in 1888 the envisaged goal of the Congress, the Congress answered its critics in its fourth session by less forthright arguments.

The fourth Congress held in December 1888 at Allahabad, deliberately chose George Yule to act as its first English president in order to curry favour with the English critics of the Congress, just as Budrudin Tyabji was chosen in 1887 to conciliate the Muslims. The key note of the fourth Congress was its attempt to appease its critics and to

^{1.} Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888, p.82.

^{2.} Indian Mirror, 23 May 1888.

manifest more emphatically its complete loyalty to British rule. Supporting the resolution which again urged the reform of the Legislative Councils, Banerjea declared in the name of the Congress that it sought "neither a parliamentary system, nor representative government, nor the application of democratic methods to Indian institutions." (This apologetic modification was in complete contrast to Banerjea's declaration made a year earlier in the Madras session of the Congress, when he declared in support of the same resolution: "We unfurl the banner of the Congress and upon it are written in characters of glittering gold which none may efface, the great words of 'Representative institutions for India'.")2 He argued that the sole object of the Congress was the reform of the Legislative Councils through which the Government would be better able to consult Indian opinion on its administrative measures. Referring to the charge that Congressmen were seditionists. Banerjea rhetorically asked, "Is it for one moment to be suggested that we have become so idiotic and have taken such utter leave of our senses as not to see that we owe all that we possess - our position and our prestige - to the English connection? Let that connection come to an end, and we lose with it all that we hold most dear in life." To give wider currency to this newly modified

^{1.} Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888, p.29. 2. Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887, p.83. 3. Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888, p.80.

theme with the intention of appeasing the critics of the Congress, and with an eye on the English public in England, the <u>Bengalee</u> echoed Banerjea's speech in the fourth Congress and wrote: "It is not Home Rule or Parliamentary institutions that we want. Our humble prayer is that we should be associated with our rulers and only in a limited measure in the government of the country."

In July 1889, the Indian Political Agency in London developed into the British Committee of the Indian National Congress under the chairmanship of William Wedderburn. Its members included W.C. Caine, Dadabhai Naoroji, E. Norton, Charles Bradlaugh and William Digby as its secretary. The British Committee of the Congress published a journal, India, which was distributed free of charge to political associations, and to Members of Parliament in a bid for their support.

In connection with the propaganda of the Congress in London and with the view to further disarm the critics of the Congress, the fifth Congress, held in Bombay in 1889, selected William Wedderburn as its president. In his review of the development of the Congress, W. Wedderburn alluded to the policy of Lord Ripon which, he opined, led to the recognition that the British Government of India was not an alien Government. He recalled the demonstrations at the time

^{1.} Bengalee, 8 January 1889.

of Ripon's departure and expressed his belief that they proved by popular declaration that British rule could be accepted as the national government of the Indian people. Congressmen acclaimed this pronouncement with "long and enthusiastic cheers". Referring to the prospects of the Congress in England, he affirmed that the success of the Congress depended entirely upon the degree to which the British public would be induced to exert their influence on Indian affairs. 2

The fifth Congress appointed Pherozshah Mehta,
Surendranath Banerjea, Man Mohan Ghosh and W.C.Bonnerji to
propagate the programme of the Congress in England.
Referring to their appointment, Banerjea described the nature
and importance of the delegation in the following glowing
terms: "I think this will be the realization of one of the
grandest ideals that ever flashed across the minds of any
patriot or philanthropist; India standing before the bar of
English public opinion, and there through her accredited
delegates chosen by the representatives of the nation,
pleading her cause and demanding redress of her grievances,
no finer, no nobler, no grander spectacle has ever been
presented to the gaze of mankind." In a farewell dinner
given in honour of Banerjea's departure to England, W.C.

^{1.} Report of the fifth I.N.C. Bombay 1889, p.5.

 $[\]frac{101d}{3}$, $\frac{101d}{100}$, $\frac{1}{100}$

Bonnerji stressed the importance of the mission in these terms: "From the government of this country we have little if any hope of emancipation. It is to England the land of political freedom ... that we must turn if our political aspirations are ever to be realised." Referring to Banerjea's zealous work for the Congress, he remarked that it was fortunate for India that Banerjea's career as a civil servant came to an abrupt end because otherwise he would have been "a bright and shining light in the Civil Service."

In England, Banerjea delivered a series of speeches at public meetings, which were organized by the British Committee of the Congress, in which he harped on the theme of England's mission in India. He explained that by the introduction of English education and Western principles of government, British rule had saved India from her traditional system of mis-government and from the religious domination of her priestly class. But he argued that as an inevitable result the Universities in India were turning out annually thousands of Indian students who were steeped in English literature and Western political ideas, and were craving for English political institutions in which they expected to participate on the basis of equality of merit. He further argued that in spite of the pledges given in the Queen's Proclamation, Indians were discriminated against and

^{1.} Bengalee, 22 March 1890.

^{2.} Ibid.

had no representation in the government. In his attempt to describe the Congress in terms which would best appeal to Englishmen, he claimed that the Congress was a national political organization and wrongly contended that its delegates were elected in the same manner as were the members of Parliament. 1 He categorically asserted that the Congress did not want Home Rule or parliamentary institutions in India, but added at the same time, that it was inevitable that English-educated Indians aspired to have the "free institutions of England". The denial of parliamentary institutions for India was designed to appease Englishmen's apprehensions that the Congress did not aim at Home Rule of the Irish pattern. But as it has been shown, the Congress identified itself right from its inception with the English parliament which it constantly held as its model. Thus, it was only as a result of wishing to conciliate its critics that Banerjea diplomatically emphasised that the Congress did not want parliamentary institutions for India while in fact, he and Congressmen constantly treasured the hope that this goal would be reached by gradual stages. Banerjea further argued in his speeches in England, that Englishmen and Indians belonged to the same Aryan race and appealed to Englishmen to support the aspirations of their fellow Indians by exercising their power of the vote in favour of the Liberals.

2. Ibid., p.127.

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.III, p.124, April 1890.

As a conclusion to their work in England, the Indian deputation had an interview with Gladstone and asked him to support the Congress proposals to reform the Legislative Councils. The deputation thus attempted to involve English home politics with the demand for Indian representation in the Government of India.

On his return to India in July 1890, Banerjea was received with enhanced honour and was acclaimed for his successful mission in England. He reported that the British public sympathised with the aspirations of Indians and approved the constitutional character of the Congress. He described how the Indian speakers put the case for the reform of the Legislative Councils and complacently claimed that their moderate request "went straight home to the heart" of the English audiences. 2 Although the English Press generally commented in favourable terms on the propaganda campaign of the Congress deputation, and in particular praised Banerjea's oratory, Banerjea was misled in believing that the deputation scored a success. He was over-zealously impressed by the courtesy and sympathetic hearing of English audiences, especially as it contrasted with Englishmen's behaviour in India, with the result that he confused this courtesy with a pledge of active support. He exaggerated the importance of the public meetings which

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.222.

^{2.} Ibid., p.225.

were merely social entertainment, and took them too seriously as party political meetings. The cheers and applause which were accorded the Indian speakers were expressions of surprised admiration for their fluent English rather than signs of support. In contrast to the uncommitted reaction of the English audiences, J.M. Maclean, M.P. suggested that the Government should prohibit all Congress meetings and frankly asserted: "Let us have the courage to repudiate the pretence ... that we keep India merely for the benefit of the people of the 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." Sir Lepel Griffin wrote: "The ultimate ratio in India is force." He opined that no Viceroy had done India more lasting injury than Lord Ripon who "excited unreasonable hopes and dangerous passions by ill considered promises which he was unable to fulfil ... and bequeathed to his successors the impossible task of persuading the peoples to accept cheerfully the very little which statesmanship could offer them."3

However on the basis of their self-acclaimed success,

^{1.} Modern Review, December 1909, "The Agitation of Indian Grievances in England", p.288.

^{2.} Asiatic Quarterly Review, April 1889, "The Home Rule Movement in India", p.437.
3. Ibid., "Indian Volunteers and Indian Loyalty", pp.7 & 9.

Banerjea urged that an Indian deputation should be sent to England every year; that the work of the British Committee of the Congress should be given greater financial support to open more branch agencies in England; and that paid delegates should be employed to keep up the interest of Englishmen in Indian affairs. 1

While Banerjea was congratulated by Congressmen on his success, the vernacular press took a different view on his mission and on the usefulness of the propaganda of the The Dacca Prakash 2 wrote that the Congress in England. money spent on the Indian Political Agency in London was a sheer waste, and that it should have better been spent to improve the condition of the Indian masses. The article further criticised the Congress for not having passed any resolution which aimed to discourage the use of English manufactured goods or to promote the growth of indigenous cloth. (In the second session of the Congress, a delegate from the Punjab - Lala Hukam Chand - suggested that Indians should compete with English manufactured goods by supporting Indian artisans and by buying Indian made goods - his proposal was dismissed.) The Soma Prakash criticised Banerjea for "making too much fuss" over his mission in England where he had claimed to be the representative of the

^{1.} Speeches, Vol. III, p.228. Also Banerjea, A Nation in p.117.

^{2.} B.N.N.Ŕ. Dacca Prakash, 12 January 1890.
3. Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, p.68.

250 million Indian people, while in fact he had lost touch with the Indian masses. But these observations were ignored by Congressmen.

It is evident that in the preparations for the sixth Congress in 1890, Congressmen again deliberately sought to have an Englishman to preside over the session. Herbert Gladstone, M.P. was first invited. When he declined, the offer went to W. Gantz, the president of the Madras Anglo-Indian and Euroasian Association, who also declined. Hence, just before the Congress was about to convene, Pherozeshah Mehta was hastily selected and elected president. In his presidential speech, Mehta said that the Congress had passed its initial stage of trial and had succeeded in proving its moderation, loyalty and constitutional character. But he admitted that so far the recommendations of the Congress had failed to gain acceptance. He referred to Lord Salisbury's pronouncement that the principle of election or representative government was an idea which could not fit into Eastern traditions, but encouraged Congressmen to continue with their efforts by drawing sustenance from Charles Bradlaugh's Bill in Parliament which proposed the reform of the Indian Legislative Councils.4

^{1.} B.N.N.R. Soma Prakash, 15 September 1890.
2. Bengalee, 8 November 1890.
3. Ibid., 6 December 1890.
4. Report of the sixth I.N.C. Calcutta 1890, p.8.

Lal Mohan Ghosh reaffirmed the Congress' creed in declaring: "Our motto is reform not revolution." Alluding to the success of the Indian deputation in England he deduced that British public opinion was on their side and pressed the need to convince Parliament that the moderate reforms which the Congress advocated, were only calculated to improve the administration of the Government of India in order to strengthen its foundation on the people's affection. This theme expressed the constant refrain of the Congress, but the novelty of the sixth Congress was in the proposal to hold the 1892 session in London. In suggesting this measure, Narendranath Sen contended that the real centre of the Indian government was not in Calcutta or in Simla, but in London. He argued that an assembly of the Congress in London would create a greater impression in England than the combined effect of the former five Congresses put together. expressed Congressmen's feeling of despondency in his conclusion that hitherto they were "crying in the wilderness" and emphasised that the remedy was to be found only by sending one hundred Congressmen to hold a session in London. 2

This theme was the key note of the seventh Congress, held in 1891 in Nagpur. Its deliberations conveyed an unmistakable feeling of despondency. The death of Charles Bradlaugh was a heavy loss to the agitation of the Congress

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.15.

^{2.} Ibid., p.65.

in Parliament, and cast a shadow over the Nagpur session. The announcement of Hume's retirement from India was a sad surprise. An account on Hume's resignation from his office of General Secretary of the Congress attributes to him the following statement: "If the session be not held in London, my resignation be accepted. It is desirable that the session should not be held in India for some time to come."

The Congress had passed its resolutions during the past seven years of its existence and failed to achieve practical success. The only progress which the Congress did make was in proving that it was not a seditious organization, and that it was loyal to British rule. In other words it proved to the Government of India that it would do it no harm, and was therefore practically ignored. In fact, by 1891 the Congress was in a stalemate. It was for this reason that the session at Nagpur contemplated moving its seat of operation to London. Urging this measure as a last resort, Banerjea asked: "Shall the Congress exist as it has existed in the past, or shall it pronounce its doom?"2 Charlu, the president of the session, explained that on the basis of the experience gained by the delegation of the Congress to England, it was thought best to transfer the venue of the next Congress to London "with the Congress banner over our heads emblazoned with the figure of the

^{1.} Hamendranath Das Gupta, The Indian National Congress, p.220.

^{2.} Report of the seventh I.N.C. Nagpur 1891, p.11.

Union Jack." Apart from the heavy financial expense which was to be involved in holding a session in London, a serious obstacle existed in the fear that a journey across the sea, tabooed by Hindu religion, would result in the social ostracism of all Congressmen who would go to England. Encouraging Congressmen to rise above the fear of their possible ostracism, Ananda Charlu, himself a Brahman, declared: "There is already the beginning of a Congresscaste" and any social boycott "would only tend to cement that caste more closely together."2 The significance of this declaration lies in its being an admission that the Congress developed into an exclusive group of English-educated Indians who held themselves aloof from non-Congress Indians: an isolated intellectual political group which was far from being a spearhead of a national mass movement. Speaking about the Indian masses, Ananda Charlu told Congressmen they should arouse the national consciousness of the masses by imparting the conviction that they should cease to regard British rule as foreign, "We should ask them to look upon our British rulers ... as taking the place once held by the Kshatria and as being therefore part and parcel of the traditional administration" of India.

Banerjea's speech in the seventh Congress ended with the warning that the political existence of the Congress and

^{1.} Report of the seventh I.N.C. Nagpur 1891, p.7.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.7-8.

the possibility of its future advancement might depend on the implementation of the resolution to hold the next session in London. But in view of the impending general elections in England, the Congress resolved to postpone the proposed London session until the general elections were over.

Throughout the year 1892 a general feeling of despondency prevailed over the fruitless inactivity of the Congress. The Bengalee published a letter from Hume which read: "Let the sulleness and discontent that broods over so large a population be replaced by hope and cheerful patience." Hume admitted in his letter that he had "almost begun to despair" and suggested that the meeting of the next Congress should be postponed until the end of the general elections in England which he hoped, would return the Liberals. Only under such circumstances, he advised, could the Congress successfully hold its session in London. Throughout the year the Bengalee kept publishing articles which tried to explain that sea voyage to London would not result in the loss of caste.

The vernacular newspapers again attacked Banerjea and the Congress. The <u>Bhanganivasi</u> attributed the failure of the Congress to gain any practical success to the fact that its members lacked earnestness and were primarily interested in enhancing their personal prestige.²

^{1.} Bengalee, 18 June 1892.

^{2.} B.N.N.R. Bhanganivasi, 1 January 1892.

The Bhangavasi wrote that the Congress had dissipated the energy of India's struggle for political advancement. If Congressmen really wanted to convince India's rulers, the article argued, "they should stop talking and take to action", which would at least prove their readiness to make sacrifice for the mother country. The Bhangavasi also attacked Banerjea for falsely posing as a patriot when in fact he remained the same Sahib that he was before his dismissal from the Indian Civil Service forced him to take up the role of a patriot. 2 The Maratha attacked the Congress for having stifled the life of India's political activity by holding its short meetings once a year, and suggested a wider and permanent political organization which would function throughout the year.

The resignation of William Digby from the British Committee of the Congress was another blow to Congressmen, although Hume attempted to calm Congressmen's disappointment by writing 4 that Digby's resignation was not to be regretted because he had drawn £500 a year for acting as secretary, £100 a year for editing India, over £100 for partial use of his office and over £200 for the services of his employees. However, just when the outlook appeared gloomy for Congressmen, their hopes were boosted by two events - the

B.N.N.R. <u>Bhangavasi</u>, 16 January 1892.
 Ibid., 12 March 1892.

^{3.} Maratha, 29 December 1892.

^{4.} Bengalee, 3 December 1892.

victory of the Liberals at the general elections and the election of Dadabhai Naoroji to the House of Commons.

At the eighth session of the Congress held in December 1892 in Allahabad, Banerjea declared: "We appeal to Mr. Gladstone and to the illustrious leaders of the Liberal party for the application of the elective principle to the councils and I am sure that we will not appeal in vain." In the presidential address, W.C. Bonnerji reviewed the history of the Congress and confidently said that since his inauguration of the Congress, it had completed its first successful cycle and was about to begin a new and more promising cycle. Referring to Hume's absence, he acknowledged the debt which the Congress owed to Hume, but encouraged Congressmen not to feel disheartened by Hume's departure since the Congress, he declared, had outgrown its dependency on one individual and rested on the general influential forces of British rule and English education which were constantly animating its deliberations. 2 Alluding to Dadabhai Naoroji's election to Parliament, W.C.Bonnerji thanked the constituency of Central Finsbury for having elected Naoroji and added that by having done so, they have also elected a representative for the people of India in the House of Commons. The main theme of W.C.Bonnerji's

^{1.} Report of the eighth I.N.C. Allahabad 1892, p.30.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.10-11.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.15.

presidential speech centred on the hope that the political change in England would accelerate the reform of the Legislative Councils. For the first time in the deliberation of the Congress, Bonnerji asserted that the Congress wanted "responsible government" for India. But it should be immediately added, (as Bonnerji did), that he used this concept in the sense that the Government of India would be responsible to Parliament.

In 1893 an Indian Parliamentary Committee was established with William Wedderburn as Chairman, and Herbert Roberts as secretary. Dadabhai Naoroji's election to Parliament strengthened Congressmen's belief that their tactics should centre on party politics in England with more Indian members in the House of Commons. A letter of Hume read: "By all means send young men too, if W.C.Bonnerji, Man Mohan Ghosh, Surendranath Banerjea and Pherozshah Mehta chose to come over and work for a constituency as Dadabhai did, they would very likely get it and be an invaluable additional strength to the Indian party."²

In 1892, Parliament passed the Indian Councils Act which empowered the Viceroy to make regulations for the nomination of non-official members to the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils. The selection of Indian members was arrived at through their election by municipal

I. Ibid.

^{2.} Bengalee, 3 November 1894.

and district boards, the universities, chambers of commerce, and landholders' association. The Government of India accepted the recommended elected representatives and then nominated them members of the Councils. 1

In April 1893, Banerjea was elected as the representative of the Calcutta municipal corporation for nomination to the Bengal Legislative Council. In proposing Banerjea to represent the municipal corporation, Narendranath Sen attributed to him the leading part in the agitation which had brought the partial reform of the Legislative Councils. 2

The Statesman wrote that the new representation in the Councils was largely due to Banerjea's efforts and that it was fitting that he should have been the first Indian to be elected for their nomination. 3 New India commented that 'the tribune of the people' will no longer cry in the wilderness. The Advocate of Lucknow, the Hindu of Madras and the Maratha also congratulated Banerjea on his election and acknowledged his well deserved success.4 India of London forecast that he would proceed to be elected to the Imperial Legislative Council and in time to the House of Commons. The Pioneer wrote a biographical sketch of Banerjea in which

^{1.} The de-facto quasi election system which emanated from the Indian Councils Act of 1892 is discussed in Reginald Coupland, <u>India</u>: A Re-statement, pp.100-103; and C.H.Philips, <u>India</u>, London, 1948, p.102.

2. Bengalee, 15 April 1893, and Banerjea, A Nation in Making,

p.125.

^{3.} Statesman, 15 April 1893.

^{4.} Bengalee, 22 April 1893.
5. In Speeches, Vol.IV, Appendix I, p.117.

it observed that he was justly regarded by the majority of Indians as the life and soul of the movement which culminated in the Indian National Congress. Referring to Banerjea's chequered career, the article noted his successful entry into the Indian Civil Service and his expulsion from it, and his success in raising the standard of the Bengalee to one of the foremost weeklies of India. As a politician, the article continued, Banerjea lacked tact and practical wisdom in having no faith in the Government of India, but abundant trust in the justice and generosity of the British people. This conviction led to Banerjea's participation in the Congress deputation to England in 1890 in which he made an uncommonly good impression on the English working class; yet, an impression which "faded like all impressions created by foreigners in England". The article concluded by acknowledging the fact that public opinion owed its existence in Bengal to Babu Surendranath Banerjea. 1

The ninth session of the Congress, held in December 1893 in Lahore, met under the glow of the partial reform of the Legislative Councils and was presided over by Dadabhai Naoroji M.P.. Banerjea summed up the atmosphere of the ninth Congress by forecasting that the year 1893 will be memorable in the annals of English history for witnessing the birth of representative institutions in India. He

^{1.} In Speeches, Vol.IV, Appendix II, pp.117-122.

concluded: "The past fills us with hope. Our record has been a brilliant one ... as in the past so in the future our hopes will be centred in the House of Commons."

In his presidential speech Dadabhai Naoroji told
Congressmen that their efforts succeeded in enlisting the
support of Englishmen in England, and that if this had been
their only success it amply justified the work of the
Congress. He encouraged them to maintain their perseverance
by comparing their struggle to the agitation in England
against the Corn Laws and the struggle for Parliamentary
Reforms. He reaffirmed that the struggle of the Congress had
to be continued in England through the British Committee of
the Congress. He concluded by urging Congressmen to hold a
session in London and assured them that their implicit faith
in the justice and fairness of the English people together
with their loyalty to British rule and patriotism to India
would result in the implementation of their demands.

On 27 January 1894 the <u>Bengalee</u> published the speech of the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, in which he dismissed Congressmen as superficially educated men who entertained "vague aspirations and ambitions". This rebuke further strengthened Congressmen's belief that they could expect no favourable response from the Government of India and that the main impulse for reforms would have to come from England.

^{1.} Report of the ninth I.N.C. Lahore 1893, p.75.

The following incident which occurred in June 1894 illustrates Congressmen's sensitiveness to their constitutional agitation. On 2 June the Bengalee and other newspapers reported that four trees in the maidan of Calcutta were found smeared with cow-dung. The Englishman associated this unusual event with the agitation for the preservation of cows which, a year earlier, had caused serious riots between Hindus and Muslims in Bombay. The Lieutenant-Governor of Bombay, Lord Harris, reported that in his opinion the agitation for the preservation of cows was indirectly connected with the Congress, and that it would be used as a lever not only against the Muslims but also against the Government. 1 The Englishman compared the smearing of the trees with cow-dung, with the circulation of the chapaties before the outbreak of the Mutiny and advised the Government to take precautions against a Hindu militant revival. 2 Banerjea editorialised in the Bengalee on "The smearing incident and the cause of Indian progress" and implored that the Congress was doing its best to strengthen its hard won reputation of loyalty to British rule; that the measure of the success of the Congress to advance the political status of Indians depended on the extent to which the Congress would gain the support of the

2. Englishman, 2 June 1894.

^{1.} S.A.Wolpert, <u>Tilak and Gokhale</u>. University of California Press, 1962. p.66. Quoting his source, Lord Harris to Secretary of State, Lord Kimberly, Kimberly Papers PC/E/16 Public Record Office, 31 August 1893.

British public in England; that the Congress succeeded in forming the Indian Parliamentary Committee which would be better able to render its help if more members joined it, but if the British public would have the slightest apprehension that the conduct of any section of the Indian people was unconstitutional, members of Parliament would refuse to support any further reform for India. Three days later the Bengalee wrote that it had learnt from the Englishman that the trees were smeared by a Mohamedan who confessed that he had merely done so in order "to keep them cool and assist the growth of their berries."

further illustrates the strong reliance of Congressmen on their hopes to obtain the sympathetic support of Englishmen in England. In explaining the character and object of the Congress, he emphasised that it sought only a partial share in the administration of the government and said: "We Hindus have more to lose by the disruption of the Empire than any other portion of its community. The National Congress as a crude non-official Parliament would keep alive the feeling of loyalty. We want to be associated with our rulers not to supersede them ... we want you English here, we cannot do without you; and when silly English Radicals who know nothing about the matter tell the masses in Hyde Park that we wish

^{1.} Bengalee, 16 June 1894.

you out of the country, they lie. We have a great reverence for our own traditions leavened by English feelings. We want to combine our ancient good with your good. All we ask for is sympathy, sympathy, sympathy."

For its coming session, the Congress again sought to select its president from England. The offer first went to E. Blake M.P. and when he declined, Michael Davitt, an Irish M.P. was invited, but he also declined. Alfred Webb, Irish M.P. and a member of the Indian Parliamentary Committee was then invited and agreed to preside. In justifying this selection, the Bengalee repeated the refrain that the Indian political arena was Parliament.

However, Congressmen's fundamental belief in the ability of Parliament to materialise their requests suffered a severe blow in connection with the question of Simultaneous Examinations. The 1876 Regulation lowered the maximum age limit from 21 to 19 years for candidates to the competitive examinations for the Indian Civil Service, and made it almost impossible for Indian candidates to compete successfully with English candidates. In 1888, the age

^{1.} Bengalee, 3 November 1894. The interviewer, Raymond Blathwayt, described Banerjea as "clever, having all the popular orator's love of phrases, pompous, and possessing great sense of self appreciation."

^{2.} Bengalee, 17 November 1894.

Joid.
 During 1862-1878 the total number of successful Indian candidates was eleven; less than one a year. During 1879-1886 the rate of recruitment was on an average six a year. Hira Lal Singh, Problems and Policies of the British in India, p.33.

limit was raised from 19 to 23 but the holding of the examinations in London seriously hampered the prospects of Indian competitors. From its first session in 1885 and throughout its following sessions the Congress constantly urged that the examinations should be held simultaneously in England and in India. On 2 June 1893, Herbert Paul M.P., secretary of the Indian Parliamentary Committee, moved in the House of Commons a resolution which proposed that the competitive examinations should be held simultaneously in England and in India. Dadabhai Naoroji supported the resolution and it was carried by 84 to 76 votes. The Under Secretary of State for India, George Russel, and the Secretary of State for India, Lord Kimberly, viewed the resolution as a "fatal mistake". Kimberly held that the resolution was carried by a snatch vote and invited the opinion of the Government of India. The Government of India replied that the application of simultaneous examinations was "an ill advised and dangerous" proposal. 2 The Secretary of State endorsed this opinion and the question of simultaneous examinations was dismissed.

The outcome of the Ilbert Bill proved that in as much as there was any practical policy for the participation of Indians in the government of India, it was hampered by the influence of official and non-official Englishmen in India.

^{1. &}lt;u>Tbid</u>., p.64.

^{2.} Ibid., p.68.

The Ilbert Bill was defeated in spite of the best possible combination of a Liberal government headed by Gladstone in England and Ripon as Viceroy in India. Hence, the Congress, as noted above, adhered to the belief that the main impulse of reforms would come from Parliament. Yet, although the Liberals were again in power and in spite of the fact that Parliament passed the resolution in favour of holding simultaneous examinations, the resolution was overruled by the Secretary of State for India and by the Government of India - thus proving that Parliament had in fact no effective control over Indian affairs.

The Bhangavasi expressed the general reaction of the vernacular press when it wrote that British rule in India proved itself "unmasked" and advised Congressmen to get rid of their delusions. 1

On the other hand, Hume again appealed to Congressmen not to become disheartened and explained that the overriding of the resolution of Parliament was a rebuff "one had to expect and accept cheerfully in practical politics."2 Banerjea upheld this view in the 1894 Madras Congress and said: "We meet today under the shadow of great disappointment, but we need not despair. Our Sovereign declared that we are to be free; that we are to be eligible to the highest offices of the state; Parliament has endorsed the mandate and we

B.N.N.R. <u>Bhangavasi</u>, 1 September 1894.
 <u>Bengalee</u>, 22 December 1894.

shall see to it that no Minister of the Crown however highly placed he may be, that no government however influential it may be, is permitted to nullify the gracious pledges of our Sovereign and the authoritative declaration of Parliament."1 As if to give sanction to this assertion, the whole audience in the Congress hall stood up while Banerjea recited the Queen's Proclamation. Banerjea called for a protest against the overriding of Parliament's resolution on simultaneous examinations and urged Congressmen to organize a petition of a million signatures to the House of Commons, thus fastening again on Parliament.

Reviewing the Madras session, the Bengalee wrote that it had proved an "unqualified success" in demonstrating the enthusiasm of Congressmen. The article thanked the Reception Committee of Madras for its hospitality and acclaimed its "splendid arrangements" for the delegates. 2 The petition to Parliament however, proved of no avail.

It is evident that although the Congress sustained a severe blow to its faith in Parliament, Banerjea and Congressmen were not discouraged but congratulated themselves on the success of their Congress session, and were satisfied with the aspect of its social festivity.

On his return from Madras to Calcutta on board s/s Rewa, Banerjea addressed the English passengers on the

Report of the tenth I.N.C. Madras 1894, pp.80-81.
 Bengalee, 5 January 1895.

programme of the Congress, and frankly explained that Congressmen could only be loyal, because he said: "We have everything to lose, nothing to gain by the severance of our connection with England. We owe whatever position or prestige we have acquired to our English education and culture, If you were to leave the country our English education and culture would be at a discount. We are not particularly anxious to commit political suicide."1 private meeting of leading Congressmen, held in March 1895, in honour of Pherozeshah Mehta, Banerjea reaffirmed his belief in the providential mission of England in India and said: "I am not credited with being particularly loyal to the British connection. It is an obloquy which has haunted me through life. I am loyal because I am patriotic, because I feel in my heart of hearts that with the continuance and indeed the permanence of British rule in India are bound up the best prospects of Indian advancement."2

Commenting on the reception given in London to Alfred Webb, president of the 1894 Congress session, in which one of the speakers, A.C. Morton, expressed the hope that the efforts of the Congress would culminate in achieving Home Rule, Banerjea editorialised in the Bengalee that the goal of the Congress was not Home Rule but a transformation of India into an organic part within a federated British Empire. 3

^{1.} Speeches, Vol.V, p.104, January 1895.
2. Bengalee, 30 March 1895.

T5 June 1895.

In May 1895, Banerjea was re-elected representative of the Calcutta municipal corporation for nomination to the Bengal Legislative Council.

In November 1895, Banerjea was selected president for the approaching eleventh session of the Congress. Reactions to his selection alluded to him in terms of "the tribune of the people", "the father of political agitation in India", and "one of the few Indians whose name is a household word throughout India".²

In his presidential speech, Banerjea summed up the ideology which permeated the programme of moderate Congressmen in the following declarations - "We Congressmen know what we are about, we know our minds, we know our methods, we stick to them with resolute tenacity of purpose and faith ... We are advocates of reform and not of revolution, and reform as a safeguard against revolution. Above all, we rely with unbounded confidence on the justice and generosity of the British people and their representatives in Parliament. Our voice would be that of one crying in the wilderness but for our organization in London, the British Committee, our paper India and our Parliamentary Committee. The money that we spend in England is worth its weight in gold... To England we look for inspiration and guidance. To England we look for

^{1.} Ibid., 25 May 1895.
2. Observer of Cawnpur and Gujarati of Bombay - Bengalee, 16 and 30 November 1895.

sympathy in the struggle. England is our political guide and our moral preceptor ... English history has taught us those principles of freedom which we cherish with our lifehood ... We have been taught to admire the eloquence and genius of the great masters of English political philosophy. We have been brought face to face with the struggles and the triumphs of the English people in their progress towards constitutional freedom ... We did not seek to transplant into our country the spirit of those free institutions ... it is the work of Englishmen. In this Congress from year to year we ask England to accomplish her glorious work... In our efforts for the improvement of our political status we feel that we may appeal with confidence to the sympathies of the Anglo-Indian community. They are Englishmen. By instinct and tradition they are the friends of freedom. Our interests and their interests are identical... any extension of our political privileges would benefit them as well as ourselves ... Time is with us. Time, present and future is our ally... it is this feeling which reconciles us to the present... It implies confidence in the progressive character of British rule... We appeal to England gradually to change the character of her rule in India, to liberalise it, to adopt it to the newly developed environments of the country and the people, so that in the fulness of time India may find itself 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."

However, commenting on Banerjea's presidential speech, the Englishman wrote: "It pains us to descend from these lofty heights to a lower but more practical level. Very different sentiments were expressed in a letter addressed to us saying, 'the time shall come when we will kick out of India the whole set of you pale faced braggarts and rule our country in the name of our good Empress' - This is the end for which the Congress is consciously or unconsciously striving at."

^{1.} Report of the eleventh I.N.C. Poona 1895, p.51.

^{2.} Englishman, 2 June 1896.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY CAREER OF LAJPAT RAI AND THE EMERGENCE OF A RIFT IN THE CONGRESS 1882-1902

The earliest development of ideological differences in the Congress can be discerned in 1889 in the writings of Lajpat Rai. To understand the development of his ideas, it is necessary to describe briefly his early life.

Lajpat Rai was born in 1865 in Jagraon - a small town in the Punjab between Ferozpur and Ludhiana. His father, Munshi Lala Rada Krishen of Aggarwal (banya) caste, was educated in a Persian school, whose devout Muslim headmaster zealously influenced his pupils to embrace Islam. Though Lajpat Rai's father did not declare himself officially a Muslim, his religious convictions leaned heavily towards Islam (Suni). He observed Muslim fasts, and condemned Hindu customs and rituals. His close friends were Muslims, and he was an ardent follower of Syed Ahmed Khan.

On the other hand, Lajpat Rai's mother came from an orthodox Sikh family. She resented her husband's leanings to Islam and regularly performed the pūjā²and shrāddha³ rituals in secrecy in order not to arouse her husband's condemnation. During 1870-1878 the family lived in Rupar in Ambala

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, The Story of My Life, Autobiographical fragment, Walls (Henceforth Lajpat Rai, Autobiography).

^{2.} Worship of God.

^{3.} Rite of commemoration of ancestors.

District, where Lajpat Rai's father taught Persian in the local school. Lajpat Rai received his elementary education from his father who taught him Urdu and Persian, read to him the Quran and generally sought to bring him up on the appreciation of Islamic ideals.

In 1879 the family returned to Jagraon and Lajpat Rai studied in the Mission High School in Ludhiana. He was married in 1877 at the age of twelve and a half. In November 1880 he went to Lahore and passed the Entrance Examinations to Lahore University College. He studied law and qualified in December 1882 as a Mukhtar (pleader).

In Lahore, Lajpat Rai was persuaded by Pandit Shiva Narain Agnihotri, leader of the Brahmo Samaj in the Punjab, to join the Brahmo Mandir Samaj and was formally initiated in 1882.

Lajpat Rai's closest friends - Hans Raj, Guru Datta
Vidyarthi, and Rai Shiva Nath - were ardent followers of
Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj. It was due
to their influence that he became dissatisfied even with his
nominal membership in the Brahmo Samaj, particularly because
of its Christian leanings.

Lajpat Rai's knowledge of Indian history was based on a book entitled "Waqiat-i-Hind", from which he deduced that the Hindus were subjected to Muslim tyrannical rule. A second

^{1.} Selections from the history of India, ed. by Maulavi Karim al-Din, Calcutta 1898.

book entitled "Qasis-i-Hind", made a deep impression on his mind, since it eulogised the heroism of the Rajputs in their struggles against the Muslims and impressed upon him for the first time a feeling of pride in being a Hindu.

Thus Lajpat Rai's early identification with Hindus and his attachment to Hinduism stemmed from a rejection to his Islamic upbringing. In his own words: "The respect for Islam that I had acquired from early training changed into hatred."²

Early in 1882 a fierce controversy raged in the Punjab over the use of Urdu or Hindi. Lajpat Rai's friends enthusiastically advocated the use of Hindi as the most suitable language for the rejuvenation of Hindu nationality. Lajpat Rai was prompted by them to uphold the cause of Hindi, and in his first public speech in April 1882 at Ambala, he opposed the use of Urdu and expressed his newly arrived conviction that the political solidarity of the Hindus demanded the development of Hindi into the national language of India. It is significant that he was obliged to advocate this idea in Urdu since he did not even know the Hindi Alphabet. As an outcome of the Urdu-Hindi controversy he gave up studying Persian and Arabic and began to learn Hindi.

Lajpat Rai hesitated to join the Arya Samaj since his father was hostile towards it, but in December 1882 he attended for the first time an Arya Samaj meeting and became

^{1.} Judges of India.

^{2.} Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, pp.92-93.

a member of the organization. He described the crucial importance of the event, which proved to be the turning point in his life, in the following words - "All that was evil in me I must have inherited either from those who brought me into being, or from my own previous incarnations, and all that was good and creditable in me I owed to the Arya Samaj."

His decision to join the Arya Samaj marked a three fold rejection; of his father's idealisation of Islam; his mother's practice of Hindu ritualism which he regarded as sheer superstition; and the Brahmo Samaj.

Above all, the Arya Samaj confirmed his new realization of pride in being a Hindu. Through its principles and teachings he learnt "to love the Vedic religion, to be proud of Aryan greatness and to make sacrifices for the country."

In December 1885 Lajpat Rai and Hans Raj founded the Dayanand Anglo Vedic College - an institution which greatly served to spread and strengthen the doctrines of Arya Samaj.

In 1886 Lajpat Rai qualified as a Vakil and practised law in Hissar. He established an Arya Samaj centre in Hissar, acted as its secretary, led the prayers and read the sermons and supported it by annual donations of Rs.1,500 which amounted to one month's income. He became a successful lawyer and acted also as Honorary Secretary of the Hissar

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.32.

^{2.} Ibid.

Municipal Board. During his stay in Hissar from 1886-1892, his annual income reached Rs.17,000. In six years he had saved Rs.70,000. Yet he described his financial success as a failure, "to amass wealth was not the object of my life, to enjoy luxury was not my goal, to win official honours was not my ambition. I wanted to sacrifice myself for my people and my country."1

He felt stifled in the small town of Hissar and moved to Lahore.

Lajpat Rai's first association with the Congress dates from its third session at Madras in December 1887. It was presided over by Budrudin Tyabji in order to enlist the support of the Muslims who had been advised by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to keep aloof from the Congress.²

Lajpat Rai played no active part in the Madras session, but towards the end of 1888 he published four "open letters to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan" in which he criticised Sir Syed's attack on the Congress as being inconsistent with Sir Syed's earlier advocacy of Hindu-Muslim co-operation. Reviewing Sir Syed's writings and speeches, Lajpat Rai argued that in his "Causes for the Indian Revolt" Sir Syed emphasised that the

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.52. 2. See above, Chapter II, p.66.

^{3. &}quot;Open letters to the Hon. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan" (I. 27 October 1888, II. 15 November 1888, III. 22 November 1888, IV. 20 December 1888) by "The son of an old follower of yours". Lajpat Rai - The Man in his word. Madras, 1907.

^{4.} Written in 1858, translated into English and published in 1873.

wide gap between the rulers and the ruled was a contributive factor to the revolt, and that the remedy for bridging the gap lay in the introduction of Indian representation into the Legislative Councils.

Lajpat Rai quoted from Sir Syed's Gurdaspur speech on 27 January 1884 in which he declared that it was essential for Hindus and Muslims to support each other and act in unison, and from his reply to an address of the Indian Association of Lahore on 3 February 1884 in which he advocated the same idea and explained that in the word "quam" (society or nation) he included both Hindus and Muslims, who shared the same country and were dependent on one another for the advancement of their common interests.

Yet in his Merut and Lucknow speeches in December 1887 and March 1888 respectively, Sir Syed advised the Muslims to disassociate themselves from the Congress, to regard it as a seditious organization, sectarian, and a harbinger of civil war.

Lajpat Rai attempted in his open letters to refute Sir Syed's charges by arguing that the Congress aimed to advance the very ideas which he had advocated before 1888 and challenged him to explain his volte-face.

Lajpat Rai attended the fourth session of the Congress, held in December 1888 in Allahabad and presided over by

George Yule. During the session he delivered a short speech in which he repeated his criticism against Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and was congratulated on his open letters to Sir Syed. He also attended the fifth session of the Congress held in December 1889, presided over by Sir William Wedderburn, after which his interest in the Congress faded.

He had come to regard the Congress as an Anglicised organization whose leaders cared mainly for their personal fame and were reluctant to make genuine sacrifices. He shared the views of his Arya Samajist friends - Sain Das (president of Lahore Arya Samaj) and Hans Raj - who rejected the Congress because they believed that since it was founded and guided by A.O. Hume whose first loyalty was inevitably to England, it could not possibly aim to win India's freedom from British rule. Lajpat Rai emphasised Hume's idea of the safety-valve function of the Congress, and understood it as a deliberate device aimed to set up a harmless organization for the purpose of paralysing the development of a wider and more militant movement.² This was a narrow interpretation which disregarded Hume's wider conception of the Congress as a vehicle which would transform the Government of India, peacefully and gradually, from its character of foreign bureaucracy into a stable national self-governing Dominion.

Report of the fourth I.N.C. Allahabad 1888, p.34.
 Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.102.
 W.Wedderburn, A.O.Hume Father of the Indian National Congress, London 1923, p.48.

Nevertheless, it was a valid interpretation as far as Hume's own emphasis on the safety-valve function of the Congress was concerned.

In his speech on the origin and aims of the Congress, Hume clearly explained that "by getting hold of the great lower middle class before the development of the reckless demagogues to which the next quarter of the century must give birth and carefully inoculating them with a mild and harmless form of the political fever, we are adopting the only certain precautionary method against the otherwise inevitable ravages of a violent and epidemic burst of disorder." Hume further explained that, the Congress was designed in order to limit and control the forces which Western education and ideas have let loose before they would burst into a revolution.² In the deliberations of the Subjects Committee of the third and fourth sessions of the Congress, Hume strongly opposed the proposal to pass the resolution which asked the Government to abolish the Arms Act and enable Indians to own arms. He argued that his memory of the Mutiny would never allow him to support such a

^{1.} A.O.Hume's speech, "The Indian National Congress, its origin, aims and object". Allahabad, 3 April 1888. I.O.L. Tract 658.

^{2. &}quot;Western education and western ideas have let loose forces which unless guided and controlled might sooner or later involve consequences which are too disastrous to contemplate and it is precisely to limit and control these forces and direct them, while there is yet time, into safe channels that this Congress was designed." Ibid.

resolution.1

In emphasising the safety-valve function of the Congress, Lajpat Rai was convinced that the Congress had frustrated a bolder movement which would have been animated by self-reliance, and which could have smuggled arms and bode its time until it felt sufficiently strong to expel the British.²

The second reason for Lajpat Rai's criticism of the Congress stemmed from his Arya-Samaj-inspired conviction that the attempts of the Congress to court the co-operation of the Muslims were not only futile but dangerous to the interests of the Hindus. He believed that the Muslims were potentially capable of putting up a united front against the Hindus if their religious solidarity was galvanized by political issues.

He further believed that they would strongly challenge the Hindus for the future supremacy of India and that their effort would be strengthened by the support of Afghanistan and Turkey. By comparison with this potential Islamic unity, Lajpat Rai emphasised that the Hindus were weaker in spite of their majority because of their social and religious disunity. Hence, he asserted, that the Congress would have

3. Ibid., p.103.

^{1.} Hamendranath Das Gupta. The Indian National Congress, p.169 and Bipin Chandra Pal. Swadeshi and Swaraj. Calcutta, 1956. A selection from Pal's speeches and writings during 1902-1907, "Loyal Patriotism", p.28.

2. Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.102.

done better if it concentrated its whole effort on fostering Hindu national unity instead of clinging to the façade of an Indian National body which falsely claimed to represent all Hindus and all Muslims.

It is significant that in having swung to this view, Lajpat Rai abandoned the argument which he had put forward in his open letters to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, and in fact expressed the very ideas which Sir Syed had promulgated.

While Lajpat Rai's adherence to the Arya Samaj clearly permeated his views and reactions, Surendranath Banerjea's official association with the Brahmo Samaj is equivocal. There is no clear statement in Banerjea's autobiography which attests to his membership in the Brahmo Samaj, and in the Reports of the Congress his religious denomination is given as "Brahman" and as "Brahmo". However, the most important and unmistakable fact is that Banerjea was strongly influenced by the personality and ideas of Keshub Chunder Sen, and that he propagated the ideals of the Brahmo Samaj. On his return from London in 1871, Banerjea and his family were socially ostracised, yet he was cordially welcomed by Keshub Chunder Sen and fellow Brahmos.

When he was dismissed from the Indian Civil Service,

^{1.} Appendix giving list of delegates in Reports of the Congress.

^{2.} Speeches. Vol.I, p.10, "Indian Unity". Vol.I, pp.116-117, "Keshub Chunder Sen". Vol.II, pp.33-34, Bengalee, 12 January 1884.
3. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.6.

Brahmo friends - notably Ananda Mohan Bose - secured for him a teaching post in the City school, a Brahmo college in Calcutta in which Banerjea delivered his early speeches on religious and political themes. It was from this background that Banerjea - together with Ananda Mohan Bose and Dwarkanath Ganguli, two prominent Brahmo leaders, - went on to establish the Indian Association.

Since Lajpat Rai's disappointment with the Congress and his criticism of its aims and methods were inseparably linked with his fervent adherence to the Arya Samaj, while Banerjea's convictions were inspired by the Brahmo Samaj, it is useful to contrast the basic elements of the Arya Samaj with those of the Brahmo Samaj in order to gain a better insight into the different premises from which they developed their different ideas.

The Brahmo Samaj of India, under the leadership of Keshub Chunder Sen, attempted to synthesize Hinduism, Islam and Christianity into an Indian National Church. Keshub Chunder Sen (1843-1884) came from one of the most Westernized families in Bengal, drew heavily from Christian teachings, and believed that Hinduism and Islam would first coalesce and then be shaped by Christianity. "The spirit of Christianity", he preached, "has already pervaded the whole

^{1.} Keshub Chunder Sen's lectures in India, "The Future Church", Sources of Indian Tradition, ed. T. De Bary, Columbia University Press, New York 1958, p.621.

atmosphere of Indian society and we breath, think, feel, and move in a Christian atmosphere." Keshub Chunder's 'New Dispensation' called for the harmonization of all conflicting creeds and for the fusion of East and West. He called on "Europe to enter into the heart of Asia and Asia to enter into the mind of Europe" and added, "We instantly realize within ourselves an European Asia and an Asiatic Europe, a commingling of oriental and occidental ideas and principles."

He preached the idea of England's Providential mission in India not as a political doctrine but as an integral part of Brahmo ethics and asserted: "It is Christ who rules British India and not the British Government." He saw the hand of Providence in the British conquest of India and stressed that it was primarily an intellectual and moral conquest which was ordained to enlighten the people of India and uplift them from their degraded condition. He consequently claimed that India was held by Britain on a trust accountable to God and that the Government of India was dutifully bound to expedite the mission with which it was providentially entrusted. Correspondingly, he preached, the Indians were bound to profess loyalty to British rule not only on the grounds of expediency, but as a sacred duty.

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.623.

^{2.} Keshub Chunder Sen, "We Apostles of the New Dispensation", Sources of Indian Tradition, ed. T. De Bary, p.627.

^{3.} Keshub Chunder Sen, The Brahmo Samaj, Discourses and Writings. 2nd ed. Calcutta, 1917. Speech "England and India", delivered in Calcutta, 2 February 1870.

The sovereign, Keshub emphasised, was God's representative and must therefore have the subjects' allegiance and homage.

"We look upon Victoria as our Queen Mother and we are politically her children. She sits upon the throne as India's mother protecting the lives and property of her children, promoting their material and moral prosperity and helping them to attain political and social manhood. She represents law, order, and justice and is appointed by Providence to rule over us." Hence any form of sedition was rebellion against the authority of God's representative and was therefore not only a political offence but a direct sin against God.²

This concept of sovereignty agrees with Indian traditional ideas of kingship. When the title of 'Empress of India' was conferred on Victoria, Keshub Chunder declared with reference to the Delhi Durbar, "We were rejoiced to see the rajas and maharajas of India offering their united homage to Empress Victoria and her representative at the imperial assemblage." Implicit in this view is the idea of equating Queen Victoria with the Indian concept of the cakravartin.

2. The New Dispensation. Brahmo Tract Society. Calcutta 1884, p.27.

4. The Universal Emperor.

^{1.} Keshub Chunder Sen, "On British rule in India and loyalty to Sovereign". I.O.L. Political Tract 1368.

^{3.} Keshub Chunder Sen, "Philosophy and Madness in Religion", speech at Calcutta in 1877. Sources of Indian Tradition. ed. T.De Bary, p.619.

The fact that Victoria reigned in England did not in the least impair her image as the Sovereign of India. Whenever Banerjea made reference to Queen Victoria he alluded to her title 'Empress of India' in terms of "Our Sovereign" and "Our Mother". Bengali newspapers referred to Victoria as "Maharani". "Paramatma". and "Goddess". These were the manifestations of a deeper process by which Indians attempted to absorb and transform the British Government in the same manner in which former foreign conquerors of India were absorbed and accepted as India's own rulers. The enthusiastic processions which witnessed Lord Ripon's farewell tour of India and his reception in Calcutta - which was compared to the legendary entry of Rama into Ayodhya - attested to the readiness of Indians to accept a popular Viceroy as their own ruler.2

This sentiment was expressed by Banerjea in his approval of Professor Seely's contention that British rule in India developed from indigenous origins and was supported by the Indians who chose to install British rule over them. 3

Again, the same sentiment was expressed by Congressmen when they responded with cheers to William Wedderburn's supposition that they wished to transform the British Government into the national government of India.4

^{1.} The Great Soul.

^{2.} See above, Chapter I, p. 52. 3. See above, Chapter I, p. 52.

^{4.} See above, Chapter II, p. 79.

Banerjea harped on Keshub Chunder's theme of harmony and reconciliation and stressed the providential mission of British rule in India. But he lacked the religious fervour of Keshub Chunder and since he had been dismissed from the Indian Civil Service, Banerjea placed more emphasis on political expediency and supported his arguments by the theme of England's mission and by England's pledges to the Indians. Nevertheless, the principal ideas which he carried from Keshub Chunder to the Congress platform were the advocacy of Hindu-Muslim co-operation, and the conviction that Indian patriotism, loyalty to England and the permanence of British rule were indivisible.

In contrast to Keshub Chunder Sen, Dayananda Saraswati (1824-1883) founder of the Arya Samaj, came from an orthodox Brahman family in Gujarat, a province which by comparison with Bengal was appreciably less affected by British cultural influences. He received a Sanskritic education and spent much of his life as a wandering ascetic.

While the ideal of Brahmo Samaj was to find a common denominator for Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, the Arya Samaj was a Hindu Protestant Reformation. It was founded in Bombay in 1875 and promulgated its principles in 1877 in Lahore. Dayananda Saraswati rejected Western values and relied solely on the Vedas, which he upheld as the "repository of knowledge and religious truths - the word of

God." He denounced post-vedic Brahmanical Hinduism as an over-subtle and exacting ecclesiasticism which reduced Vedic religion to a spiritless dogma. He denied the recognized authority and superiority of the Brahmans on the grounds that they rested on deception and rigid indoctrination which had no sanction in the Vedas. He attacked the caste system and preached the right of equal opportunity to all according to their merit. In reaching back to Vedic roots and in interpreting the Vedas very liberally, the Arya Samaj wished to purge Hinduism, and aimed at doing away with the caste system, child marriage, and restrictions on widows, by emphasising that they had been foisted on the Vedic religion by Brahmanical law.

Though the Arya Samaj held the belief in the doctrines of Samsāra and Karma, it accentuated the ability of the individual to forge ahead by his energetic action (Karma Yoga) rather than resign to fatalism and predestination. In practice, the Arya Samaj uplifted Untouchables to the status of Dvijas by investing them with the sacred thread and by interdining.

D. Saraswati, The Light of Truth, Lahore 1927, p.678. Sources of Indian Tradition, ed. De Bary, p.635.
 Lajpat Rai, The Arya Samaj. London 1915, p.72.
 Samsara - transmigration. Karma - literally "deed".

^{3.} Samsara - transmigration. Karma - literally "deed".

The effect of former deeds - performed either in one's present life or in a previous one - on one's present and future condition.

^{4.} Dvija - twice born. The three higher classes; Brahmans, Ksatriyas and Vaisyas were "twice born". Once at their natural birth and again at their initiation, when they were invested with the sacred thread and received into Aryan Society. The Sudras had no initiation and were not looked on as Aryans at all. A.L.Basham, The Wonder That Was India, London 1954, p.136.

Inherent in Dayananda Saraswati's call of revival was an emphasis on Aryan pride, self-confidence, and self-help. The Arya Samaj drew its strength from the achievements of ancient India and criticised the Brahmo Samaj of Keshub Chunder as a confession of Hindu inferiority and as an attempt to introduce social and religious reforms, merely in order to enable English-educated Indians to be in harmony with Western social behaviour.

"The question is no longer of other people's attitude to us" said Dayananda Saraswati, "but rather of what we think of them." He refused to learn English and discarded the word "Hindu" because of its Persian origin, preferring instead "Trya".

Side by side with the attempts of the Arya Samaj to uplift the Untouchables, it called upon Hindus who had become Muslims to reconvert, and actively prevented conversions to Christianity.

Thus in its efforts to "unfasten the chains of intellectual, moral, religious, and social bondage", the Arya Samaj was a militant movement which combated Brahmanical law, as well as Islam and Christianity. Though the Arya Samaj officially claimed that it was not an anti British political body, its emphasis on self-reliance and

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, The Arya Samaj, p.242.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.174.

self-help, and its non-obsequious attitude, inevitably expressed defiance against political bondage.

Hence the contrast between the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj becomes sharpened when it is centred on the political issue, since Keshub Chunder and Banerjea believed that British rule released the Indians from their own bondage, while Dayananda Saraswati and Lajpat Rai believed that Indians ought and could regenerate India's former greatness by their own efforts.

The first important sign of sectionalism in the Congress came into the open during the preparations for the eleventh session, which was to convene in December 1895 in Poona. The conflict centred on the issue of whether the Congress should or should not be concerned with social and religious reforms.

In the 1886 Congress, Dadabhai Naoroji laid down the maxim that the Congress was a national political body whose function was to voice the political aspirations of Indians, irrespective of their religious denominations or their social classification, and that if it attempted to discuss social and religious problems, it would only arouse frictions which would irreparably damage its loose collective unity. Naoroji emphasised that in posing as the Indian National Congress and in being comprised of Hindus, Muslims,

^{1.} See V. Chirol, <u>Indian Unrest</u>. London 1910, p.111 - 'Arya for the Aryans'.

Sikhs, Parsees and Christians, the Congress could not possibly meddle with their peculiar social and religious problems, and had therefore to confine its deliberations to political questions which would weld all the members of the Congress into a cohesive body.

From that time, the Congress adhered to this principle. It realised that deliberations on social and religious problems would inevitably centre on Hindu social and religious questions and thus mark out the Congress as a Hindu sectarian organization. In particular the Congress was anxious to rally the Muslims to its three day annual assembly, in order to exhibit the validity of its claim that it also embodied and represented the Muslims. Furthermore, the Congress was a secular organization which had no authority to recommend, let alone sanction, any religious or social reforms. At best it could only recommend social reforms to the Government and invite legislation, but this would have aroused fierce resentment against the Congress from the very people whom it claimed to represent.

In spite of these considerations, Congressmen were consciously aware of the urgent need for social reforms and realised the force of Ranade's dictum that "India's social institutions impose a tyranny more oppressive than the most despotic acts of any arbitrary Government."

^{1.} Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, Dadabhai Naoroji's presidential speech, p.54.

^{2.} Ranade's speech at the 1893 National Social Conference. Bengalee, 2 January 1894.

The solution to the dilemma was found in the procedure by which an annual National Social Conference was held immediately after the close of the Congress session, at the same place and in the same pavilion. It was a convenient arrangement because most of the delegates who came to the Congress also participated in the National Social Conference. While the Congress restricted its deliberations to political issues, the National Social Conference dealt with specific problems pertaining to Hindu society.

The subjects of its theoretical discussions ranged over the need to spread education to the low castes, the promotion of interdining and intermarriages, the promotion of female education and widow remarriage, and the encouragement of travel abroad by removing the pollution entailed upon it. Thus the Social Conference was an unofficial annex to the Congress and yet at the same time a distinctively separate convention.

When the Congress was about to hold its eleventh session in 1895 in Poona, Tilak placed himself at the head of the orthodox Brahmans of Poona, and acting as the joint secretary of the Congress Reception Committee, opposed the procedure to hold the Social Conference at the same pavilion as the Congress. Having been forced to resign from the Reception Committee for his opposition, I Tilak then warned

^{1.} S.A. Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale, p.72.

that if the Social Conference would convene in the Congress pavilion "a separate People's Congress would be established in defiance to the Reformers' Congress." He criticised the Social Conference as Western influenced, and its proposed reforms as damaging to the uniformity of Hindu society. He upheld the system of Varnasrama-dharma, 2 and maintained that social and religious reforms would jeopardize the structural coherence of Hindu society and weaken its opposition to the Government.

He accused the Social Conference as being an attempt to destroy the long cherished customs of Hindu society and added that the Congress should rally the support of the masses by stimulating religious and patriotic zeal.³

The threat of a split in the Poona Congress was avoided by Banerjea who mediated in his capacity as president elect of the Poona session, and succeeded in prevailing upon Ranade not to hold the Social Conference in the Congress pavilion.4

Banerjea generally condemned the caste system, the prohibition on widow remarriage, child marriage and the

^{1.} Maratha, 17 November 1895.

^{2.} The organization of social life through well-defined and well-regulated four classes and the organization of an individual's life within those classes and in the four stages of life.

^{3.} Native Opinion, 10 November 1895. It is significant that in this controversy, Tilak and the orthodox Brahmans of Poona were referred to as "the extremists". Bengalee, 30 November 1895. 4. Bengalee, 30 November 1895.

illiteracy of women as "foul blots on the Hindu social system which must be cleansed and wiped out, before the political regeneration of India could be made possible." Yet in view of the impending clash in Poona, he affirmed that the Social Conference was not and could not be part of the Congress programme, and that it had hitherto held its annual meetings at the time and place of the Congress merely for the sake of convenience.²

In his presidential speech Banerjea praised Ranade's conciliation which had "averted a crisis that might have proved disastrous to the best interests of the Congress."3 He reminded Congressmen that their organization had already been criticised for being a Hindu Congress and emphasised that discussions on Hindu social and religious problems in the Congress went contrary to the claim of the Congress to be the united representative body of Hindus and Muslims. He warned that if social and religious discussions would be associated with the Congress, it would only cause dissensions and schism in its fragile camp.4

In the Shivaji memorial meeting which was held in Poona immediately after the Congress, Banerjea told the meeting: "Shivaji fought with the Mohamedans, and had recourse to arms. Our methods are different altogether. We

Speeches, Vol.I, p.68. "England and India", April 1877.
 Bengalee, 28 December 1895.
 Report of the eleventh I.N.C. Poona 1895, p.15.

do not fight with the Mohamedans. We seek to be united with them upon the solid ground of common national interests. We do not appeal to the sword; the pen is our weapon. We appeal to the methods of constitutional agitation."1

Yet constitutional agitation and the Congress were strongly attacked in the vernacular newspapers. The Sanjivani wrote that "prayers and lamentations avail nothing. the only way to deliver mother India is by their sonsheart's blood."2 The Bhangavasi wrote that the "so called Indian National Congress was a useless farce", that it was an organization of denationalised men whose only aspiration was to be appointed to high offices in the Government service. 5 and that the Indian representatives in the Legislative Councils were merely playing in a puppet show.

The Bangavasi of 10 August 1895 wrote: "Surendranath, the patriot of patriots, it was an evil day that you were dismissed from Government service and chose to turn out a patriot."

Speeches. Vol.V. p.87. "The Shivaji Memorial" December 1895; also Maratha, 31 December 1895.
 B.N.N.R. Sanjivani, 20 November 1895.
 B.N.N.R. Bhangavasi, 30 November 1895.
 Ibid., 6 July 1895.

The Bhangavasi of 2 August 1895 attacked Banerjea for having voted in the Bengal Legislative Council in favour of a Drainage Bill which entailed a levy of tax, and condemned him as a traitor. The <u>Hindi Bangavasi</u> of 7 August 1895 revealed that Banerjea, acting in his capacity as Honorary Magistrate of Barackpur, sentenced a widow to two months rigorous imprisonment for stealing a piece of cloth, a sentence which was quashed by the Magistrate of Alipur who ordered the immediate release of the woman. The article went on to comment that "Surendranath Banerjea the great patriot and pillar of the Indian National Congress who publicly lamented the oppression of Hindu widows, failed to prove his own sympathy."

During 1896-1897, bubonic plague struck Poona, famine was widespread in Maharashtra and the Punjab, and there was scarcity of food in Bengal and much of Northern India. The Maratha wrote: "Take an oath, a holy oath by the love of India and by the noble memory of the heroic Aryan ancestors that as long as Indians are not treated as equal subjects, resolve to die rather than take an inch of Manchester cloth. Let everyone who buys one yard of English cloth be branded as a traitor to his country."1

The Samachar reported that 5,000 inhabitants of Berar resolved in a public meeting to boycott Manchester cloth and vowed to use only indigenous goods. 2 The Sanjivani urged the use of swadeshi clothes as a patriotic sacrifice. and the Bhangavasi echoed this theme and argued that such action did not entail sedition since loyalty to British rule did not include the duty to starve.4

Thus, Swadeshi and Boycott which were to gather momentum during 1905-1906, had already been advocated as political methods in 1896. The Punjab Samachar wrote that the Government would not concede any political reforms or regard Indians as equal subjects unless Indians resorted to The article concluded: "If the Indians have any self-respect or any drop of national blood left in their

^{1.} Maratha, 9 March 1896. 2. B.N.N.R. Samachar, 11 March 1896.

^{3.} B.N.N.R. Sanjivani, 14 March 1896.

^{4.} B.N.N.R. Bhangavasi, 14 March 1896.

veins, now is the time to prove it."1

On 15 June 1897 Tilak published in his Kesari the speech which he had delivered during the Shivaji festival, in which he exonerated Shivaji's murder of Afzal Khan. The article, entitled "Utterances of Shivaji", read as the lament of Shivaji on seeing the poverty and oppression of his country. In it Tilak advocated - allegorically - the forceful removal of tyrannical rule: "If thieves enter our house and we have not sufficient strength to drive them out, we should without hesitation shut them up and burn them alive."2

On 22 June 1897, W.C.Rand and Lieutenant C.E.Ayerst were murdered in Poona. Rand was in charge of enforcing measures to combat the bubonic plague which was prevalent in Poona during 1896-1897. These measures aroused strong resentment since they entailed house to house searches, disinfection, and the forced segregation of plague infected patients.

The assassin, Damodar Chapekar, revealed in his confession 5 the existence of a secret revolutionary society which was motivated by religious and patriotic feelings, and inspired by the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals. 4 "Merely

^{1.} P.N.N.R. <u>Punjab Samachar</u>, 19 & 20 January 1897. 2. Report of Committee appointed to investigate Revolutionary Conspiracies in India. 1918, p.11. Henceforth Rowlatt Report.

^{3.} Synopsis of autobiography of Damodar Chapekar, Home Prog. Public Vol.5640 no.5991, 25 August 1899.4. The militant character of the Ganapati and Shivaji

festivals is discussed in V.Chirol, Indian Unrest, pp.44-45, and in S.A. Wolpert, Tilak and Gokhale, pp.67-80.

reciting Shivaji's story", Damodar Chapekar said, "does not secure independence, it is necessary to be engaged in desperate enterprises... Take up swords and shields and we shall cut off countless heads of enemies. We shall risk our lives on the battlefield in a national war, we shall shed upon the earth the life-blood of the enemies who destroy [our] religion."

The article of Tilak on the "Utterances of Shivaji" was regarded as an incitement to the murder of Rand, and Tilak was arrested on 28 July 1897 and charged with attempting to excite feelings of disaffection towards the Government.

The Poona murder and the writings of Tilak horrified Congressmen. Damodar Chapekar was executed by the Government and dismissed by Congressmen as an irresponsible fanatic. Tilak however, was a member of the Congress, a member of the Bombay Legislative Council, a prominent leader in Mahrashtra, and above all an independent editor of his influential Kesari and Maratha newspapers. His ideas and his methods of arousing popular ferment were the antithesis of the aims and methods of the Congress. They presented a serious challenge to the constitutional agitation of the Congress and marred its image of respectability and loyalty.

^{1.} Synopsis of autobiography Damodar Chapekar, p.25; also Rowlatt Report, p.11.

The rules and procedure which governed the three days annual session of the Congress | ensured that the slightest expression of disloyalty to the Government was immediately bridled, but outside its sessions the Congress in fact did not exist as an organization and it could neither prevent nor curb the publications of articles by independent newspaper editors. The only recourse of loyal Congressmen was to publish articles in their own newspapers, which upheld the loyalty of the Congress to the Government and deplored seditious articles. This was sharply illustrated in the case of the Pratoda newspaper - a leaflet of very small circulation which was published in Marathi in Satara whose editor and proprietor were arrested on 14 August 1897 on charges of sedition for having published an article entitled "Preparation for becoming independent", which expressed the hope that India will attain the same political freedom as Canada. They were tried on 28 August 1897 and found guilty of sedition. The editor was sentenced to be exiled for life, and the proprietor to seven years rigorous imprisonment. Judge Aston who delivered the sentence justified its severity on the grounds that it would serve as an exemplary punishment.

^{1.} Discussed below, pp.141-143.
2. Bengalee, 4 September 1897.

^{3.} On appeal, the sentence was commuted to one year rigorous imprisonment to the editor and three months imprisonment to the proprietor. Ibid.

Commenting on the trial, the Bengalee wrote that the harsh sentence was ill-advised since it would enlist unmerited public sympathy for the convicted editor who, the Bengalee opined "should have better been put in a lunatic asylum." The trial of the Pratoda editor and the comment from Banerjea's newspaper - which had hitherto upheld the freedom of the Indian press - reveal the alarm on the part of both Government and Congressmen, which the Poona murder and Tilak's article caused.

As a result of the impending trial of Tilak, an Indian Press Association was hastily set up in Calcutta with Banerjea as its appointed secretary. 2 The Press Association was comprised of the Bengalee, the Hitabadee, the Indian Mirror, the Hindu Patriot, the Bangabasi, the Hindi Bangabasi, and Amrita Bazar Patrika.

On 28 August 1897 the Bengalee published Banerjea's editorial entitled "The Olive Branch of Peace" which advised the Government that it would be unwise to bring Tilak to trial because if he were to be sentenced to prison, his popular reputation would be enhanced to martyrdom. 3 The article impressed upon the Government that "recent events have vastly added to Tilak's popularity and if developed

^{1.} Ibid.

^{2.} Bengalee, 14 August 1897.
3. Banerjea drew the force of this argument from his own trial and imprisonment which elevated him to a position of a martyr during the Ilbert Bill controversy.

further he will be elevated to the rank of a demi-god." "We are anxious" - the article concluded - "that the Government should avoid this mistake." This article was followed up by a letter from Banerjea, acting as the secretary of the Press Association, to the Officiating Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, which proposed that whenever the Government intended to prosecute an editor for seditious writings, it should first refer his case to the Press Association which would act as an unofficial censuring body and would reprimand the editor. In the event that the offending editor would ignore the warning of the Press Association, the Government could then prosecute him with the full support of the Press Association. Furthermore, the proposal concluded, this procedure would ensure that the offending editor would fail to secure popular sympathy or the support of other journals.

It is evident that by setting up the Press Association and by offering its service to the Government, Banerjea and loyal Congressmen attempted to create the machinery which would enable them to suppress or disparage seditious articles of independent editors like Tilak. But the Press Association died as quickly as it was set up since the Government turned down its proposal.²

^{1.} Bengalee, 11 September 1897 (letter dated 5 September 1897).

^{2.} Reply to suggestion of Press Association from C.W.Bolton, Chief Secretary to Government of Bengal. Bengalee, 6 November 1897 (letter dated 18 October 1897).

Tilak was convicted and sentenced to eighteen months rigorous imprisonment. Banerjea was ostensibly sympathetic to Tilak, and the <u>Bengalee</u> issue of 25 September 1897 which reported Tilak's sentence, was printed with black borders; but Banerjea's editorial on it concluded: "He will come forth from jail a far more powerful man than he had ever been before and for this service he is indebted to the fatuous unwisdom of the Government of Bombay."

The 'Defence Fund' which was raised for Tilak fetched contributions from Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Lahore, Gujarat, Berar, Nagpur and from villages in Konkan and Maharashtra, and amounted to Rs.48,000. It clearly attested to the widespread popular support for Tilak, yet in reporting the success of the fund, the <u>Bengalee</u> tried to mitigate the proof of Tilak's popularity by interpreting the contributions to his defence fund as a testimony to, "United India - the soundest triumph of British rule, a crown of glory to the British Government."

Shortly before the Poona murder, Banerjea returned from England where he had given evidence before the Welby Commission.² In his evidence before the Commission, Banerjea

^{1.} Bengalee, 30 October 1897.

^{2.} Royal Commission appointed to enquire into Indian expenditure and the adjustment of financial relations between England and India. Dadabhai Naoroji and William Wedderburn were among the members of the Committee; in addition to Banerjea, the other summoned Indian delegates were Gokhale, D.Wacha, and S.Iyer.

suggested that there should be parliamentary control over the finances of the government of India; that the members of the Legislative Councils should have the right of proposing amendments to the budget; that the non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council should elect a member to the Council of the Secretary of State for India; and that there should be periodical surveys of the administration of India by Parliamentary Committees or Royal Commissions. While in England, Banerjea addressed several meetings in which he reiterated the plea that the process of fulfilling England's mission should be accelerated. 2

Ten days after Tilak was arrested, Gokhale published an open apology for an accusation he had made in England that two women had been outraged by British soldiers in Poona. On his return, Gokhale discovered that he was unable to support the allegation. In explaining the reasons for his apology, Gokhale wrote: "Our loyalty is our only claim on England for sympathetic, progressive, enlightened rule. I feared that if our character of loyalty was lost, our best national interests would be injured beyond repair."

In view of Tilak's writings and the Poona murder,

Report of Welby Commission, also Congress Blue Book No.II, and Bengalee special supplement, 12 June 1897.
 Bengalee, 2 June 1897.

^{3.} Manchester Guardian, 2 July 1897. 4. Bengalee, 7 August 1897.

Gokhale's apology was primarily aimed to offset the impression in England that Indians were disloyal. Moreover the timing of Gokhale's apology denoted that it served as a rebuke to Tilak's article.

Before the impending thirteenth session of the 1897 Congress at Amraoti, Banerjea warned that the Congress faced a crisis and that it was imperative that it should unequivocally reaffirm its loyalty to the Government. This proved to be the key note of the Amraoti Congress.

In the presidential address Shankaran Nair reemphasised the characteristic features which made Congressmen loyal, and frankly explained, "From our earliest school
days, the great English writers have been our classics;
Englishmen have been our professors in Colleges; English
history is taught us in our schools; the books we generally
read are English books which describe in detail all the
forms of English life; week after week English newspapers,
journals and magazines pour into India. We in fact now live
the life of the English." Under these circumstances,
Shankaran Nair asserted, Congressmen were animated by
English political ideas and it was but natural that they
sought political representation, but they fully realised
that the fulfilment of their political aspirations were
inseparably linked with the continuance of British rule.

^{1.} Bengalee, 25 December 1897.

^{2.} Report of the thirteenth I.N.C. Amraoti, 1897, p.9.

He stressed the conviction of Congressmen that British supremacy safeguarded India from the return to "anarchy, war, and rapine", and explained that the contemplated anarchical situation would be in the form of Muslims! bid to recover their former rule over India, the internecine struggle of Hindu chiefs, and significantly, the struggle of the lower castes against the domination of the higher castes. Referring to the Poona murder and to the conviction of Tilak, he deplored the rigid measures which were enforced to combat the plague, but he emphatically deprecated intemperate speeches or writings which advocated severance from British rule.

Banerjea elaborated in his speech at the Amraoti Congress upon the same theme and declared, "We, men of the Congress, are the friends of peace and orderly Government. We denounce violence; we condemn violent methods; for we believe in our heart of hearts that order is the first condition of political progress 1... We, the men of the Congress true to ourselves, remain firm in our allegiance to those principles which gave birth to the Congress movement. Now as of old, we raise aloft the banner of constitutionalism on which are engraved in characters of light the words 'devotion to the British Crown and the sacred interests of our country'. Now as of old we wish for the permanence of the British rule."2

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.68; also <u>Speeches</u>. Vol.VI. p.61. 2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p.72; also <u>Speeches</u>. Vol.VI. p.70.

These declarations reiterated the conviction of loyal Congressmen that there could be no half-way-house between order and anarchy. The British Government of India maintained law and order and any suggestion, open or veiled, to overthrow it, immediately raised to Congressmen the spectre of anarchy.

Congressmen realised that the Government of India did not recognize their organization but merely tolerated it. Yet the Amraoti Congress proclaimed the loyalty of the Congress with special zeal. It did so not only to counteract the impression that the Poona murder represented a wider conspiracy against British rule, but in order to utilise the crisis by reminding the Government that the Congress willingly stood to co-operate with the Government. By this it hoped to gain better appreciation of its aspirations to be associated with the Government.

However, the loyal proclamation went only as far as to reassure the Government that the Congress presented no danger to British rule, and at the termination of his Viceroyalty, Lord Elgin declared, "The Empire of India has been won by the sword and must be held by the sword if need be."

With the approach of the fourteenth session of the

^{1.} Speeches by the Earl of Elgin, Calcutta, 1899, p.419. Farewell Speech at United Service Club, Simla on 14 October 1898.

Congress, Banerjea wrote, "The peculiar character of the struggle is that we are fighting with Englishmen for the preservation of English principles in the government of the country, and the bureaucracy is apparently resolved to fall back upon oriental methods in the government of an oriental country."1

In welcoming the delegates to Madras, where the fourteenth session was held in December 1898, the chairman of the Reception Committee, Subha Rao Pantulu, recalled that they met on the 40th year of the Mutiny and made the following observation, "Today the elite of India's leaders, prosperous in their profession, respected by their fellowcountrymen, meet year after year to strengthen the foundation of the same rule which in 1857 ignorant and misguided people tried to overthrow", 2 and added that so long as the Congress would last, the events of 1857 will not occur again.

The Congress, however, had lost its initial vitality, and from 1898 to 1902 the struggle of the Congress centred within the Congress itself and hinged upon the issue of providing a constitution for the Congress.

The President of the Madras session, Ananda Mohan Bose emphasised that it had become imperative to infuse into

^{1.} Bengalee, 10 December 1898.
2. Report of the fourteenth I.N.C. Madras 1898, p.11.

the Congress renewed vigour in order to "give living force" to the resolutions of the Congress. He urged the adoption of a constitution, and suggested that a permanent body should carry on the work of the Congress throughout the year by circulating pamphlets in the vernaculars, by sending delegates to the countryside to explain the programme of the Congress and to awaken the interests of the whole country in the work of the Congress.1

Accordingly the Madras session resolved that a constitution should be drafted which will provide each province with Executive Provincial Committee. It further resolved that the constitution should provide for electoral divisions with a fixed number of seats allotted to each division.²

These tentative suggestions signified an attempt on the part of the Congress to break out of its confinement in the urban sphere and to percolate its ideas and programme in the wider circles of the provincial towns. by no means an attempt to arouse or enlist the support of the masses. The Congress stood fast to the view expressed by Sir Ramesh Chunder Mitter that, "The English-educated Indians represented the brains and conscience of the country and were the legitimate spokesmen of the illiterate masses -

^{1. &}lt;u>Tbid</u>., p.35. 2. <u>Resolution XIX</u>, p.126.

the natural custodians of their interests, and those who think must govern those who toil." This view was reaffirmed during the Madras session by Banerjea who argued that although Congressmen were criticised as a "microscopic minority", and as the "despised educated community of India" they were "the natural leaders of the unenlightened masses."2

As early as 1887, the third Congress appointed a committee to draft a constitution for the Congress. Among the 35 members of the Committee were Alan Octavian Hume, W.C.Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerjea, Narendranath Sen, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Subramanya Iyer.

No constitution was drafted but the committee was formalised in 1888 and became known as the Subjects Committee. It was enlarged to about 100 members who were elected each year by the delegates of the different provinces, but it maintained a permanent core which consisted of Alan Octavian Hume, William Wedderburn, W.C.Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerjea, Ananda Charlu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Dinshaw Wacha, and Pherozeshah Mehta. These men formed the oligarchy which virtually controlled the Congress. They enacted the following rules which governed the proceedings of the Congress:4

^{1.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.145.
2. Report of the fourteenth I.N.C. Madras 1898, p.54.

^{3.} Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887, Resolution I.

^{4.} Report of the tenth I.N.C. Madras, 1894.

- 1. On any point of order the decision of the President was final and thereupon no further discussions were allowed.
- 2. None but the delegates could address the Congress or vote in any manner.
- 3. Every delegate had to address the assembly from the speakers' platform and his address could be cut short by the President.
- 4. The Subjects Committee formulated all the resolutions, and selected the proposers, seconders, and supporters of each resolution.

In theory delegates had the right to move amendments or propose new resolutions. But since the speech of the Chairman of the Reception Committee, and the address of the president occupied the whole of the first day, and the remaining speeches of the selected proposers, seconders, and supporters of the resolutions could barely be delivered in the remaining two or three days, virtually no possibility remained for non selected members to introduce unspecified subjects. On rare occasions when delegates made interjections from the floor, they were quickly dismissed as out of order.

^{1.} In the third session of the Congress, when the resolution on a constitution to the Congress was proposed, a delegate (name not given) asked, "I want to know what is meant by a constitution, it might mean anything", but he was shouted down and his remark was ignored. Report of the third I.N.C. Madras 1887, p.80.

In the 1894 Madras Congress, a delegate objected to the nomination of Elderly Norton to the Subjects Committee. His objection was dismissed by the President Alfred Webb, who called upon the assembly to confirm Norton's nomination and received its approval by a chorus of acclamation.

Thus the Subjects Committee controlled the agenda of the Congress while the public assembly merely heard the resolutions and passed them by cheers and applause. The autocratic rules and procedure of the Congress ensured internal discipline, but more importantly, they ensured that the Reports of the Congress would read as manifestos of moderation and loyalty.

In 1895, as a result of the threat of a split which was narrowly avoided in Poona, it was urged that a constitution should be drafted for the Congress. But no constitution was drafted and as a result of the Poona murder the oligarchy of the Congress tightened its control over the 1897 Amraoti session. Yet the Congress was waning. Its listlessness was evidenced by the decline in the attendance of delegates. In the Bengal provincial conference of the Congress, the president Ambica Charan Mazumdar remarked that the Congress had "ceased to exhibit any tendency towards further development and expansion."

Three weeks before the Congress was about to convene in Lucknow for its fifteenth session in December 1899, no

Banerjea's speech at Calcutta University Students' Union, Speeches. Vol.V, p.143; also Bengalee, 29 February 1896.
 Bengalee, 8 January 1898. "It had been one of the most

^{2.} Bengalee, 8 January 1898. "It had been one of the most successful Congresses ever held, not a word was spoken from the platform which showed the least form of impatience towards the Government in spite of the famines."

^{3.} In 1895 - 1,584; in 1896 - 784; in 1897 - 692; in 1898 - 614.

^{4.} Bengalee, 20 May 1899.

preparations were made to elect delegates in Bengal. The Bengalee admitted that the forthcoming Congress would not present new resolutions but argued that the mere holding of the Congress was important in itself. When the fifteenth Congress did assemble at Lucknow, a delegate from Madras, Rathna Pillay, said from the Congress platform that the institution was degenerating into a three day annual Christmas tamasha.

The realisation that the Congress was stagnating induced the oligarchy to succumb to the proposal that a decentralising constitution might revitalize the Congress. The constitution which the Congress adopted in the Lucknow session in 1899 provided an organizational framework on three levels: an Indian Congress Committee, Provincial Congress Committees and Standing Committees.

The Indian Congress Committee consisted of 45 members. 40 of whom were to be elected on recommendation of the Provincial Congress Committees in the following set proportion: Bengal 8, Bombay 8, Madras 8, North West Provinces and Oudh 6, Punjab 4, Berar 3, Central Provinces 3. The remaining 5 members (out of the 45) were to be "appointed on behalf of the Congress" and consisted of W.C.Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerjea, Ananda Charlu, Ananda Mohan Bose and Pherozeshah Mehta.

l. Ibid.

^{2.} Ibid., 9 December 1899.
3. Report of the fifteenth I.N.C. Lucknow 1899, p.126.

The Indian Congress Committee was to manage the Congress and act as its executive head. It was empowered to elect the president, to draft the resolutions and to select the speakers, to frame rules for the election of delegates, and to be responsible for the general proceedings of the Congress. It was scheduled to meet at least three times a year, once immediately after the Congress session, once during June to October, and again immediately before the Congress was about to convene.

The Congress Provincial Committees were to be organized at the capitals of the provinces for the purpose of "carrying on the work of political education on lines of general appreciation of British rule and of constitutional agitation for the removal of its defects." They were to organize Standing Committees in their respective districts, to hold provincial conferences, and to carry on their work throughout the year. The functions of the Standing Committees were not defined in the constitution.

The most important feature of this constitution was its provision for the <u>elected</u> Indian Congress Committee, which was to take over the control of the Congress from the existing oligarchy. But the adoption of the constitution by no means signified a departure from the Congress' method of constitutional agitation, nor did it signify a surrender to

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.85.

radicals within the Congress. Banerjea's speech at the Lucknow 1899 Congress contained the following threatening remark, "We are the friends of Reform because we are enemies of Revolution. We have made our choice, let our enemies make theirs. Do they wish to belong to our camp or do they wish to belong to the camp of revolutionists? There is no intermediary step between Reform and Revolution. Therefore, you must enlist yourselves under the banner of Reform or you must take your place behind the standard of Revolt."1

This was an obvious warning to the radicals to comply with the principles of the Congress or to get out of it. The Indian Congress Committee met for the first time in September 1900 at Delhi and elected Narayan Chandavarkar to the presidency of the forthcoming sixteenth session of the Congress which was to convene at Lahore. 2

The preparation for the Lahore session further showed the decline in enthusiasm for the Congress. Banerjea was specially invited to the Punjab in order to arouse interest and participation in the forthcoming session. He addressed public meetings in Delhi, Amritsar, Lahore, and Rawalpindi. but the small number of delegates who came to the Lahore session attested to the apathy of the Punjabis towards the

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.68; also <u>Speeches</u>. Vol.VI, p.159. 2. Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress". East and West, December 1903, Vol.II, No.26, p.1406. 3. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.166.

Congress, and to the lethargic attitude of Congressmen from Bengal, Bombay and Madras.

During 1899-1900 the Punjab and much of Northern

India were again affected by severe famine. During the 18961897 famine Lajpat Rai organized and largely sustained from
his own funds, emergency operations to rescue Hindu orphans
from the shelter of Christian missionaries. He published
in 1897 his translation of the life of Mazzini whom he
adopted as his Guru, and also biographies of Garibaldi and
Shivaji. In the preface to his life of Mazzini, he
emphasised that political liberation demanded the highest
sacrifice. He urged that unless the leaders of the Congress
proved themselves unselfish and worthy of being followed by
the masses, it was useless to agitate for political reforms. 3

During the 1899-1900 famine Lajpat Rai organized relief operations for famine stricken peasants and sheltered 2,000 Hindu orphans in Arya Samaj orphanages. He contributed most of his income to this work. When the Congress convened at Lahore in 1900, Lajpat Rai attended the session and moved a resolution which stipulated that at least half a day of each annual session of the Congress should be devoted exclusively to a discussion on industrial

^{1.} The number of delegates who attended the Lahore Congress was 567, one of the lowest in Congress attendance.2. Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.97.

^{3.} P.N.N.R. Sat Dharm Prachar, 5 November 1897.

and educational problems. 1

The significance of this resolution lies in the fact that it contained behind its vague wording the idea of committing the Congress to deliberate on the ways and means of promoting Swadeshi. This issue proved, during 1905-1907, to be the pivot upon which were hinged the cleavages within the Congress. In the wake of the resolution two committees, industrial and educational were appointed "to consider the improvement of Indian industries and promote industrial education."

The appointed members to the Industrial Committee included Lajpat Rai, Pherozeshah Mehta, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Dinshaw Wacha; and to the Educational Committee Lajpat Rai, Tilak, Gokhale and Banerjea.

The approval of the resolution to devote half a day to industrial and educational subjects and the appointment of the Committees marked a definite gain by the Indian Congress Committee. Tt clearly implied that the rhetorical

^{1.} Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900, Resolution XII; also The <u>Kayastha Samachar</u>, January 1902, editorial survey, pp.3-5.

^{2.} Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900, Resolution XXV and p.79.

^{3.} In the second Congress held in Calcutta in 1886, a delegate from the Punjab, Hukam Chand said "We should try to compete with England by establishing such industries as would support our own artisans and by purchasing things from them." His speech was cut short and his suggestion was dismissed. Report of the second I.N.C. Calcutta 1886, p.65.

speeches of the three day annual Congress should be replaced by practical discussions of matters concerned directly with the livelihood of the masses.

A further gain over the control of the Congress by the Bengal, Bombay and Madras veteran leaders was affected by the redistribution of the 40 allotted seats on the Indian Congress Committee. The allotment of Bengal, Bombay and Madras were each reduced by one seat, two of which were gained by the Punjab, and one of which was allocated to the North West Provinces.²

Yet this gain was greatly offset by an amendment to the Lucknow constitution, according to which the Indian Congress Committee was to include in addition to the five members who were elected on behalf of the Congress and to the forty members from the provinces, all the ex-presidents of the Congress, the secretary and assistant secretary of the Congress, and the Chairman and secretary of the Reception Committee as ex-officio members.³

These consisted of A.O.Hume (General Secretary of the Congress), W.C.Bonnerji, Dadabhai Naoroji, and William Wedderburn - who were in London, and Pherozeshah Mehta, Ananda Charlu, Surendranath Banerjea - all ex-presidents, and Dinshaw Wacha the Joint-General Secretary of the Congress.

^{1.} Report of the sixteenth I.N.C. Lahore 1900, p.79.

^{2.} Ibid., Resolution I.

^{3.} Ibid.

In fact the oligarchy of the Congress and their trusted lieutenants.

Nevertheless, the gains of the Punjabis in the Indian Congress Committee and the approval of Lajpat's Rai's resolution presented a potential threat to the monopoly of the oligarchy over the Congress.

The Indian Congress Committee next met in September 1901 at Allahabad. The Bengali members deliberately did not attend the meeting of the Committee in order to paralyze its work and diminish its authority. The only accomplishment of the Indian Congress Committee was to elect Dinshaw Wacha to the presidency of the forthcoming 1901 Calcutta Session.²

In view of the approaching Calcutta session, Lajpat Rai published two articles in which he publicised his views on the Congress and advocated measures to be adopted by the forthcoming Calcutta Session.

In the first article entitled "The Economic and Industrial Campaign in India" he blamed the British Government and the leaders of the Congress for the poverty of India. He argued that although India had great potential economic and industrial resources, the British Government purposely denied technological education in order to

^{1.} Kayastha Samachar, "Squabbles in the Congress Camp and

the forthcoming Congress" September-October 1902, p.343.

2. Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress".

East and West, December 1903, Vol.II, No.26, p.1406. 3. Kayastha Samachar, August 1901, pp.131-135.

maintain India as an open market for British industrial goods. On the other hand he blamed the leaders of the Congress for having persisted in fruitless agitation instead of promoting Indian technological education. He emphasised that so long as India was poor, it could not achieve nor maintain political freedom and urged that each province should send one student every year to Europe and America to gain technological knowledge.

Implicit in Lajpat Rai's emphasis on technological education and on the promotion of Indian industries, was his Arya Samajist inspired conviction that self-reliance and self-help were the essential prerequisites to the economic and political advancement of the Indians.

In his second article entitled "The Coming Indian National Congress - Some Suggestions" Lajpat Rai criticised the character, method and aim of the Congress. He ridiculed the Congress as an annual festival of English-educated Indians who assembled in order to amuse themselves and to increase their fame by "uttering plausibly worded platitudes in the shape of speeches." He mocked the dress of the well-to-do delegates and condemned the lavish decorations and furnishings of the Congress pavilions as an unjustified extravagance. He argued that this gave cause to Englishmen in India and in England to point to the prosperity of Indians

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, November 1901, pp.376-385.

under British rule and to negate the deliberations of the Congress on the poverty of India.

In elaborating on its principal defects, Lajpat Rai accused the Congress of having promoted a false impression that it could gain political reforms by merely passing resolutions and delivering speeches; of misleading Indians to place unjustified faith in the efficacy of constitutional agitation, and of failing to impress upon them the need for great sacrifices for the achievement of political freedom.

He further attacked the Congress for its attempt to project a false unity in its anxiety to speak in the name of all Indians - Hindus and Muslims - while a good many of them did not sympathise with the Congress. He suggested that the Congress should be a bold Hindu political organization, instead of posing as an all-embracing body which jeopardized the chance of creating a united front of Hindus. In emphasising this view, Lajpat Rai asserted that the Hindus, the Muslims, and the Christians, constituted different religious nationalities and argued that the attempt to unify them within the Indian National Congress, was not only futile but at the expense of unifying and strengthening the Hindus as a religious nationality.

In the same vein Lajpat Rai criticised the National Social Conference as an organization which was as powerless as the Congress to promote the exclusive interests of the Hindus. He argued that because Muslims and Christians were

allowed to participate in its deliberations, the resolutions of the National Social Conference were rendered meaningless. Instead, Lajpat Rai suggested, the National Social Conference should deal with tangible problems relating to Hindu society such as the protection of Hindu orphans from being converted to Christianity or Islam. He concluded that it should not sacrifice the interests of the Hindus for the sake of appeasing the Muslims and the Christians.

When the Calcutta session convened in December 1901, it was composed predominantly of Bengali delegates. 1 Its agenda and proceedings were entirely controlled by W.C. Bonnerji and Pherozeshah Mehta through the president Dinshaw Wacha. The existence of the Indian Congress Committee was completely ignored.

The resolution moved by Lajpat Rai in the former session at Lahore to devote half a day to industrial subjects was not implemented.3

Above all, no elections were allowed to be held for the Indian Congress Committee and the Committee was thus extinguished. 4 This arbitrary procedure aroused strong

^{1.} Out of the total members of 896, 580 were Bengalis.
2. Kayashta Samachar, "The Indian National Congress",

January 1902, p.58.

^{3.} In his presidential speech, Dinshaw Wacha declared, "Many a vague idea is now floating in the air which requires to be definitely formulated, and many crude and ill-digested recommendations need to be ... tested before we can all agree upon a common basis on which a fair attempt at industrial development might be made." Report of the seventeenth I.N.C. Calcutta 1901, p.68. 4. Kayastha Samachar, January 1902, editorial survey, p.3.

protest from the Punjabi delegates who threatened to secede from the Congress and "an open split in the Congress was avoided with difficulty."1

The ability of Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C.Bonnerji and Dinshaw Wacha to ride rough-shod over the protest against their dismissal of the Indian Congress Committee, clearly indicated the strong measure of their control over the Congress. W.C.Bonnerji and Pherozeshah Mehta justified the elimination of the Indian Congress Committee by reasoning that "young and comparatively inexperienced members had assumed responsibility of deciding weighty measures."2 Thus the Calcutta session restored the complete control over the Congress to the oligarchy. It passed the resolutions of former Congresses and ended in a note of self-congratulation.

The Kayastha Samachar wrote that the Calcutta Congress was "a little too much of a success", 3 and expressed the feelings of those who had supported the Indian Congress Committee in the following comment, "It ill becomes those who protest so loudly against the despotism of the Indian Government, to set up over their followers a despotism no less unbearable and to resort to unconstitutional methods."4

Ibid., "The Indian National Congress", p.58.
 Alfred Nundy, "The Troubles of the National Congress", East and West, December 1903, p.1406.

^{3.} Kayastha Samachar, January 1902, editorial survey, p.3. 4. Ibid., September-October 1902. "Squabbles in the Congress Camp", p.345.

In the National Social Conference which was held immediately after the Calcutta Congress, the Bengali "professed reformers" gave a cold reception to Lajpat Rai who urged that the expression of sympathy for the famine stricken and for the Hindu orphans should be reduced to active support. His appeal was ignored and the Conference merely passed couched resolutions.

Lajpat Rai's reaction to the Calcutta Congress was expressed in two articles in which he advocated the need for a struggle within the Congress and the abandonment of constitutional agitation. In the first, entitled "The Principles of Political Progress" he wrote: "The first axiom which every Indian politician ought to take to heart is that no nation is worthy of any political status if it cannot distinguish between begging rights and claiming them." He condemned the Congress as an institution of beggars who pleaded for charity from the Government instead of realising that "Sovereignty rests with the people, the state exists for them and rules in their name."3

In his second article entitled "A Study of Hindu Nationalism", 4 he claimed that the historical and religious unity of India embodied the basis of Hindu nationalism and that it was a mistake to attribute the development of Indian

^{1.} Ibid., January 1902, "The Last Social Conference", p.105.
2. East and West, August 1902, Vol.I, p.1040.

Ibid., p.1041.

^{4.} Kayastha Samachar, September-October 1902.

nationalism solely to modern Western influences. He contended that it was wrong to suppose that nationalism required the complete union of religious, social, economical and political activity and argued that differences and controversial discussions were absolutely necessary for the healthy growth of nationalism provided one unifying ideal overruled minor differences. He urged all Indians to share the feelings of nationalism as the one ideal which would be "sufficiently broad and extensive to include all who took pride in one common name, common ancestry, common history, common religion, common language and common future."

If this was lacking, Lajpat Rai argued, it was still sufficient for the growth of Indian nationalism if all Indians, irrespective of their differences, would at least share a sense of unity in struggling together against a common enemy.

He warned that if the Congress decided to preserve an attitude of inaction in social, religious and political matters, it would result not only in the weakening of Indian nationalism, but in stagnation and the gradual extinction of Indians as a distinct nation. He concluded in asserting that the social and political improvement of the Indians necessitated a struggle amongst themselves, and between themselves against others.

Bearing in mind that the article was written in 1901,

it becomes obvious in the light of Lajpat Rai's later agitation during 1907, that his arguments were muted and should be recognized as understatements. His reference to "a struggle against a common enemy" and against "others" implied a struggle against the British Government.

The eighteenth session of the Congress was about to convene in December 1902 at Ahmedabad and it coincided with the Delhi Durbar, which was to mark the accession of King Edward VII after the death of Queen Victoria in 1901.

Kali Charan Banerjee, a veteran Congressman from the United Provinces, was nominated by the United Provinces Congress Committee as the potential president for the forthcoming Ahmedabad session. Unexpectedly the Ahmedabad Congress Reception Committee announced early in November 1902 that Surendranath Baneriea was 'elected' to the presidency of the Congress.1

It became apparent that Pherozeshah Mehta prevailed upon the Ahmedabad Reception Committee to invite Banerjea for the presidency in order that his "unrivalled gifts of oratory" will act as a counter-attraction to the Delhi Durbar. 2 Consequently, Dinshaw Wacha passed the invitation to Banerjea 'unofficially' and Banerjea accepted.3

3. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.173.

^{1.} Kayastha Samachar, November 1902, "Presidentship of the Coming Congress", p.470.

^{2. &}lt;u>Kayastha Samachar</u>, November 1902, "Some Further Light on Congress Unconstitutionalism", p.478; also Alfred Nundy, "Troubles of the National Congress", <u>East and West</u>, December 1903, p.1406.

The arbitrary way in which Pherozeshah Mehta and Dinshaw Wacha selected Banerjea to the presidency of the Ahmedabad Congress, further aggravated the discontent against the autocracy of the Bombay and Bengal leaders, and the Punjabi delegates decided not to attend the Congress.

The assumption that Banerjea's presidential address would attract large attendance in fact proved wrong. Only 471 delegates attended the Ahmedabad Session (the lowest attendance since 1886)¹ - of whom 423 came from Bombay, 28 from Bengal, 15 from Madras, 5 from the United Provinces and none from the Punjab.

The most striking remark in Banerjea's presidential speech was his tentative suggestion that since the Government of India did not protect Indian industries by tariffs, Indians should resolve to use indigenous goods as far as it was practicable in order to stimulate the growth of Indian industries.²

In substance, the implication of this suggestion was in tune with the advocacy to promote Swadeshi, a subject which was hitherto avoided in the deliberations of the Congress. Clearly the pressure of the famines and the recognition that the Congress was becoming a small and isolated body, motivated Banerjea to venture upon the

^{1.} The number of delegates in 1886 were 436, in 1887 - 607, in 1888 - 1,248, in 1889 - 1,889, then onwards it gradually declined.

^{2.} Report of the eighteenth I.N.C. Ahmedabad, 1902, p.44.

suggestion from the Presidential chair that Indians might promote India's indigenous industries by resolving to use Indian goods.

He referred to the 'pessimist school' and reminded the Government that they assessed the merits of British rule on the single criterion of whether it advanced the welfare of the people or whether it caused their impoverishment.

He repeated the charge that the Queen's Proclamation and England's pledges remained unredeemed and warned that "those who bring about the indefinite postponement of the redemption of solemn pledges and seek to quibble away the gracious promises ... to which the national faith is pledged, have no conception of the irreparable injury they do to the British Government of India." In an obvious reply to Lajpat Rai and other 'pessimists', he argued that there was no reason for despondency and that the criticism that the Congress pursued faulty methods was unjustified since the time had not arrived yet to make final judgement on the efficacy of the Congress.1

Banerjea contrasted the constitutional agitation of the Congress with European movements for reforms, and drew comfort from the fact that the agitation of the Congress

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.62.

was peaceful and entailed little sacrifice because Indians were fortunate to be under British rule which responded with sympathy to their constitutional struggle. He reaffirmed that the Congress stood for the permanence of British rule in India; that it confidently pleaded equal rights of citizenship within the Empire; and that Congressmen recognized that "the journey towards the destined goal must necessarily be slow ... and can only be attained after prolonged preparation and laborious apprenticeship."

The Congress continued to remain under the firm control of the veteran leaders.

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.63.

CHAPTER IV

THE IDEAS OF THE EXTREMISTS AND THE SURAT SPLIT 1900-1907

In October 1884 Wilfrid Blunt wrote: "Today their motto is 'Reform', let us not drive them to make it 'Revolution' tomorrow."1

In 1888 Sir Henry Harrison expressed this warning in the following words: "Repress the educated natives, their ambitions and their aspirations and you turn them into a solid phalanx of opposition against the Government; gratify their ambitions, and you make them the allies of the Government."2 The aspirations of Congressmen were not gratified. Yet notwithstanding its own critics, the Congress continued to adhere to its principle of moderation in its request for reforms.

In December 1898 the president of the Madras Congress, Ananda Mohan Bose, warmly welcomed the appointment of Lord Curzon to the Viceroyalty and said: "Let a nation which is Christian endeavour truly to show the ideal of Christ, to carry out the divine command of doing to others what they would have wished done to themselves in the exercise of its power in its attitude towards Indian aspirations."3

Fortnightly Review, 1884, p.459.
 Quarterly Review, 1886, pp.112-113.
 Report of the fourteenth I.N.C. Madras 1898, p.33.

Yet in November 1900 Lord Curzon wrote: "The Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my greatest ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise." \frac{1}{2}

Before analysing those measures during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty which have aroused intense Indian resentment, it is necessary to indicate some general Indian grievances which had accumulated by 1900 and formed an atmosphere of social, economic and political discontent.

Socially, an apartheid existed between Englishmen and Indians. In the unavoidable and rare circumstances when Englishmen and Indians met, Indians were expected to Salaam Englishmen in the street, to close an umbrella, or if riding, to dismount and give way. In going to a Government office, an Indian was not allowed to approach the building in a carriage, and upon entering the office had to remove his Indian shoes. Above all, the mark of Indian inferiority was felt most acutely in the trains and in the courts of law.

Admittedly, the previously described customs were far less acrimonious than the rigid restrictions enforced by the Indian caste system, but the trains and the courts of law stood out as English innovations in which Indians and Englishmen were supposed to meet on terms of nominal equality.

^{1.} Curzon to Hamilton, EUR.MSS.510/6. 18 November 1900.

In 1901 Lord Curzon wrote: "The Europeans are becoming more and more a caste and a white caste is not a good thing for India. The frictions between the two races are increasing. In Assam particularly relations between Europeans and their coolies are bad. Indeed I need hardly add that no European, whatever the evidences is convicted, the maximum penalty that I have so far known imposed in a case of culpable homicide (which a jury in England would have been instructed to call murder) was a money fine of 150 Rupees."

While Europeans in India could claim trial by jury which consisted of at least one-half European jurors, Indians could not claim the same protection. This provision resulted in the failure of trial by jury to fulfil its function of protecting the accused when an Indian, while it was also ineffective against the accused when an Englishman, since his English jurors did not regard his offence against

Curzon to E.Dawkins (Under Secretary of State for India) EUR.MSS. F.111/181, 24 January 1901.
 In the trial of Tilak in 1897, the jury consisted of

^{2.} In the trial of Tilak in 1897, the jury consisted of six Europeans and three Indians, the six Europeans found him guilty and the three Indians not guilty, but his conviction was based on the verdict of the European majority.

an Indian as a crime which outraged their social ethics. 1
While Banerjea rhetorized in 1897 at the Amraoti Congress
"'civis Romanus sum' was the boast of the ancient world,
'civis Brittanicus sum' is the distinction of the subjects
of the Greater Britain to which we all belong"; 2 Gandhi's
report to the 1901 Congress on racial discrimination of
Indians in South Africa, 3 accentuated the realisation that
Indians were not considered British subjects.

In the economic sphere, the famines of 1897 and 1899 emphasised the poverty of the Indian masses. Dadabhai Naoroji's <u>Poverty and Un-British Rule in India</u>, (1901); William Digby's <u>'Prosperous' British India</u>, (1901); and

^{1.} Sir Henry Cotton, formerly Chief Secretary of the Government of Bengal and Chief Commissioner of Assam, described the trial of Englishmen on criminal offences as "Judicial scandals". It was inevitable, he explained, that when a tea planter was charged with the death of a coolie and arraigned before a jury composed of fellow tea planters, the biased jurors found him guilty of single hurt for which only a small fine was imposed. He added that Government intervention would have resulted in a strom of Englishmen's protest and "no responsible Governor was anxious to face the wrath and anger of his own countrymen, however keen he might be to administer Justice between man and man". - Quoted in Lal Mohan Ghosh's presidential address, Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903, p.26. Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab wrote: "Unfortunately one of the gravest scandals of our rule in India is the frequency of unprovoked and sometimes fatal assaults by Europeans upon natives and the virtual impossibility of procuring conviction from a jury". - Home Prog. 7590, 30 April 1907.

2. Report of the thirteenth I.N.C. Amraoti 1897, p.69.

^{3. &}quot;All Indians are classed as coolies ... black skinned members of the semi civilized races of Asia." Report of the seventeenth I.N.C. Calcutta 1901, p.108.

Ramesh Chundra Dutt's <u>The Economic History of British India</u>, (1902) all protested against the drain of India's wealth to England and the impoverishment of the peasants. They contended that India's village industries, spinning and weaving, had been extinguished due to unprotected competition with industrial England, that the peasants were thus left dependent entirely on land cultivation, and that the over-assessment of land revenue and its rigid exaction prevented the peasants from saving any reserves to meet failure of harvests.

In the political sphere the main grievances of Congressmen remained centred on the meagre representation of Indians in the Legislative Councils, and on the virtual exclusion of Indians from the Indian Civil Service. At the Lahore Congress in December 1900, Banerjea once again invoked the Queen's Proclamation and complained that while a very small number of posts in the senior Civil Service have been secured by Indians, only a minute proportion of posts were made available to them in the minor Civil Services - i.e. in the departments of Post and Telegraph,

^{1.} A detailed analysis of 'The drain' is provided in J.R. McLane, The Development of Nationalist Ideas and Tactics and the Politics of the Government of India 1897-1905, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1961.

Railways, Forest, Police, Survey and Customs. 1

These social, economic and political grievances were intensified by the following unpopular legislations during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty.

The Calcutta Municipal Bill (published in the Calcutta Gazette on 12 July 1899) reduced the size of the Calcutta Corporation from 75 to 50 commissioners by taking away 25 seats of elected members. Thus, the former two-thirds majority of elected members was eliminated and the new composition of the Corporation was distributed in the following manner: 25 elected members chosen by the rate payers, 15 Commissioners selected by the Government and 10 nominees of European commercial bodies.

Condemning the Bill, Banerjea charged that it had made a "mockery of Local Self Government". In protest, 28 elected members, among them Banerjea, resigned from the Calcutta Corporation.

The University Bill proved the second measure which

1.	Banerjea gave the for Out of total number of high appointments in:					Customs
		79	24	112	13	33
	Posts held by Englishmen	75	22	103	13	32
	Posts held by Indians	4	2	6	_	1
2.	Report of the sixteen Banerjea. Speeches.	nth I.N.	C. Laho p.116.	(3 vac ore 190		į.

aroused intense resentment. In January 1902 a committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Thomas Raleigh, Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, for the purpose of reorganizing the Universities. In June the committee submitted recommendations to raise tuition fees and examination standards and to reconstitute the University Senates of Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Lahore and Allahabad. Their Senates were to be mainly composed of Government nominees appointed for periods of five years.

While Indians admitted the need to promote a higher standard of learning, they resented the officialization of the Universities, and the consequent diminution of Indian graduates.

Indians were further aggravated by the amendment of the Official Secret Act in December 1903 which restricted the freedom of the Indian Press.

Thus, local self government, university education and freedom of the press - the three most cherished boons of British rule - were curtailed.

For eighteen years the Congress had passed its resolutions, yet it remained unrecognized by the Government and its prayers and protests were unheeded. In an attempt to hearten Congressmen, William Wedderburn, Dadabhai Naoroji, W.C.Bonnerji and A.O.Hume sent a "Call to Arms" message to the nineteenth session of the Congress.

^{1.} Hindustan Review and Kayastha Samachar, December 1903, pp.471-478.

William Wedderburn reprimanded Congressmen for having relaxed their agitation in England and warned them against the development of internal dissensions. Dadabhai Naoroji called upon Congressmen to strive towards self-government within the Empire, while W.C.Bonnerji urged them to shake off their feelings of despondency and look forward towards the return of the Liberal party in the next elections. On the other hand, A.O. Hume advised Congressmen not to expect any great improvement even if the Liberals came to power. He rebuked them for having fancied that the despotic Government of India would voluntarily yield political reforms or that people in England, whether Liberals or Tories, would insist on doing justice to Indians merely for the sake of justice. He scolded them for having failed to press their cause with earnestness and emphasised that they themselves were to be blamed for their discouraging position. Impressing upon them the maxim that every nation gets exactly as good a government as it deserves, he exclaimed, "You have indeed ever eagerly clamoured and vainly clutched at the Crown but how many of you will touch the Cross even with your finger tips?". He urged them to change their half-hearted and spasmodic efforts, to an all year round constitutional agitation in India and especially in England.

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.480.

Hume's 'Call to Arms' expressed an unmistakable feeling of disappointment in the Congress. Yet it was Hume himself who fathered the Congress along the principle that English public opinion in England formed its highest court of appeal, and for all his rebukes, he complacently concluded his 'Call to Arms' with the following encouragement: "Sooner or later the Government would be wearied out by the incessant appeals and will concede Indian rights."

The nineteenth session of the Congress, held in December 1903 at Madras, witnessed to Congressmen's realisation of the ineffectiveness of merely passing resolutions and correspondingly the growth of dissensions in the Congress. Lal Mohan Ghosh presided over the session. He was the first delegate of the Indian Association to England, and a prominent member of the Congress. His retirement from political activity was regarded as an indication of his estrangement from the Congress. In proposing Lal Mohan Ghosh to the presidency of the 1903 Congress, Pherozeshah Mehta emphasised that Lal Mohan Ghosh was deliberately invited to preside in order to prove that there were no factions in the Congress and that he, Pherozeshah Mehta, was not a despotic ruler of the Congress.²

Notwithstanding the assurances of Pherozeshah Mehta,
Lal Mohan Ghosh declared in his presidential address that

l. Ibid.

^{2.} Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903, p.8.

since the whole aim of the Congress was to liberalise the autocratic Government of India, it was essential for the leaders of the Congress to themselves refrain from autocratic rule of the Congress.

For the first time in the history of the Congress, its leadership was criticised openly in a presidential address.

Lal Mohan Ghosh went on to criticise Lord Curzon's policy and denounced the Delhi Durbar as "a pompous pageant to a starving people."2 He acknowledged that British rule had indeed put an end to India's former internecine wars, but argued that there remained little difference whether Indians died on account of wars or anarchy or whether the same result was brought about by famine and starvation.

The nineteenth session of the Congress reiterated its former resolutions which objected to the exclusion of Indians from the Indian Civil Service, the high assessment of land revenue, and the discrimination against Indians in South Africa; it added new protests against the University Bill and the Official Secret Bill. Yet it was the 'Omnibus resolution' which recorded the bulk of Congress demands and it contained more and more items as the Congress counted its sessions.

Ibid., p.11.
 The Durbar cost India £360,000. J.Morley, <u>Recollections</u>, London 1917, Vol.II, p.166.

The 'Omnibus resolution' first appeared in the fifth session in 1889 and it had then already recorded the reaffirmation of the resolutions passed in the previous five sessions. In 1903 the 'Omnibus resolution' contained thirteen resolutions. Among these were the demand for simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil Service in England and in India, the separation of executive and judicial functions, and the extension of trial by jury to Indians. These resolutions had been formerly major issues of the Congress, they had been passed and reiterated in one form or another in previous sessions and were gradually tucked aside into the 'Omnibus resolution' as new and more pertinent resolutions claimed higher attention.

When the resolution on the wider employment of Indians in the Civil Service came on the agenda of the 1903

Congress, its proposer remarked, "This is one of the earliest items on our programme, and if till now we have not been able to throw it into the 'Omnibus' it is simply because of its importance." When the turn of the 'Omnibus resolution' came on the agenda the president asked the assembly whether he should at least read it, but in response to their negative reply, a copy of the 'Omnibus resolution' was merely distributed to the delegates. Congressmen had thus lost even enthusiasm for passing their own resolutions

^{1.} Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903, p.50.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.146.

since they realised their ineffectiveness.

The apathy towards the Congress (only 538 delegates attended the 1903 Congress), and Lal Mohan Ghosh's criticism of its leadership, before the open assembly, prompted Pherozeshah Mehta to counteract the damaging impression and hold the next Congress not in its scheduled place, but in Bombay. By 1903 a well understood practice had been established, according to which the Congress convened each year in a different province by rotation. It was the turn of the Central Provinces, Berar, or the Punjab to invite the 1904 Congress, and since Bombay Presidency was the host of the 1902 Ahmedabad Congress, in the ordinary course it was not expected to invite the Congress until 1908.

By holding the 1904 Congress in Bombay, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta strengthened his command over the Congress by officiating as Chairman of the Reception Committee, while his loyal Bombay followers formed the majority of delegates in the session.²

The presence of Sir Henry Cotton in the presidential chair with Sir William Wedderburn on the platform to support him, was designed to invest the 1904 Bombay Congress with a character similar to that of 1889 when Sir William Wedderburn

^{1.} Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, Introduction,

^{2.} Number of delegates: Bombay - 623, Bengal - 105, Madras - 106, Central Provinces - 87, Punjab - 56, United Provinces - 43.

then presided in Bombay.

In proposing Sir Henry Cotton to the presidency, Banerjea frankly explained, "You have come to the rescue of our situation in the very nick of time, when some of us are prone to give way to a feeling of despondency." In his presidential address, Sir Henry Cotton devoted special attention to leaders and followers in the Congress. "You cannot all be leaders" he emphasised, "Captains and Generals are few in number; the plan of campaign is designed by them but success is assured by the obedience and discipline of the rank and file."2 He exalted Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C.Bonnerji, Shankaran Nair, Surendranath Banerjea, Dinshaw Wacha and Gokhale as the illustrious leaders of the Congress and of India, and reminded Congressmen that the British Committee of the Congress in England headed by A.O. Hume and William Wedderburn was vital for their success. He warned Congressmen against expressions of "ignoble depreciation of the life-long labours" of their leaders and asserted that this dangerous symptom should be firmly suppressed and eradicated. He expressed his optimistic conviction that the impending general election in England would result in the return of the Liberals to power and that the appointment of a Liberal Secretary of State for India

^{1.} Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, p.23.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.28.

would usher in a new period of political reforms. He urged Congressmen to realise that the fate of India was to be ultimately decided in the House of Commons and that they should therefore strive to be elected into Parliament. In summing up the goal of the Congress Sir Henry Cotton declared: "The ideal of an Indian patriot is the establishment of 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 ægis of Great Britain."

It is significant that this declaration on the goal of the Congress was expressed for the first time in a presidential address by an Englishman. Henceforth it became the declared aim of the Congress.

The 1904 Congress was portentous in its attitude towards the proposed scheme of the Government of India to subdivide the province of Bengal. The two Districts of Dacca and Mymensingh and the Division of Chittagong (area of 9,000 square miles, population 6,564,000) were to be incorporated with Assam to form a new province of Eastern Bengal and Assam.

There can be no doubt that the proposal to partition

^{1.} Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, p.37.

Bengal was primarily motivated by administrative reasons. Bengal with an area of 189,000 square miles and population of 78½ millions was too large a province to be efficiently administrated by one provincial Government. Yet at the same time there could remain no doubt that the scheme valued the division of the Bengali-speaking Hindu population as an important political advantage.

Lord Curzon's Minute on the proposed territorial redistribution of Bengal dated 1 June 1903 reads, "The argument of the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal Sir A.Frazer attaches the utmost weight which cannot be absent from our consideration. He has represented to me that the advantage of severing these Eastern districts of Bengal which are a hotbed of the purely Bengali movement unfriendly if not seditious in character and dominating the whole tone of Bengal administration will immeasurably outweigh any possible drawbacks."1

When the proposal to partition Bengal was published in the Gazette of India on 12 December 1903, it angered the Bengalis who understood it as a deliberate measure aimed to break up their national unity. Eastern Bengalis resented the prospect of their being cut off from Calcutta, its High Court, its University, its Press and its general social

^{1.} EUR.MSS. F.111/247, Minute Part II, p.13.
2. Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903, p.128.

gravity. Furthermore, they regarded their proposed incorporation with the Assamese with abhorence since they looked down upon the latter as 'naked barbarians' devoid of any civilization. On the other hand western Bengali merchants feared that trade in jute and rice would be diverted from Calcutta to Chittagong, while western Bengali zamindars feared that their lands in East Bengal would depreciate in value.

Initially the Congress avoided taking up the cause of the Bengalis. The 1903 Madras session passed a resolution which deprecated the proposed partition, yet it did so half-heartedly and reluctantly. In moving the resolution Krishnaswami Iyer frankly explained that when the Subjects Committee discussed the advisability of presenting the resolution to the open assembly, the majority of the Subjects Committee objected on the grounds that the proposed partition did not constitute an all-India problem. They waived their objection only in deference to the pressure of the Bengali delegates.²

Again, in the 1904 Bombay session, Ambica Charan Mazumdar publicly thanked the Subjects Committee for its permission to present the resolution, while the seconders and supporters of the resolution restrained their speeches

^{1.} All About Partition, Calcutta 1905 I.O.L. Tract 1037, B.Ray, The Case against the break up of Bengal, Calcutta 1905.

^{2.} Report of the nineteenth I.N.C. Madras 1903, p.131.

to few remarks which merely repeated the wording of the resolution. 1 This irregular procedure suggests that the Subjects Committee adopted the resolution reluctantly, and prevented heated discussion of the question in the open assembly.

In contrast to the marginal attention which was devoted to the partition of Bengal, the 1904 Congress centred its deliberations on the question of the employment of Indians in the Civil Service. They reflected the Congress protest against Lord Curzon's speech in the Legislative Council on 30 March 1904 in which the Viceroy frankly declared that "the highest ranks of civil employment in India must as a general rule be held by Englishmen for the reason that they possess partly by heredity, partly by upbringing, and partly by education, the habits of mind and the vigour of character which are essential for the task; and that the rule of India being a British rule and every other rule being in the circumstances of the case impossible, the tone and standard should be set by those who have created and are responsible for it."²

Implicit in this declaration was the assertion that British rule was to be administered by the British for all times to come; it expressed complete negation to Queen

^{1.} Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, p.222.

^{2.} Sixth Budget Speech, India Legislative Council proceedings, Vol.XLIII, p.562.

Victoria's Proclamation as well as to all the pledges that British rule aimed to enable Indians to share in the administration of the Government.

The disillusion of Congressmen was expressed by Subramanya Iyer who said that when the security of British rule was in doubt it was expedient to dazzle Indians with pledges, but since British rule had become thoroughly secured and Indians manifested their loyalty, the Government of India turned its back upon those pledges.

Banerjea expressed his protest in the following observation: "Under the new policy, race is the test of qualification ... The Charter Act had removed the badge of our racial inferiority, the Proclamation declared and affirmed that merit was the test of qualification, irrespective of all racial considerations ... but now for the first time, there is an open and avowed attempt to repudiate the Proclamation."²

In view of the impending general elections in England, the 1904 Congress resolved to send a delegation to England in order to "bring the claims of India before the electors, before the Parliamentary candidates and before the political leaders." Significantly it was Tilak who supported this resolution 4 and thus toed the orthodox line of the Congress

^{1.} Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, p.69.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.59-60.

<sup>Joid., Resolution XV.
Tilak - "our principle work, our principle purpose and our principle hope to carry out our programme lies not here but in England." Ibid., p.150.</sup>

in emphasising that the agitation of the Congress should be mainly conducted in England.

The proposed delegates to England were Pherozeshah Mehta, Shankaran Nair, Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Surendranath Banerjea. However only two delegates were appointed, Gokhale and Lajpat Rai.

The last important feature of the 1904 Congress was its decision to appoint a committee to draft a new constitution for the Congress. Its members included Lajpat Rai and Har Kishan Lal representing the Punjab; Surendranath Banerjea, Ambica Charan Mazumdar and S.Sinha representing Bengal, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha and Gokhale representing Bombay, Shankaran Nair and Madan Mohan Malaviya representing Madras. Although the oligarchy of the Congress formed the majority of the committee, the decision to provide the Congress with a new constitution indicates an attempt to reconcile the radicals and close up the ranks of the Congress. Similarly, the extraordinary appointment of Lajpat Rai as an accredited delegate of the Congress to England, was most probably intended to rally the Punjabi dissenters.

2. Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, p.231.

^{1.} Report of the twentieth I.N.C. Bombay 1904, p.151. Assessing the Congress delegation, Lord Curzon described Banerjea as a "vitriolic windbag" and added that Banerjea and Gokhale were "the nominees of an organization which is exclusively in extreme Radical hands which exists for the purpose of attacking Government and vilifying and insulting British rule." Curzon to Sir Arthur Godley Under Secretary of State for India. EUR.MSS. F.111/164, 11 May 1905.

However, before his departure to England, Lajpat Rai denounced the Government of India for its tyrannical rule and declared his uncompromising attitude to the Congress by emphasising that unlike previous delegations of the Congress to England, he would mainly seek support not from the Liberals but from the Social Democratic Federation of Henry Hyndman.

When Lajpat Rai arrived in London in June 1905 he was not greeted by any representative of the British Congress Committee. He was met by Shyamji Krishnavarma who took him to stay at the then newly opened 'India House' in Highgate. Shyamji Krishnavarma founded in January 1905 an India Home Rule Society and acted as its self-appointed president. His Indian Sociologist propagated Home Rule for India and severely criticised the British Committee of the Congress. Through Shyamji Krishnavarma, Lajpat Rai met Henry Hyndman and it is to this period of Lajpat Rai's stay in England that his later socialist ideas can be traced.

Lajpat Rai delivered his first speech in London at a meeting of the National Democratic League. Shyamji
Krishnavarma addressed the same meeting and moved a

^{1.} Lajpat Rai's speech at his farewell meeting in Lahore, Punjabee, 15 May 1905.

^{2.} Lajpat Rai described Krishnavarma as a "sincere patriot with sound political principles" but added that he was a "thorough autocrat" and a "miser". Autobiography,p.123. For the revolutionary aspect of the 'India House' see Rowlatt Report, pp.12-13.

resolution on Home Rule for India. Lajpat Rai supported this resolution and told the meeting not to place any reliance on statements made by Congressmen to the effect that Indians did not want Home Rule. 1

Sir Henry Cotton strongly resented Lajpat Rai's support of Shyamji Krishnavarma's resolution, and moved a motion in the Congress British Committee to censure Lajpat Rai and disown him as a delegate of the Congress. In his defence Lajpat Rai contended that as a delegate of the Congress he had by no means forfeited the liberty of expressing his own views, and the motion of Sir Henry Cotton was dropped.²

During August 1905 Lajpat Rai addressed a meeting of the Liberal Party at Kettering and a meeting of the Labour Party in Lincolnshire. He told his Labour audience that Indians had lost their faith in the Liberals and henceforth looked hopefully to the support of the working class of England. To his Liberal audience he said that the racial arrogance of Englishmen in India could no longer be tolerated and that as long as Englishmen constituted a separate ruling class in India, Indians could not but regard them as aliens and their rule as tyrannical and unacceptable.

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.122.

^{3. &}lt;u>India</u> (London) 4 August 1905. 4. <u>Ibid</u>., 18 August 1905.

Since Gokhale was due to arrive in London in October, Lajpat Rai filled in the intervening two months with a short trip to America. He addressed meetings in New York, Philadelphia and Boston, in which he told his American audiences that since India was exploited by Britain, Indians desired self-government. 1 Although Lajpat Rai's stay in the United States lasted less than a month its significance was described in terms of "pioneering India's political contact with Americans."2

In October Lajpat Rai returned to London to join Gokhale in a lecturing tour which included London. Manchester, Leeds, Edinburgh and Glasgow. In his speeches he stressed the poverty of the Indian masses and emphasised Indians' desire for self-government.3

On his return to India Lajpat Rai summed up his visit to England in the following conclusions. The English voter and the English Press were too absorbed in their own domestic problems to care about the grievances of the Indians. The Liberal Party was as indifferent to Indian affairs as the Conservatives. The Labour Party alone professed sincere support for Indian Home Rule, but due to its weakness the most it could do was to pass resolutions of sympathy. Hence Indians should cease to expect any support

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, 6 and 13 October 1905. 2. <u>Ibid.</u>, 13 October 1905.

from England and should exert their own efforts to achieve political reforms.

In his speech at the anniversary of the Arya Samaj, Lajpat Rai called upon Hindus and Muslims to form a united front against the foreign enemy (i.e. the Government of India) and concluded with the following words, "Our struggle for freedom must be carried on in India ... the tree of the nation calls for blood, world history was written in letters of blood, let us crown our national movement with martyrdom." In essence Lajpat Rai nullified the validity of constitutional agitation in England and called for militant action in India.

In February 1905 Lord Curzon gave Indians similar advice - "Equip yourselves with a genuine and manly love for your own people ... not the perfervid nationalism of the platform, but the self-sacrificing ardour of the true patriot ... Learn that the true salvation of India will not come from without but must be created within. It will not be given you by enactments of the British Parliament or of any Parliament at all. It will not be won by political controversy and most certainly it will not be won by rhetorics." In his decision to partition Bengal, Lord Curzon

^{1. &}quot;India and English party politics", speech at Lahore, 26 November 1905, The Indian Review, November 1905, pp.750-751.

^{2.} P.N.N.R. Paisa Akhbar, 12 and 13 December 1905. This speech was cited by the Government of the Punjab in support of its decision to deport Lajpat Rai in 1907.

^{3.} Speech at Convocation of Calcutta University, 11 February 1905. Lord Curzon, Speeches, Vol. IV, Calcutta 1906, p. 83.

supplied Indians with the opportunity to test his advice.

The partition of Bengal was announced on 20 July 1905 and took effect on 16 October 1905. A new province called Eastern Bengal and Assam was created by the merging of Assam with the Divisions of Dacca, Chittagong, Rajshahi (without Darjiling) and the District of Malda.

The partition was regarded by Bengalis not as an isolated measure but as the climax to Lord Curzon's unpopular policies. Hence it was taken up as a cause on which were fastened all the social, economic and political grievances which had accumulated by 1905. It evoked an unprecedented wave of protests which unleashed the Swadeshi and Boycott movement and harboured the formation of the New Party in the Congress.

Although the primary motive for the partition remained the promotion of administrative efficiency, the anti-partition demonstrations strengthened Lord Curzon's conviction that the political factor in partition was all the more advantageous. In February 1905 he wrote to John Brodrick, "Calcutta is the centre from which the Congress party is manipulated throughout the whole of Bengal and indeed the whole of India. Its best wire pullers and its most frothy orators all reside there. They dominate public opinion in Calcutta, they affect the High Court, they frighten the Local Government; and they are sometimes not

without serious influence upon the Government of India. The whole of their activity is directed to create an agency so powerful that they may one day be able to force a weak Government to give them what they desire. Any measure in consequence that would divide the Bengali speaking population; that would permit independent centres of activity and influence to grow up; that would dethrone Calcutta from its place as the centre of successful intrigue or that would weaken the influence of the lawyer class who have the entire organization in their hands is intensely and hotly resented by them."1

In May 1905 Lord Curzon added, "the best guarantee of the political advantage of our proposal is its dislike by the Congress party."2

Swadeshi and Boycott were the outstanding features which distinguished the anti-partition agitation from any former Indian protest against the policy of the Government of India. It is difficult to ascertain their origin, yet early advocacy of Swadeshi and Boycott as an economic and political doctrine can be traced to 1881 in the Punjab and to 1897 in Maharashtra and Bengal. In 1881 the president of the Arya Samaj, Lala Sain Das publicly wore Swadeshi clothes and preached the economic and political merits of Swadeshi.

EUR.MSS. F. 111/164, 2 February 1905.
 EUR.MSS. F. 111/175, No.284, 24 May 1905.
 Lajpat Rai, <u>Autobiography</u>, p.103.

In 1896 Tilak advocated Swadeshi and Boycott in Maharashtra, and in 1897 Rabindranath Tagore established in Bengal Swadeshi shops. In 1900 at the Lahore Congress Lajpat Rai attempted to commit the Congress to promote Swadeshi, but the extinction of the Indian Congress Committee in 1901 proved the unwillingness of the leaders of the Congress to let their organization develop into a spearhead of an uncontrollable popular movement. Swadeshi was a direct corollary to the principle of self-reliance of the Arya Samaj and during 1905 to 1907, members of the Arya Samaj were prominent supporters of Swadeshi and Boycott in the Punjab.2

During February and March 1905 a Punjabi ascetic, Tohal Ram Ganga Ram, ceaselessly advocated Swadeshi and Boycott in Calcutta's Beadon Square. 3 His audience were young students and his influence can be measured by the fact that during 1906 young Bengali students acted as the main agents which sustained and spread the Boycott movement. Boycott as a direct retaliatory measure against the partition of Bengal was first advocated in the Bengali Press by Lal Mohan Ghosh.4

The 16th of October 1905 (the day on which partition

Home Prog. 7312, No.205, 25 January 1906.
 Ibid., No.106, 17 July 1907.
 Ibid., No.205, 25 January 1906.

^{4.} Amrita Bazar Patrika, 17 July 1905.

took effect) was observed as a day of mourning and was marked by a mass meeting in Calcutta's Town Hall in which Ananda Mohan Bose, Lal Mohan Ghosh, Rabindranath Tagore, and Surendranath Banerjea headed the following 'Peoples' Proclamation' - "We hereby pledge and proclaim that we as a people shall do everything in our power to counteract the evil effects of the dismemberment of our province and to maintain the integrity of our race. So God help us." In addition, Banerjea administered a religious vow to use, as far as practicable, Swadeshi articles and to abstain from the use of foreign goods. 2

While Lord Curzon lampooned the anti-partition agitation in March 1905 as "petty volcanoes who scream and screech and throw their torrents of mud into the air", 2 in October the Viceroy wrote, "the agitation is now being conducted by methods of open terrorism and violence. It has been converted ... into a purely political movement organized by a small disloyal faction."4

The twenty-first session of the Congress met at Benares in December 1905 under the shadow of the partition and the close of Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty. The schism within the Congress was emphasised by the Punjabee in the

^{1.} Home Prog. 7312, No.205, 25 January 1906.
2. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.228.
3. Curzon to Brodrick, EUR.MSS. F.111/164, 23 March 1905.

^{4.} Curzon to Brodrick, EUR.MSS. F.111/175, No.452, 9 October 1905.

following terms: "The hour of the inevitable parting of ways has come for our National Assembly. It should either decide to take advantage of the new spirit and launch out a bold policy, or sign its own death."1

The controversy in the twenty-first session centred on the Subjects Committee's deliberation over the proposal to pass a resolution of welcome to the visiting Prince of Wales. The resolution was opposed by Lajpat Rai who argued that the visit of the Prince of Wales staged "a gala show which aimed to divert the public from the political unrest."2 Gokhale and Banerjea pressed the acceptance of the resolution. When the resolution was carried by the majority of the Subjects Committee, Lajpat Rai and Tilak warned that they would oppose its passage in the open assembly. Their threat infuriated the veteran leaders who counter-warned Lajpat Rai and Tilak not to act as 'sedition mongers' and 'badmashes'.4 The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Munshi Madho Lal, informed the police to expect a riot during the opening of the session, and ensured the presence of the Deputy Commissioner of Police in the Congress pavilion. The imminent rift was averted by Gokhale's appeal to Lajpat Rai, and a compromise was reached when Lajpat Rai

P.N.N.R. <u>Punjabee</u>, 18 December 1905.
 Lajpat Rai, <u>Autobiography</u>, p.127.
 C.Y.Chintamani, <u>Indian Politics Since the Mutiny</u>, London, 1940, p.79.
 Lajpat Rai, <u>Autobiography</u>, p.127.

and Tilak decided to abstain from the pavilion during the passage of the resolution. Two young Bengalis, J.N.Roy and R.Ray refused to abide by this compromise and were forcibly removed and kept out of the session. Thus the opening stages of the twenty-first session anticipated the open split of 1907.

Gokhale presided over the 1905 Congress. The most important declaration in his presidential address was, "The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in the course of time a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing Colonies of the British Empire."²

Referring to the anti-partition agitation Gokhale praised Swadeshi but cautioned against Boycott. He explained that the term 'boycott' meant "a vindictive desire to injure another" and emphasised that "such a desire on our part as a normal feature of relations with England is of course out of the question." While Gokhale advised restraint, Madan Mohan Malaviya emphatically declared that the Congress did not advocate the Boycott of Bengal and that it opposed the spread of Boycott to other provinces. In contrast, Lajpat Rai impressed upon Congressmen that Boycott ushered "the

^{1.} Ibid., p.128.
2. Report of the twenty-first I.N.C. Benares 1905, p.13.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.11.

dawn of a new political era for India." "I must tell you", he continued, "that the message which the people of England wanted to send you through me was the message that in our agitation and in our fight and struggle for liberty we ought to be more manly than we have been hitherto. Englishmen hate beggary, hence it is our duty to show Englishmen that we are no longer beggars, and that we are subjects of an Empire where people are struggling to achieve that position which is their right by right or natural law. The Bengal spirit of protest has to be commended to other provinces of India. If the other provinces will follow their example, the day is not far distant when England will grant our rights. If you simply go there [to England] as a beggar without the consciousness of your power to demand your rights, you go there simply to be rejected. As friends of order we warn the Government, let it remember, and let you gentlemen also remember, that people once awakened cannot be put down. It is impossible for British rule after a century of liberal education to put us down like dogs and slaves. Why be loyal? Once the policy of Boycott be adopted prepare for the consequence. Do not behave like cowards."1

The 1905 Congress passed no resolution on Boycott, and the <u>Punjabee</u> reacted in the following editorial: "If the Congress persist in the present infatuated policy of

^{1.} Ibid., pp.73-74.

disgraceful inaction and contemptible talk heedless of the demand made on them for action, the country will come to regard them as a body of ambitious imbeciles or a society of self-seekers who are sacrificing the real interests of their country on the altar of their vanity or own aggrandisement. Speeches without action are demoralising. If the Congress be hopelessly wedded to impotent rhetoric and despicable pomp, the people who have been crying for action should combine and start a Congress of work."1 Describing the character of the proposed new Congress the Punjabee added that it would concentrate on imparting political education to the masses by regular weekly meetings and by issuing pamphlets in the vernaculars.²

Throughout 1906 the anti-partition agitation gathered momentum in Bengal and its repercussions widened the gulf between Congressmen. Boycott became more effective when the picketing of shops by students was strengthened by social intimidation on religious grounds. This aspect of the agitation was mainly fanned by the Bengali newspapers and the following samples convey their general tone. The Daily Hitavadi wrote: "Boycott British goods and more especially boycott those native enemies of their country who use British goods."3

P.N.N.R. <u>Punjabee</u>, 10 January 1906.
 Ibid., 13 January 1906.

^{3.} B.N.N.R. Daily Hitavadi, 9 January 1906.

The Hitavarta urged its readers to ostracize non-users of Swadeshi by the following penalties - "None shall intermarry or eat and drink with them; none shall buy from them or sell to them; washermen shall not wash their clothes; barbers shall not shave them; and boys shall not be allowed to play with their boys."1

The Sandhya urged boycotting of Indian members of the Legislative Councils, Indian Honorary Magistrates and Indian lawyers practising in British Courts of law. 2

The Hitavarta warned its readers not to use English salt and sugar because it alleged "they were mixed with blood of swine and cow."5

The Sanjivani approvingly reported that officiating Brahmans in Siraajgong resolved not to perform any religious ceremonies wherever Swadeshi was not observed.4

The chief exponents of Boycott were Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay, 5 Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh. Their sources of inspiration were the writings of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (1838-1894) and the preaching of Narendranath Datta (1863-1903) - better known as Swami Vivekananda. An example of Vivekananda's condemnation of slavish imitation of Western standards is reflected in the following extract

B.N.N.R. <u>Hitavarta</u>, 28 January 1906.
 B.N.N.R. <u>Sandhya</u>, 15 March 1906.

^{3.} B.N.N.R. Hitavarta, 29 April 1906. 4. B.N.N.R. Sanjivani, 26 April 1906.

^{5.} Editor of Sandhya.

from his essay on Modern India written in 1899. "When I see Indians dressed in European apparel and costumes, the thought comes to my mind perhaps they feel ashamed to own their nationality and kinship with the ignorant, poor, down trodden people of India ... Oh India! with this mere echoing of others, with this base imitation of others, with this dependence on others, this slavish weakness ... will you attain by means of your disgraceful cowardice the freedom deserved only by the brave and heroic? ... You the brave one, be bold, take courage, be proud that you are an Indian and proudly proclaim 'I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother' ... Say brother 'the soil of India is my highest heaven, the good of India is my good' and repeat and pray day and night, 'O thou Lord of Gauri' thou Mother of the universe, vouchsafe manliness unto me". 1

The historical novels of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee provided an additional major source of inspiration, notably his Anandamath and its poem Bande Mataram. 'The Mother' was represented, chiefly by Aurobindo Ghosh, as a concept which expressed at once both the divine motherland and the mothergoddess in the form of Durga.² 'The Mother' and the slogan

^{1.} The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Almora, Vol.IV, pp.412-413. Cited in Sources of Indian Tradition, ed. De Bary, pp.658-659.

^{2. &#}x27;The Durga Puja and Patriotism' - "The Motherland is no other than divinity itself ... the Motherland in all her beauty and splendour represents the goddess Durga of our worship." Bande Mataram, 9 October 1907.

'Bande Mataram' thus conveyed both patriotic and religious devotion. They generated mass emotional appeal which the academic Congress and its rational principle of constitutional agitation, could not, and did not intend to arouse.

It was this religious fervour which transformed the anti-partition agitation into a militant movement. In its forefront stood the new leaders of Bengal - Aswini Kumar Dutta 1 and his lieutenant Satish Chandra Chatterjee, Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh.

Although Surendranath Banerjea advocated Swadeshi and Boycott in numerous public meetings, his speeches stressed the need for restraint and his Bengalee condemned rowdyism and unconstitutional acts. 2 The force of Swadeshi was in its Boycott counterpart, yet Banerjea asserted that Swadeshi was not an anti-British movement, 3 and that Boycott was a temporary measure adopted to protest against the partition and intended not to alienate, but to appeal to British public opinion in England.4

^{1.} In proposing the deportation of Aswini Kumar Dutta, the Government of Bengal described him as the most effective organizer and leader of the 'Volunteers' - students who picketed shops. His speeches openly urged the expulsion of Englishmen from India. Home Prog. Political 7590/106 17 July 1907.

^{2.} Bengalee, 8 September 1905.
3. "Swadeshism is based on the love of country and not the hatred of the foreigner." Speech "On Swadeshism", Calcutta December 1906. Speeches. Vol.VI, p.426.
4. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.192.

The Government of Bengal assessed Banerjea's role in the anti-partition agitation thus: "He has a certain widespread influence as a leader of the Cause at the centre of affairs, but his influence is diminished and impaired by the fact that he was in the I.C.S. and he is suspected of having in his heart of hearts a sneaking feeling for Englishmen at any rate as far as his own comfort and convenience are concerned." Above all the ascendency of the new popular leaders eclipsed Banerjea's prestige.

It was in this context that Banerjea endeavoured to regain his popularity by courting arrest at Barisal. occasion was the annual Bengal Provincial Conference which was held in April 1906 at Barisal in Eastern Bengal. Banerjea headed the Calcutta delegation to the Conference. On arrival at Barisal he was warned by Magistrate Emerson that the cry of 'Bande Mataram' would not be tolerated. When a group of delegates defied the prohibition on shouting Bande Mataram, the police charged and forcefully dispersed their procession. Banerjea rushed to the scene and was ordered by Superintendent Kemp to quiet down the delegates, to which Banerjea replied "there is nothing illegal in what is being done, I am responsible, arrest me." Accordingly Banerjea was arrested, summarily tried and fined. Having been

^{1.} Home Prog. Political 7590/106, 17 July 1907.
2. Home Prog. Public 7312/165, June 1906; also Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.223.

released, Banerjea joined the Conference and was carried shoulder high to a table "to enable people to take the dust of his feet", while the Conference pavilion resounded with shouts of 'Bande Mataram'. 1 The police later entered the pavilion and dispersed the Conference. The arrest of Banerjea, the beatings of some delegates in the procession, and the dispersal of the Barisal Conference gave fresh impetus to the anti-partition agitation.

The Hitavarta wrote: "The blood of the innocent will be washed by the blood of white oppressors. How long will the people of this country have more patience? The English have lost the confidence of the people, soon they will also lose their Empire."2 Banerjea was hailed as a national hero, and indignation meetings were held at Calcutta and numerous places in Bengal, as well as at Madras, Bombay, Delhi, Allahabad, Amritsar and Lahore. Yet none made more capital of the Barisal incident than Banerjea himself. His Bengalee described the indignation meetings as testimony to Banerjea's widespread popularity. It elevated Banerjea to the rank of a martyr and recalled Banerjea's imprisonment in 1883 during the Ilbert Bill controversy.4

The visit of Tilak to Bengal during June 1906 to

^{1.} Bengalee, 15 April 1906. 2. B.N.N.R. Hitavarta, 29 April 1906.

^{3.} Bengalee, 17 April 1906. 4. Ibid., 22 and 26 April 1906.

celebrate the tenth anniversary of Shivaji's festival gave an additional impetus to the anti-partition agitation. At his reception meetings in Calcutta Tilak declared, "The words 'Bande Mataram' are now inscribed on the temple of Shivaji at Ratnagiri." The Shivaji festival is an inspiring political festival which must spread all over India. The Goddess Kali is the presiding Goddess in Bengal, the same Goddess was the protector of Shivaji. We cannot conceive of Shivaji without Bhawani". 2 Having thus merged 'Bande Mataram' with Shivaji's festival, Tilak avowed "a Shivaji would yet come and lead us to glory and prosperity."3 Banerjea hailed Tilak at Calcutta as "the uncrowned king of the Deccan, on whom the mantle of the Peshwas had fallen".4 while at Belgaum, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande publicly styled Tilak as "Rajadhiraja Chatrapati Tilak Maharaj" and "Tilak Lokamanya, Our Shivaji".5

Banerjea too was proclaimed a messianic hero in a Shanti Sechan (benediction) ceremony in Calcutta, in which a floral chaplet was placed on his head while Brahmans blew conches and recited Vedic mantras. But while the projection of Tilak as the new Shivaji enhanced Tilak's popularity, the

^{1.} Ibid., 5 June 1906. 2. Ibid., 6 June 1906. (Bhawani = Kali). 3. Ibid., 7 June 1906.

^{4. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., 8 June 1906.

^{5.} Englishman, 6 October 1906 (Rajadhiraja = King of Kings, Lokamanya = Revered by the people).

^{6.} Bengalee, 2 September 1906.

mock coronation of Banerjea resulted in a serious setback to his prestige. The Amrita Bazar Patrika ridiculed Banerjea for having posed as a messiah and condemned his Shanti Sechan ceremony. The Hindu Patriot described the ceremony as a "miserable crowning farce" and advised the 'new king' to retire. 2 The Englishman wrote "we pity the future of the nation which has a buffoon as its spokesman."3 In addition to the general condemnation of Banerjea's mock coronation, he was rebuked for having urged a mass meeting at Kalighat to swear by Kali not to use English goods, on the grounds that Kali was repugnant to Banerjea's own religious convictions. 4 On the other hand Lord Minto's letter to Morley on Banerjea reads "It was simply marvellous, with the troubles and anxieties of a few months ago still fresh in one's memory, to see the 'King of Bengal' ... asking for my assistance to moderate the evil passions of the Bengali, and inveighing against the extravagances of Bipin Chandra Pal." Yet in a general perspective, the oscillation of Banerjea, his arrest at Barisal and his mock coronation were, for all their wide publicity, only marginal events in the anti-partition agitation. The question of partition itself receded into the background and the main issue

^{1.} B.N.N.R. Amrita Bazar Patrika, 5 September 1906. 2. B.N.N.R. Hindu Patriot, 11 September 1906. 3. Englishman, 5 September 1906.

^{4.} B.N.N.R. Indian Nation, 10 September 1906. 5. Minto to Morley, 19 March 1907; Mary Countess of Minto, India: Minto to Morley, London, 1934, p.109.

became self-government or Swaraj.

In August 1906, Gokhale told Morley that the aim of the Congress was the attainment of self-government within the Empire. 1 But while Gokhale continued to advocate in London the urgent need for a bold declaration on selfgovernment for India in order to regain the confidence of loval Indians. 2 in India, Lajpat Rai, Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh dismissed prayers and appeals to the British Government as useless mendicancy, and emphasised that the Government of India would hand over its powers when "the force of circumstances compelled it to do so in spite of itself."

The Yugantar wrote: "War or a revolution is far better than death in peace."4 It urged Indians to draw inspiration from Japan's victory over Russia, and it interpreted the Sepoy Mutiny as "the first Indian war for independence."5 New India wrote: "Absolute national autonomy is the goal. The nation must succeed in gaining it, or must perish in the attempt. Revolution is inevitable."6 Towards the approaching twenty-second session of the Congress, the Sandya wrote: "English-educated Indians have become slaves

^{1.} Morley's Recollections, Vol.II, p.181.

^{2.} Gokhale's address before the East India Association,

Indian Review, July 1906, pp.526-528.
3. Lajpat Rai, "The Swadeshi Movement", Indian Review, May 1906, p.356. 4. B.N.N.R. Yugantar, 17 June 1906.

^{5.} Ibid., 16 December 1906.

^{6.} B.N.N.R. New India, 10 November 1906.

to the feringhis and say we must live with them as partners. The management of the Congress must be wrested from the hands of the demi-feringhis."1

An open split was forecast in the Congress when the hitherto unconsolidated groups of conservative and radical Congressmen converged into two opposite factions. The veteran leaders and their followers became styled the 'old party' or 'the moderates', while 'the new party' led by Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh became known as 'the nationalists' or 'the extremists'.

When Tilak's candidature for the presidency of the 1906 Congress was advocated by the extremists, Banerjea prevailed upon Dadabhai Naoroji to come from England and preside over the session. 2 The twenty-second session of the Congress held in Calcutta in December 1906 had the highest attendance of delegates since 18893 and its proceedings reveal an open battle between the old and the new parties. The key note of the session was Dadabhai Naoroji's declaration: "Instead of going into further details of our rights as British citizens, the whole matter can be

^{1.} B.N.N.R. <u>Sandhya</u>, 22 November 1906. 2. Banerjea to Naoroji - "Those who were canvassing for Tilak have given us the assurance that they will unanimously join in electing you as President and have authorised me to communicate the fact to you ... you have saved us from a great crisis." 25 October 1906, R.P. Masani, Dadabhai Naoroji, The Grand Old Man of India, London, 1939, p.497.

3. 1889 - 1,889 delegates; 1906 - 1,663 delegates.

comprised in one word, self-government or Swaraj like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies."

It was the first time that 'Swaraj' was uttered in the Congress, yet its ambiguous definition 'like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies' resulted in intensifying the rift between the moderates and the extremists. In the Subjects Committee meeting, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Gokhale, Bhupendranath Basu, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Surendranath Banerjea were opposed by Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lajpat Rai and cries of "down with Banerjea", "down with Pherozeshah Mehta" threatened to break the meeting. 2 The conflict centred on the formulation of the Boycott and Swadeshi resolutions. While Banerjea, Pherozeshah Mehta and Madan Mohan Malaviya insisted on limiting the endorsement of boycott only to Bengal, Bipin Chandra Pal demanded Congress recommendation of universal economic and political boycott. Pal's demand was rejected by the veteran leaders but a temporary compromise was agreed on Tilak's suggestion that the Swadeshi resolution would conclude with the clause "even at some sacrifice". Thus the resolution on Boycott read, "Having regard to the fact that the people of this country have little or no voice in its administration and

Report of the twenty-second I.N.C. Calcutta 1906, p.21.
 S.Brimasankara Row, The 22nd Indian National Congress 1907
 I.O.L. Tract 1028; also Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.131.

that their representation to the Government do not receive due consideration, this Congress is of opinion that the Boycott Movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the partition of that province, was and is legitimate." While the resolution on Swadeshi read, "This Congress accords its most cordial support to the Swadeshi movement and calls upon the people of the country to labour for its success by making earnest and sustained efforts to promote the growth of indigenous industries and to stimulate the production of indigenous articles by giving them preference over imported commodities, even at some sacrifice."

However, the dispute over the interpretation of
Boycott was reopened in the general assembly of the Congress
when Banerjea exclaimed, "A section of our people have lost
all confidence in the utility of constitutional agitation,
they say that they decline to approach the Government with
memorials and petitions ... they say that self-respect
demands that they should have nothing whatever to do with
the Government. I am not in sympathy with this view at all.
I think that political agitation must be continued and I
further think that petitions should be submitted." In
response to cries of "no", "no", Banerjea continued, "You

^{1.} Report of the twenty-second I.N.C. Calcutta 1906, Resolution VII.

^{2.} Ibid., Resolution VIII.

may say 'no' to the end of your life and you will not convince me that in this matter I am in the wrong." In contrast, Bipin Chandra Pal expressed the extremists' view when he urged total disassociation from the Government, and emphasised that the term 'Boycott Movement' implied the spread of Boycott to other provinces. Furthermore he advocated Boycott as a permanent political weapon against British rule.²

This exposition was strongly rejected by Madan Mohan Malaviya who declared that the Congress completely disavowed the remarks of Bipin Chandra Pal. Gokhale re-read the Boycott resolution and added "to the extent of the resolution we all go together, beyond this if any of you want to go, go by all means but do not go in the name of the Congress."

The different interpretations of the Boycott resolution expressed a fundamental cleavage between the moderates and the extremists, and although the 1906 Congress endeavoured to conclude its proceedings with an outward appearance of reconciliation, it clearly signified an impending dissolution.

During January to May 1907, Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin

Report of the twenty-second I.N.C. Calcutta 1906, p.75.
 Pal, "Until we get every right, until every liberty will be ours, until in one word we realise the highest destiny of our people as a nation in the committee of nations". Ibid., p.84.

Jbid., p.88.
 Ibid., p.89.

Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh set out to canvass support for the new party. The common denominator in their speeches and writings was an emphatic assertion that the belief in England's providential mission proved fallacious. They disparaged the moderates' plea for Indians' equality of rights as British subjects, and emphasised that Indians were subjugated people whose rights for equality and liberty rested solely on the basis of fundamental human rights as enunciated by the French Revolution.

Tilak presented the relationship between Indians and the Government of India in terms of power politics between rulers and ruled. He emphasised that politics were void of benevolence, and that history never recorded an instance in which an Empire ceased to exercise its rule by conceding its dominion voluntarily. In Tilak's words, "At present we are clerks and willing instruments of our oppression in the hands of an alien Government. The new party wants you to realise the fact that your future rests entirely in your own hands. If you mean to be free, you can be free; if you do not mean to be free, you will fall and be forever fallen. So many of you need not like arms, but if you have not the power of active resistance, have you not the power of self-denial and self-abstinence in such a way as not to assist

^{1.} The Bande Mataram published 'La Marseillaise' with translations in English, Sanskrit, Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Marathi and Gujarati, on 29 July 1907.

this foreign government to rule over you? This is boycott, we shall not have their goods, we shall not give them assistance to collect revenue and to keep the peace. We shall not assist them in fighting beyond the frontiers or outside India with Indian blood and money. We shall not assist them in carrying on the administration of justice. We shall have our own courts and when time comes we shall not pay taxes. Can you do that by your united efforts? If you can, you are free from tomorrow."

Lajpat Rai upheld Swadeshi and Boycott as the religion of new India; the manifestation of self-sacrificing patriotism; the means of moulding a self-reliant Indian nation, and the spearhead of India's national struggle against British rule. Discarding the moderates "sermons of unswerving loyalty", he asserted that it was folly to interpret India's status of political subservience as a beneficial school for political apprenticeship. To emphasise this assertion, Lajpat Rai offered two scholarships for Punjabi students to study 'methods of political work' and stipulated that they should undertake not to seek their career in the Government of India. Outstandingly among Indian leaders, Lajpat Rai stressed the need to arouse the political consciousness of the urban workers and pointed out

4. Punjabee, 6 and 20 March 1907.

^{1. &}quot;The Tenets of the New Party", speech at Calcutta, 2 January 1907. I.O.L. tract 1010.

^{2. &}quot;The Swadeshi Movement", Indian Review, May 1906, pp.353-356.

^{3. &}quot;The National Outlook", Modern Review, March 1907, p.205.

that "the wage earning classes in this country gradually realise that their destiny and bread is in their own hands and not in the hands of those handful of people who overlord them."1

Implicit in the extremists' rejection of petitions and appeals to the British Government was an underlying rejection of Western values and ideals. Bipin Chandra Pal contrasted the old and the new spirit of Indian patriotism in the following words: "We loved the abstraction we called India but we hated the thing that it actually was. Our patriotism was not composed of our love for our own history, literature, arts and industries, culture and institutions, but as a prototype of England which we wished her to be. The new spirit cured us of an imaginary and abstract patriotism. Love of India means a love for its rivers and mountains, for its paddy fields and its arid sandy lands, its towns and villages and poor people, for its languages, literature, philosophies, religion, culture and civilization."2 Pal denied the efficacy of constitutional agitation by arguing that the Government of India was not a constitutional government in the sense that it rested on its own laws which did not bind it to recognize any constitutional rights of the people it governed. 3 Like Lajpat Rai, he

3. Ibid., p.133.

^{1.} Home Prog. Political 7590, July 1907. 2. "The New Patriotism", speech at Madras, April 1907, B.C.Pal, Swadeshi and Swaraj, (Selection from Pal's writings and speeches during 1902-1907) Calcutta 1956,

rejected the moderates' emphasis on the indispensability of political apprenticeship under British guidance, and argued that British rule constituted India's bondage and as such could never be a school for freedom.

Having thus rejected the moderates' method of constitutional agitation and in particular its emphasis on apprenticeship under British guidance, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh advocated boycott in the form of 'passive resistance'. Pal defined passive resistance as "non aggressive active resistance" or "even the determination to allow a man beat you is the activity of one's will power." While Aurobindo Ghosh defined it as "lawful abstention from any kind of co-operation with the Government."

Outlining the practical form of passive resistance,
Aurobindo Ghosh urged boycott of British goods and the sole
use of Swadeshi; boycott of Government controlled schools
and the establishment of independent schools teaching
"national education"; boycott of courts of law and the
administration of justice through popular arbitration; and
lastly, boycott of Government offices, police and army and
the establishment of "national league of defence". The

4. <u>Ibid</u>., p.70.

^{1.} Ibid., p.55.

^{2.} The New Movement' speech at Madras, April 1907; B.C.Pal, Swadeshi and Swaraj, p.79.

^{3.} Aurobindo Ghosh, The Doctrine of Passive Resistance (first published in Bande Mataram, 9-23 April 1907) Pondicherry 1948, p.40.

double-edged purpose of passive resistance thus aimed to paralyse the executive functions of the Government and to foster a self-sustained popular system of administration.

Although Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh were unanimous in disparaging the methods of the moderates, they differed in projecting the ultimate aim of Indian self-government.

Tilak explained self-government as the possession of Indian control over the administrative machinery, 1 but he by no means advocated the severance of India from the British Empire. "Our remote ideal", he declared, "is a confederacy of the Indian provinces possessing colonial self-government with all imperial questions set apart for the central government in England." His dispute with the moderates was limited to the application of different methods of agitation but he conceived the same goal as that of the moderates - a self-governing India within the Empire. While the moderates looked forward to a limited target of Colonial self-government, Tilak projected the ideal of Swaraj, yet he was at pains to explain its exact political meaning and confessed "at this stage it could not be determined what form of self-government we wished, it will

^{1. &}quot;The Tenets of the New Party", speech at Calcutta, 2 January 1907, I.O.L. Tract 1010.

^{2.} Henry Nevinson, The New Spirit in India, London 1908, p.72.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.73.

be decided in thirteen or fourteen years hence." He could better define Swaraj by emphasising that it neither meant the expulsion of Englishmen, nor the breaking away from the Empire. 2 Above all he advocated continued loyalty to the Crown. 3 For all the image of Tilak as 'the father of Indian unrest', his imprisonment in 1908 did not check the spread of terrorism, while on his release in 1914, he strongly condemned acts of terrorism, praised the "inestimable benefits which British rule conferred upon India by its civilized methods of administration", and called upon Indians to support England in the war.4

On the other hand, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh rejected the methods of the moderates as well as their aim of Colonial self-government. For them, conciliation between Indian patriotism and loyalty to the Empire was anathema, and the ideal of self-governing India within the Empire a contradiction between two incompatible entities. "How can a subject race governed by another be patriotic towards its rulers?" asked Lajpat Rai. 5 He condemned Indians who celebrated 'Empire Day' as "hypocrites who dragged Indian patriotism into the mire", 6 and bitterly

^{1. &}quot;Our present situation", speech at Allahabad, 4 January 1907, I.O.L. Tract 1010.

^{2.} Ibid.

Ibid.

Indian Review, September 1914, p.719. "Indian patriotism towards the Empire", Indian Review, January 1907, p.52.

^{6.} Ibid.

denounced Indians who hankered after British honorary titles as "whited sepulchres full of rotting corruption; the symptoms and disease of the national organism; the morbid parasitic cells which develop mean selfishness and thrive on favouritism." While the moderates polarised stability and anarchy, Lajpat Rai justified unrest as an essential harbinger of progress, and emphasised that India's release from political slavery necessitated her going through a "hell of unrest". In 1914 Lajpat Rai praised acts of terrorism as "expressions of genuine passion for national liberty" and unlike any other Indian leader, asserted that Indians should not support England in the war as mercenaries.4

Bipin Chandra Pal denied the feasibility of a selfgoverning India within the Empire on the grounds that India constituted the pillar of the Empire and therefore could exert effective self-government only if the Empire itself ceased to exist. 5 In addition Pal emphasised the racial division and expressed his conviction that Indians could never exercise self-government within a larger political framework which included Englishmen. Australians and Canadians. On the basis of these contentions Pal advocated

6. Ibid., p. 152.

^{1. &#}x27;Title hunters', <u>Punjabee</u>, 27 January 1907.
2. "Political work in the Punjab", <u>Punjabee</u>, 13 October 1906, Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

3. Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.4.

4. Tribune, 14 November 1929. "Congress Politics in 1914".

5. "The New Movement", speech at Madras, April 1907.

B.C.Pal, Swadeshi and Swaraj, p.29.

Swaraj in terms of "autonomous Government, absolutely free from British control". He visualised the ideal of a selfgoverning India as a federation which comprised of republican states and constitutional monarchies in a democratic United States of India. 2 In projecting this ideal, Pal approvingly envisaged a transition period of inner conflict which entailed imposition of dictatorship and the temporary abandonment of democracy.

Aurobindo Ghosh gave the clearest exposition of Swaraj by declaring it synonymous with independence - "a free national Government unhampered even in the least degree by foreign control."4 To him, arguments about the liberalisation of Legislative Councils or the wider admission of Indians to the Civil Service were futile and irrelevant. He upheld the view that the more reactionary the Government of India was, the more it stimulated Indians to abandon their acquiescence, and the more it spurred them to revolt. He justified revolution against British rule partly on the grounds that "liberty is the life birth of a nation and when the life is attacked by violent pressure, any and every means of selfpreservation became right"; But, more importantly, on the

^{1.} Ibid., p.153.

^{2.} Ibid., p.203.

^{3.} Ibid., p.204.
4. Aurobindo Ghosh, The Doctrine of Passive Resistance, (first published in Bande Mataram, 9-23 April 1907) Pondicherry 1948, p.17. 5. Ibid., p.17.

grounds that it was essential for Indians to go through a revolution in order to purge themselves from Western tutelage. To launch the revolution Aurobindo Ghosh advocated the creation of a 'central force' to represent 'the national will'. In his words, "There can be no genuine progress carrying the whole nation forward unless there is a central force representing either the best thought and energy of the country or else the majority of its citizens and able to enforce the views and decisions of the nation on all its constituent members." Or in short, "National reforms and national progress needs the organisation of the national will in a strong central authority."2 Unlike Bipin Chandra Pal, he avoided the term dictatorship, yet his idea of the 'central force' representing the 'national will' harbours the elements of dictatorship. Moreover, he conceived the ultimate aim of India's national emancipation as "a sacrifice to the Motherland, offered in feeding her fire, even with the blood, lives and happiness of our nearest and dearest."3

The general state of unrest in the Punjab during February to June 1907 provided a testing ground for the ideas of the extremists.

The discontent in the Punjab emanated from the

^{1.} Ibid., p.2.

^{2.} Ibid., p.4.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.77.

legislation of the Colonization Bill, and from the proposed increase of the Bari Doab Canal water rate. The Chenab Colony had been settled by pensioned Jat Sepoys who received free grants of irrigated lands. In accordance with Hindu practice of inheritance, by which sons inherited property in equal shares, land was constantly subdivided and became too small to support the Colonizers' growing families. To check further deterioration, the Colonization Bill provided inheritance by primogeniture as well as uniformity in erecting buildings, planting trees, and maintaining improved sanitation. The Bill was strongly resented by the settlers. They regarded it as an infringement on their rights of tenure and suspected concealed intentions to confiscate their lands. Above all, plague was taking an average toll of 6,000 deaths per week.

The discontent was intensified by racial animosity which was ignited by the prosecution of the <u>Punjabee</u> for publishing an article² in which the accidental shooting of an Indian Shikari by the District Officer of Rawalpindi was described as a deliberate murder. While the <u>Punjabee</u> was prosecuted, no similar action was taken against the <u>Civil and Military</u> <u>Gazette</u> which published letters which incited worse racial

^{1.} Published in the <u>Punjabi Public Gazette</u> on 1 November, 1906.

— Auchantican was to be a public of the public

^{2.} On 11 April 1906.

antagonism. The proprietor of the <u>Punjabee</u>, Jaswant Rai, was sentenced in Lahore to two years imprisonment, and the editor, Athalye, to six months imprisonment, for "fomenting race hatred."

Although Lajpat Rai succeeded in securing their release on bail, their sentence provoked a riot in Lahore. The house of the District Magistrate was attacked and damaged, Europeans passing by were abused and manhandled, while the released prisoners were hailed with cries of 'Bande Mataram' "Death to the enemy". The tone of the prevailing atmosphere was expressed by the Vakil of Amritsar in the following rallying cry, "Indians! Consider the injustice done to the Punjabee. Indians! Strike for independence. Arm yourselves and form secret societies. Seize arms and drive the tyrants from the soil of India."

Throughout March, April and May 1907, public meetings in protest against the Colonization Bill were held in Lahore,

^{1.} Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, admitted that the prosecution of the Punjabee was a blunder and that the Civil and Military Gazette incited worse racial hatred. Minute Home Prog. 7590, 30 April 1907. Minto to Morley, 2 May 1907 "They were disgracefully low in tone, just the sort of thing to stir up racial hatred. The Punjab Government decided not to prosecute and would not allow private prosecution. They may have been right, but it makes one's blood boil to know that a leading English newspaper could publish such productions" Mary Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.123.

^{2.} Tribune, 16 February 1907.

^{3.} Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, pp.133-134.

^{4.} P.N.N.R. Vakil, 7 March 1907.

Rawalpindi, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Lyallpur, as well as in surrounding villages. On 22 March, Lajpat Rai addressed a mass meeting of peasants in Lyallpur in which he thus challenged the legitimate ownership of land by the Government, "Whence did the Government bring these lands?, the blood of our forefathers was shed on it, we conquered it and inhabited it, these lands are therefore either ours or God's ... Government officials are servants to serve us and not to rule over us. Do not fear the jails nor death."1

A.jit Singh² impressed upon the same meeting that three hundred million Indians could easily defeat the hundred fifty thousand Englishmen in India in spite of their guns, and urged the peasants to revolt.3

In Rawalpindi a mass meeting on 21 April was presided over by Hans Raj and addressed by Ajit Singh who urged Muslims and Hindus to unite and fight the Government to death. 4 When Hans Raj, Ajit Singh and three other organizers of the meeting were summoned for trial on 2 May, a riot spread in Rawalpindi in which the District Judge was rescued

^{1.} Punjabee, 2 March 1907, Home Prog. 7590, July 1907, Appendix E.

^{2.} He was a former student at the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College; was present in the 1906 Congress and supported the extremists section; organized in Lahore a Bharat Mata' (Mother India) revolutionary society; approached Lajpat Rai for financial support for its activities but was refused. Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.135; also Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

3. Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

4. Ibid., No.28.

from crowds armed with sticks shouting "beat the Europeans. kill any you meet", while the house of the District Commissioner was attacked and Englishmen passing by were manhandled. During the riot Lajpat Rai was approached by a Pathan who told him that a Sikh regiment was awaiting his orders.1

The Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab. E. Maclagan informed Sir H. Risley, Secretary to the Government of India, that although Ajit Singh was at the forefront of the agitation, Lajpat Rai was the more dangerous revolutionary leader who was generally recognized as the chief organizer and the moving spirit of the whole agitation.² In his request for special powers to check the agitation, Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, reported that the peasants were incited to murder high officials and rise against the Government, that the Arya Samaj was the chief promoter of the agitation, and that attempts were made to tamper with the Sikh army units. He urged the Government of India to realise the "exceedingly dangerous situation" and requested its approval to prohibit all public meetings and to deport Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai. 3

In view of the fact that the agitation in the Punjab

Lajpat Rai, Autobiography, p.141.
 Home Prog. 7590 No.695, 3 May 1907.
 Minute of Sir Denzil Ibbetson, Home Prog.7590 No.1, 30 April 1907.

coincided with the 50th anniversary of the Mutiny, Lord Minto promptly sanctioned the proposed deportation as well as the prohibition of all public meetings. On the other hand, the Viceroy vetoed the Punjab Colonization Bill on the grounds that "it was a very faulty piece of legislation".

The withholding of the Colonization Bill proved the major reason for the restoration of calm in the Punjab, while the deportation of Ajit Singh and Lajpat Rai acted as the immediate deterrent which enervated and abated the agitation.

On the day of his deportation to Burma, 9 May 1907, Lajpat Rai's article in the <u>Punjabee</u> "On the political situation" concluded with the following challenge to the Government, "Do what you may to crush or kill it [the agitation], fear will give way to the desire of martyrdom, and arrests will speed up the national awakening"; yet his deportation resulted in a general demonstration of submissive loyalty to the Government.

In an open letter to the <u>Civil and Military Gazette</u>, forty-two prominent Punjabi lawyers and leaders of the Arya Samaj, including Hans Raj, declared that they "disassociated themselves from, and expressed their emphatic disapproval of, all methods of political agitation which

^{1.} Minto to Morley, 16 May 1907; Mary, Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.132.

tend to promote disloyalty, sedition, or disorder."1

The same forty-two leaders apologetically wrote again, "We as members of the Arya Samaj and as subjects of the British Government, strongly disapprove of the conduct of fanatics, and declare that we have no sympathy with these doings. It is unfortunate that Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Hans Raj and Gurudas Ram - prominent members of the Arya Samaj have been suspected of unconstitutional agitation. We believe they were advocates of constitutional agitation only, and that sedition had no place in their minds. We pray their innocence will be proved to the satisfaction of the Government."2 On the other hand, letters of congratulation on Lajpat Rai's deportation were sent to the Civil and Military Gazette by elated Muslims. 5 The Azad and Watan published extracts from Lajpat Rai's speeches to demonstrate his guilt of sedition, 4 while a letter to the Akhbar-i-Am read, "The sooner such enemies of India are wiped out the better for the country."5

The Anglo-Indians' reaction to the agitation and to Lajpat Rai's deportation was expressed by the following letter to the <u>Civil and Military Gazette</u>: "We must hold the country with the power of the sword and in the interests of

^{1.} The Civil and Military Gazette, 11 June 1907.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, 12 June 1907.

Jbid., 11 May 1907.
 Ibid., 28 June 1907.

^{5.} P.N.N.R., Akhbar-i-Am, 6 August 1907.

our women and children and the Empire we must see that the edge of the sword is not dulled ... The only thing an oriental respects is power."1

In contrast, the Sandhya saw Lajpat Rai's deportation as the first sacrificial offering to 'the Mother' and added, "Fifty years ago the Sepoys sounded the war drum and the blood of the feringhi flowed on the soil of India. Exactly fifty years have gone by since then and again the deep sounds of that war drum are being heard again."2

Yet this was the exception. In general the Indian Press expressed indignation, but its protest went only to the extent of arguing that Lajpat Rai should have been allowed to defend himself under trial. The Indian Mirror termed the extremists 'a microscopic minority' and concluded that their influence was greatly exaggerated since the majority of the people proved to be unaffected by their inflamatory speeches and writings. 3

In view of this general submissive reaction, it becomes apparent that the extremists' advocacy of revolution was premature, lacking practical support. The anti-partition agitation in Bengal and the unrest in the Punjab contained revolutionary elements which were far more militant than the relatively crude agitation during the Ilbert Bill

Civil and Military Gazette, 12 June 1907.
 B.N.N.R. Sandhya, 17 May 1907.
 Indian Mirror, 18 June 1907.

controversy in 1883; yet in spite of the fact that by 1907 the nascent nationalist movement was fanned by religious fervour and spurred by racial animosity, as well as by economic distress and by political frustration, there was no Indian revolution.

Apart from the obvious reason that the military strength of the Government posed a formidable deterrent, while in contrast the extremists had neither the resources nor the organization which could sustain a revolution, the main cause may be attributed to the political apathy of the peasantry, but more precisely to the fact that authoritative leadership centred in the Congress, and the Congress was dominated by moderates who abhorred the prospect of a revolution. The Congress formed and represented a class of professional men whose political career, economic prosperity, and social prestige were either dependent on or directly linked, with the existing institutions of the Government; their struggle was designed to increase their association with the Government; not to jeopardise their vested interests in a struggle against the Government. Hence the application of militant agitation instead of constitutional agitation had to be first fought out in the Congress itself, before it could have been effectively directed against the Government. In other words, the extremists had first to capture the Congress in order to invest their militant ideas

with an aura of authority which would attract a wider following.

Aurobindo Ghosh justified the impending clash on the grounds that political struggle of subjugated people demanded inner struggle rather than an appearance of fictitious unity. He relied on the examples of the Italian and American revolutions and concluded that in the struggle between the moderates and the extremists, "one or the other must be crushed or prevail before true unity of a regenerated nation can replace the false unity of acquiescence in servitude."1

The candidature for the presidency of the twentythird session of the Congress signalled the contest for the leadership of the Congress. The extremists proposed Lajpat Rai who had been released 2 on 15 November, while the moderates nominated Rash Behari Ghosh. Although Lajpat Rai refused to contest the presidency, 3 the extremists persisted in opposing the nomination of Rash Behari Ghosh.

Towards the approach of the session at Surat, Aurobindo Ghosh called upon the extremists to counter the

^{1.} Bande Mataram, 27 October 1907.

^{2.} Minto to Morley, 5 November 1907, "As to Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, I have not a shadow of doubt that we must in common justice release them, and that the sooner we do so the better. Now that we have declared the Punjab to be quiet we cannot justify their further imprisonment."
Mary, Countess of Minto, India, Minto and Morley, p.163.

3. "I will be the last person to allow myself to be made the reason or occasion of any split in the national camp." Indian Review, December 1907, p.960.

'Bombay Loyalists' and set up a separate 'Nationalists Conference'. Accordingly, the first Indian Nationalist Conference was held in Haripur at the outskirts of Surat on 23 December 1907. It was presided over by Aurobindo Ghosh and addressed by Tilak. Entrance to the Nationalists Conference was conditioned upon personal declaration of being a 'Nationalist', while the Conference itself passed resolutions on total boycott and complete independence. 2

Although the extremists' Nationalists Conference posed a consolidated front, it contained two distinct groups; one led by Tilak who repudiated any intentions to cause a split in the Congress, 3 the other led by Aurobindo Ghosh who sought to capture the Congress or wreck it.4

On the other hand, the undelivered presidential address of Rash Behari Ghosh reveals that the moderates approvingly anticipated the secession of the extremists from

Bande Mataram, 13 December 1907.
 Bengalee, 25 December 1907.
 Tilak emphasised in his speech at the Nationalists Conference "We have not come to cause a split in the Congress, we do not want to hold a separate Congress, our policy is not destructive but progressive." The Surat Congress - A unique collection of letters, articles and reports. Madras 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1042.

^{4.} Aurobindo Ghosh, Sri Aurobindo on Himself and on the Mother, Pondicherry 1953, p.47.

the Congress. Moreover the decision of Pherozeshah Mehta to bring into the Congress pavilion forty hired men armed with sticks, indicates predetermination to expel the extremists. 2 Above all, the mild formulation of the draft resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott, and National Education, signified the Congress' rebuke to the ideas of the extremists and its determination to appease the Government.

The resolution on Swadeshi replaced the crucial clause "even at some sacrifice" by "preference where possible"; the Boycott resolution omitted the term 'Boycott Movement', and the resolution on National Education excluded the words "education on national lines and under national control".3

The rupture started on the first day of the Surat session, 26 December 1907, when Banerjea formally introduced the president-elect Rash Behari Ghosh. Tumultuous hisses and

^{1. &}quot;The National Congress is definitely committed only to constitutional methods of agitation to which it is fast moored. If the new party does not approve of such methods and cannot work harmoniously with the old, it has no place within the pale of the Congress. Secession, therefore, is the only course open to it." The Surat Congress, Natesan, Madras 1908, Presidential address, p.29. Referring to Lajpat Rai's deportation, Rash Behari Ghosh added "though a martyr may be worshipped for his sufferings and his sacrifices, he is not always counted among the wisest of men and his example is more frequently admired than followed." Ibid., p.32.
2. The Congress Split, Calcutta 1908, p.12. I.O.L. Tract

^{1042.}

^{3.} The Surat Congress 1907. A Unique Collection of letters, articles and reports intended to give a more exact history of the fiasco than any published hitherto. Madras 1908, pp.22-24. I.O.L. Tract 1042.

shouts deafened Banerjea's speech and the general meeting had to be suspended. On the following day, Tilak opposed the instalment of Rash Behari Ghosh to the presidential chair. Having been declared out of order by N.Malvi, Chairman of the Reception Committee, Tilak demanded an amendment to delay the election of the president, but was declared out of order by Rash Behari Ghosh. When Tilak then appealed to the delegates, an uproar and general scuffle ensued. The police was called and the twenty-third Indian National Congress dispersed in chaos.

Although Tilak's objection to the election of the president sparked off the uproar, Tilak was by no means responsible for the split of the Congress. He regretted the outbreak and believed that it was "accidental and unexpected.'

The following admission of Aurobindo Ghosh provides the clue, "Very few people know that it was I, (without consulting Tilak), who gave the order that led to the breaking of the Congress."

Following the dissolution of the Congress, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Rash Behari Ghosh, Gokhale and Banerjea announced their decision to hold an exclusive Convention of the moderate party. In an attempt to forestall the Convention, Tilak approached Banerjea with a compromising suggestion. He proposed to waive his opposition to Rash

Mother, p.81.

^{1.} H. Nevinson, The New Spirit in India, p.243. 2. Aurobindo Ghosh, Sri Aurobindo on Himself and

Behari Ghosh's election provided the resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education retained their 1906 formulation. In return Banerjea stipulated to Tilak the following unconditional public apology, "I and my party beg to withdraw in the best interests of the Congress our opposition to Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh's presidency and regret the incident that took place." Tilak concurred provided Banerjea agreed to walk out from the Congress in the event that the resolutions were carried in their milder form. Banerjea refused and the negotiations broke down. 2

Lajpat Rai implored the moderates not to oust the extremists and thereby offer them to Government persecution. In a last minute attempt he tried to persuade Gokhale to postpone the meeting of the Convention. Gokhale rejected the possibility of finding a compromise and the Convention met on 28 December 1907 at the Congress pavilion.

Nine hundred delegates attended the moderates' Convention which passed the following resolutions:

1) The attainment of India of Self-Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and participation by her in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with

^{1.} The Surat Congress, I.O.L. Tract 1042, p.26.

^{3.} Lajpat Rai's speech at the All-India Swadeshi Conference, Surat, December 1907. The Indian Nation Builders, p.348.

those members - is the goal of our political aspirations.

- 2) The advance towards this goal is to be by strictly constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing system of administration, by promoting national unity and fostering public spirit, and by improving the condition of the mass of the people.
- 3) All meetings held for the promotion of the aims and objects above indicated must be conducted in an orderly manner with due submission to the authority of those entrusted with the power to control their procedure.

On the other hand, three hundred extremists met under the presidency of Aurobindo Ghosh and reiterated the 1906 resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education and Self-government.² The extremists' meeting appointed a committee to outline future plans, yet it did not issue cohesive directions, and it never met again.

The moderates' Convention reassembled under the name of the All-India Conference with Banerjea as its chairman, and appointed a committee to reconstitute the Congress. The Committee (which consisted of Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Rash Behari Ghosh and Banerjea) met in April 1908 at Allahabad and drew a rigid constitution for the Congress.

3. <u>Indian Review</u>, May 1908, p.400.

^{1.} The Surat Congress, I.O.L. Tract 1042. Appendix I, The Convention'.

^{2.} Ibid., Appendix IV, 'The Meeting of the Extremists'.

It specified that the object of the Indian National Congress was the attainment of self-government within the British Empire, to be achieved strictly by constitutional means and by gradual reform of the existing system of administration. 1 Every delegate to the Congress had to express in writing his acceptance of this article of faith of the Congress. 2 In addition, the Constitution laid down disciplinary rules which ensured the exclusion of rebellious members from the Congress.3

In November 1908, Pherozeshah Mehta disclaimed any intentions of receiving the extremists back into the Congress. He emphasised that the cleavage was irreparable and that it became obligatory upon the Congress to purge itself from all elements which marred its loyalty to the Government.4

Above all, A.O. Hume and W. Wedderburn sent their following message of congratulation: "The objects and methods of the Congress set forth in Article One of the constitution, are precisely those with which our movement started when we inaugurated it at the first Bombay Congress in December 1885."

The Congress had thus proved and fulfilled its safety-valve function.

^{1.} The Indian National Congress, Natesan, Madras 1911, B, Article I. Appendix

^{2.} Ibid., Article II.
3. Ibid., Rules 25,26,27.
4. Mehta's letter to Bhupendranath Basu, Indian Review, November 1908, p.808.

^{5.} Indian Review, December 1908, p.968.

CHAPTER V

THE CONGRESS ADRIFT, AND CAPTURED BY THE EXTREMISTS

1908-1920

In his presidential address to the twenty-fourth Congress - or more accurately, the first exclusively moderates' Congress - Rash Behari Ghosh explained the absence of the extremists in the following words: "Those who have gone out of us, were never of us, for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us." He held the extremists responsible for their "political suicide" and emphasised that since the Congress was dedicated to its principle of constitutional agitation, it refused at Surat "to purchase unity at the price of principle and loyalty." He further emphasised that the Congress "could not and dared not extend the hand of fellowship" to the extremists so long as the latter persisted in their policy of disloyalty.

The key note of the 1908 moderates' Congress was its expression of gratitude for the proposed reforms in the Government of India which had been announced two weeks before the Congress convened. The reforms, which were

^{1.} Report of the twenty-fourth I.N.C. Madras 1908, p.34.

^{2.} Ibid.

J. Morley introduced the Indian Reform Bill in the House of Lords on 17 December 1908. The lengthy development of the reforms is discussed in Mary, Countess of Minto, India:

Minto and Morley, Chapters IX-XIV, and in Morley's Recollections, Vol.II, Book V, Chapters I-V. See also S.R.Wasti, Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1962.

embodied in the Indian Councils Act of 1909, enlarged the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils; conceded non-official majorities (of nominated and elected members together) while retaining the official majority in the Centre; and allowed members of the Councils to move resolutions and ask supplementary questions. Two nominated Indians were appointed to the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and one to the Executive Council of the Viceroy. Above all, the reforms recognized the principle of election to the enlarged Legislative Councils, though not through constituencies but through the expanded representation of municipal and district boards, universities, chambers of commerce, landholders' associations; and most portentous they gave the Muslims special electorates.

Expressing the deep satisfaction of the Congress for the proposed reforms, Banerjea described them as "the crowning triumph of constitutional agitation." He exalted Morley as "the author of Parliament in India" and expressed his belief that the reforms would lead to Indian Colonial Self-Government. Gokhale summed up Congressmen's feelings as follows: "Hitherto we have been engaged in what might be called responsible association with the administration.

From agitation to responsible association, and from

^{1.} Report of the twenty-fourth I.N.C. Madras 1908, p.48.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.49. 3. <u>Ibid.</u>

responsible association - a long and weary step but the step will have to come - to responsible administration."1

Yet these interpretations of the reforms were in complete contrast with the ideas of their authors. Both Minto and Morley were convinced that their reforms could by no means lead to the establishment of parliamentary system in India, nor that they could be regarded as a step forward towards Indian self-government. Minto wrote: "I am no advocate of 'representative government for India' in the Western sense of the term. It could never be akin to the instincts of the many races composing the population of the Indian Empire. It would be a Western importation unnatured to Eastern tastes." While Morley explicitly remarked, "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or necessarily to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I for one would have nothing to do with it."3 Notwithstanding Morley's liberal convictions, his image of India was that of a vast country, populated by 300 million people - composite, heterogenous, with different histories, belonging to different races and divided by different religions. 4 Hence his evaluation of the national aspirations

^{1.} Tbid., p.137.

Minto to his wife, 21 March 1907, Mary, Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.110.
 Morley, Indian Speeches, London 1909, pp.91-92, speech at House of Lords on 7 December 1908.

^{4.} Ibid., p.18, speech at House of Commons on 6 June 1907.

of Indians was in a different category to his appreciation of Irish demands for Home Rule. To him, India was far away in the East while Ireland was a part of the United Kingdom. 1 Similarly, he rejected the supposition that India could have self-government similar to that of Canada in terms of "a thoroughly dangerous and hollowest fallacy." Since Morley did not recognize in Indians a nationhood, he did not think it "desirable or possible, or even conceivable, to adopt English political institutions to the nations who inhibit India." Yet his liberal convictions led him to add that the introduction to India of "the spirit of English institutions is a different thing which we cannot escape... Cast-iron bureaucracy won't go on for ever."4 On 7 October 1908 he exclaimed, "What are we in India for? Surely in order to implant - slowly, prudently, judiciously - those ideas of justice, law humanity, which are the foundation of our own civilization."5

Morley's inclination to veer towards a more liberal appreciation of Indians' aspirations was deterred by two factors - the pressure of public opinion of Englishmen in India, and the revolutionary aspect of the Indian agitation in the Punjab and Bengal. When Minto referred to the

^{1.} Ibid.

^{2.} Ibid., p.36.
3. Morley's Recollections, Vol.II, Book V, p.172.

^{5.} Ibid., p.278.

appointment of an Indian Member to the Viceroy's Executive Council, Morley replied: "The fear of reawakening the uproar of the Ilbert Bill days, and so reviving racial antipathy, will be a powerful factor in most minds, as I know it has been in yours and is in mine." During May 1907 Minto's report on the agitation in the Punjab and Bengal indicated the possibility of a revolutionary outbreak, 2 adding that his information from Calcutta pointed to "a nervous hysterical Anglo-Indian feelings... the beginning of much of the same feelings which it is not pleasant to read of in Lord Canning's time during the Mutiny." To which Morley replied: "You may be sure of my firm support, even if the sternest things should unluckily be needed. It may turn out that you will need that support not only against seditionmongers, but also against your "law-and-order" people who are responsible for at least as much fooleries in history as the revolutionists are... But you know the ground too well in Pall Mall and Westminster, and the City of London. for me to need to draw a picture of the forces that will wax active in the various directions."4 The acts of terrorism

Ibid., p.209, and Mary, Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.112, 12 April 1907.
 Mary, Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley, p.123.

^{3.} Ibid., p.127.

^{4.} Ibid., pp.128-129, and Morley's Recollections, pp.215-216.

during December 1907 to December 1908 1 further heightened the fears of Englishmen in India and prompted Minto to request Morley's sanction for repressive measures. Describing the situation to Morley, Minto wrote: "There are European elements in this country capable of self-restraint up to a certain point only, and if there are further outrages we shall have a European outcry creating a position far worse to deal with than the present attempts at anarchy."2 And again, "One cannot but feel that the atmosphere of every day life is electrically inflamed ... if some outrage upon a European is perpetrated in the planters' districts, for instance, I should not be at all surprised at lynching, and some mad action may easily set things in a blaze."5 November he wrote: "What I am always afraid of is... that the European population may be panic-stricken and make an attempt to take the law into its own hands. There is already a hint of this in the Englishman suggesting 'organization for self-defence' ... I am afraid that European public confidence may become dangerously shaken

^{1.} On 7 December 1907, an attempt by bomb was made to derail the train of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, Sir Andrew Frazer. On 23 December 1907, Mr. Allen, formerly District Magistrate of Dacca, was shot. On 31 April 1908, a bomb intended to kill Mr. Kingsford, District Judge of Muzaffarpur, missed his carriage but killed two ladies, Mrs. and Miss Kennedy. The subinspector of police who arrested their assassin - Khurdiram Bose, - was shot dead in Calcutta on 9 November 1908. Rowlatt Report, pp.21-23.

^{2.} Mary, Countess of Minto, <u>India: Minto and Morley</u>, p.234, 28 May 1908.

^{3.} Ibid., pp.247-8, 5 August 1908.

unless we adopt some new machinery... 1 There is a great deal of nervousness everywhere even ladies are buying revolvers."

In view of this emergency Minto prevailed upon Morley to delay the announcement of the reforms in Parliament until the Viceroy's Council passed the repressive legislation and explained, "We must give the medicine first and then do all we can to take the taste away."2

In June 1908, the Newspaper Act had been passed, which gave power to the Government to confiscate presses used for publishing newspapers which incited sedition. In July 1908, Tilak was sentenced to six years imprisonment for his artciles in the Kesari which excused the murders of Mrs. and Miss Kennedy. In October Brahma Bandhab Upadhyay and Bipin Chandra Pal were imprisoned for seditious writings. Aurobindo Ghosh was jailed from May 1908 to May 1909 during his trial in connection with an article on the Muzaffarpur murder.

Yet, since the machinery of trial was considered too slow to deal with the growth of terrorism, Minto introduced the Criminal Law Amendment Act on 11 December 1908 to his Council, which passed it in a single day. It provided for speedy prosecution without jury and prohibited unauthorised

Ibid., p.251, 12 November 1908.
 Ibid., p.255, 30 November 1908.

public meetings. Two days later, ten Bengali leaders, among them Aswini Kumar Dutta, Satish Chandra Chatterjee, and Shyam Sunder Chakravarti were deported.

Thus, in December 1908, repression and reform were enforced and granted at the same time to suppress the extremists and to rally the moderates. 1 Thus too, the 1908 moderates' Congress expressed its "most sincere and grateful thanks" to Morley and Minto for the reforms, 2 while it also condemned the acts of terrorism, 3 and petitioned against the repressive legislations 4 in the same breath.

Having discarded the extremists, and having enforced the disciplinary rules of its constitution, the Congress became an inanimate body. Furthermore, the Indian Councils Act of 1909 deprived the Congress of its main demand - the representation of Indians in the Councils - and thus took the wind out of its sails. Until 1909, the Congress fulfilled the task of criticising the Government of India from without, and, in as much as the Government paid heed to that criticism, it regarded the Congress (at best) as a body which provided a means whereby it became aware of what educated Indians were thinking. From 1909, the enlarged Councils became the advisory bodies. Many Congressmen

^{1.} Morley, Recollections, Vol.II, Book V,pp.266,282,319.
2. Report of the twenty-fourth I.N.C. Madras 1908,

Resolution II.

^{3.} Ibid., Resolution III.

<u>Ibid</u>., Resolutions X and XI.

became Honourable Members of the Councils. They were now in a position to criticise measures of the Government from within; though still without exercising effective control over the policy of the Government. Consequently, their speeches in the Congress merely echoed their speeches in the Councils. From 1908 to 1910 the number of delegates to the Congress dropped, while its proceedings aroused little interest in the Congress movement itself, or in the country.2 By 1908 Swadeshi and Boycott had spent their force. 3 A pamphlet by S.Sankaranarayana - signed "the grateful Indian patriot" - advocated the replacement of the slogan Bande Mataram' by that of 'Bande Matapitarau' (hail to the Mother-Father: Mata - Mother India, Pita - Father England). It depicted England as the guru of India - the source of modern education and influences which taught Indians the idea of patriotism -, and recommended Bande Matapitarau as a broader concept which expressed at once both Indian patriotism and loyalty to England in a spirit of harmony between India and England, instead of the chauvinistic cry of 'Bande Mataram'.4

As an aftermath to the affray in Surat, P. Chandra Roy, editor of the Indian World wrote: "We must realize the

 ⁶¹⁷ in 1908; 243 in 1909; 636 in 1910.
 C.Y.Chintamani, <u>Indian Politics Since the Mutiny</u>, p.84.
 V.G.Kale, "The Breakdown of Boycott", <u>Indian Review</u>, June 1908, p.893.

^{4.} S. Sankaranarayana, Bande Matapitarau. Madras 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1050.

ideal of discipline before we can hope to realize the greater ideal of Swaraj." But in 1911 he observed that because of its rigid constitution, the Congress had become an exclusive organization which "degenerated into a mere platform for glib oratory and claptrap declamation."2

Yet the Congress adhered to its creed which was reemphasised by Bhupendranath Basu thus, "We desire selfgovernment not by revolution but by gradual evolution and we are prepared to advance steadily and surely, though it may only be slowly." Gokhale expressed the hope in October 1908 that in ten years time, Indians will attain provincial self-government and explained, "It is no use trying to overthrow the present administration before we have something to put in its place."4

On the other hand, Aurobindo Ghosh protested: "Nations that became free did not first convince themselves to be helots and then seek freedom. They denied they were servile, they laid down they were free, would become free, and became free."⁵ He contended that English political ideas of democracy were centred on materialism, and that English temper and culture were the very antipodes of Indian

19 January 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1044.

^{1.} Indian World, January 1908, "The Lesson of Surat",p.103.

^{2.} Ibid., July 1911, p.109.
3. Ibid., January 1908, "The Indian Political Outlook", p.5.
4. W.C.Blunt, My Diaries. London 1919, Vol.II, p.229.
5. "On the Present Situation", speech at Poona on

temper and culture. Hence he concluded, "If India is to model herself on the Anglo-Saxon type she must first kill everything in her which is her own." He blamed the moderates for the Surat split and asserted that the extremists fought at Surat against the oligarchic and arbitrary rule of the moderate leaders, whose insistence on their self-veneration, their obstinacy, reactionary conservatism and parochial policy, stifled the national movement. He further blamed the moderates for having framed the rigid constitution which prevented the admission of popular leaders to the Congress and rendered it an undemocratic body. Apprehending the possibility of his deportation, he published "An open letter to his Countrymen", in which he expressed his last political will and testament to his countrymen. 2 In it he reiterated his definition of Swaraj as "absolute autonomy free from foreign control", to be achieved by passive resistance through the formation of an Indian government in control over internal affairs, with the important new qualification of "so far as that could be done without disobeying the law or questioning the legal authority of the bureaucratic administration."3 Possibly, as a result of reaction from the acts of murder

^{1.} Aurobindo Ghosh, <u>Ideals face to face</u>, May 1908, I.O.L. Tract 1044.

^{2.} Aurobindo Ghosh, An open letter to his Countrymen, Calcutta August 1909, I.O.L. Tract 1050.

^{3.} Ibid., p.2.

committed by the terrorists, or possibly due to his deep religious meditations in jail during his trial between May 1908 to May 1909, or possibly writing his open letter with an eye on the C.I.D., Aurobindo Ghosh strongly condemned the terrorists and stressed that the struggle of Indians for their rights must conform with no hatred to the Government established by law. He further moderated his earlier advocacy of revolution by explaining that the extremists were not committed to persistent refusal of cooperation with the Government unless and until they got Swaraj, but that they were ready to compromise and cooperate on the basis of progressive steps towards Swaraj. 2

Bipin Chandra Pal also modified his previous uncompromising assertions, by explaining that passive resistance did not deny the British Government of India its right to rule, but only sought to safeguard the right of the individual against the excessive exercise of administrative authority. He added that the Nationalist leaders "have always recognised the futility of political assassination as an instrument for the attainment of political freedom."

Evidently, the repressive measures of the Government, especially the deterrents produced by the deportations of

l. <u>Ibid</u>., p.l.

^{3.} Indian Review, April 1909, "Swaraj", p.294.

the Bengali leaders, the imprisonment of Tilak, and their own experience in jail, led Aurobindo Ghosh and Bipin Chandra Pal to retract their extreme views and to refrain from political agitation.

For the same reasons² and because of the frustrating realisation that the militant movement in the Punjab had been enervated, Lajpat Rai also avoided political activity, and concentrated during 1908 to 1914 on three issues: famine relief, the elevation of Untouchables, and the Hindu-Muslim conflict. On his return to Lahore from Mandalay in November 1907, he organized famine relief work independent of Government support. Visiting famine stricken villages in the Punjab, he supervised the setting up of local centres

certainly support you to the uttermost in again putting his fire out by a douche of deportation." 5 November

1907. Mary, Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley,

p.163.

^{1.} Bipin Chandra Pal left India for England in 1909. He returned to India in 1911, was arrested on charge of sedition for having written an article entitled "The Ethology of the Bomb in Bengal", pleaded for mercy, and was sentenced to one month imprisonment. (Judicial and Public papers 4004/2884, 11 October 1911). He resumed political activity in 1916 when the extremists captured control over the Congress. Aurobindo Ghosh left India in 1910 and settled in Pondicherry where he remained until he died in 1950. In May 1962 Nehru wrote: "When Gandhiji started his non-co-operation movements and convulsed India, we expected Sri Aurobindo to emerge from his retirement and join the great struggle. We were disappointed at his not doing so." Foreword to Karan Singh, Prophet of Indian Nationalism. London, 1963.

2. Following Lajpat Rai's release from Mandalay, Morley wrote to Minto: "If Lajpat opens fire again we shall

from which volunteers (mainly members of the Arya Samaj) distributed money, food, and clothes. His appeal for funds was met by contributions from merchants in Bombay, Delhi, Allahabad, Lahore and various other towns, as well as from Indian merchants in Rangoon, Singapore, Zanzibar and Nairobi. 2 Reviewing the success of the operation, Lajpat Rai stressed the valuable training it provided in self-help, particularly as a lesson in breaking away from dependence on the Government. 3 In the Swadeshi Conference held in December 1907 at Surat, he developed this theme as follows: "The highest dictates of patriotism require that we should help the destitute and the wretched. By sharing what has been given to us with our countrymen in distress, we should conclusively establish our claims to speak for them and to demand their co-operation with us in the ensuing struggle. Our claim to their regard should be based upon substantial services and not merely on lip-sympathy expressed in paper resolutions."4

At the same time, he condemned the hankering of Westernized Indians after Western materialism, band asserted

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, Report of People's Famine Relief Movement of 1908. Lahore 1909, I.O.L. Tract 1098.

^{2.} Ibid., the total amount of contributions reached Rs.44,842.
3. Ibid., p.4.

^{4.} Lajpat Rai's speech at the Swadeshi Conference held at Surat in 1907, I.O.L. Tract 1042, p.123.

^{5.} The assumption that in pre-British India, materialism was totally shunned, is inaccurate since both in Hinduism and Buddhism there are references to one's duty to strive for material success. The Jains and the Marwaris, needed no Western impetus for their enterprise in business. Lajpat Rai's denunciation was against the adoption of Western capitalism.

that the exchange of India's heritage, particularly the harmonious structure of the family, to the "noisy and pushfull manners of the West" would result not in the acceleration of India's progress but in retrogression. Reviewing J.N. Farquhar's article "Is Christianity destined to become the religion of India", Lajpat Rai answered in the negative and bitterly denounced "the accursed industrial methods of the West which necessitate the accumulation of so many human souls under one roof in a vitiated atmosphere and then necessitate the enactment of factory laws."²

In his article "The Social Genius of Hinduism", 3 he asserted that the solution to India's social inequality lay neither in the wholesale imitation of the West nor in the Arya Samajist attempt to bring about the wholesale revival of India's past. He argued that originally the division of the four classes in the Hindu social structure enabled each class to sustain and supplement the other by performing its own separate functions in the framework of mutual interdependence and as parts of the same social organism. In other words, the Brahmans were to teach all, the Kṣatriyas were to protect all, the Vaisyas to produce and trade for all, and the Sūdras to labour for all, while preserving the oneness of the whole of society. Yet, he

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.121.

^{2.} Indian World, June 1908, "Christianity and Hinduism", p.491.

^{3.} Hindustan Review, April 1909, p.311.

went on, the system degenerated due to selfish interests of the Brahmans who instilled invidious social distinctions. Hence he asserted that it was preferable to remove the abuses created by the Brahmans rather than seek inspiration from the model of Western society. Deploring the existence of the Untouchables, he emphasised that it was useless to hope for any Hindu national solidarity as long as there were Untouchables, and urged the immediate need to remove at least the sting out of their name. 1 He contended that the boasted claim of Hinduism for its tolerance became nullified when Indians lacked tolerance to the Untouchables; that the agitation for political rights was trivial in comparison to the apathy towards the monstrosity of untouchability, and charged: "You dare not be uncivil or unkind to Mahomedans or Christians, but you are insolent towards your own people whom you think you can defy without any fear of retaliation."2 He warned that Christianity promised the Untouchables the release from their subjection to the most relentless form of social tyranny and that the Untouchables were turning their backs upon their Hindu oppressors by embracing Christianity. In 1912 Lajpat Rai visited shacks of Domes (one of the lowest Untouchable castes in the United Provinces) together with high-caste

^{1.} Indian Review, May 1909, "The Depressed Classes", p.400. 2. Modern Review, July 1909, "The Depressed Classes", p.40.

Arya Samajist friends, ate their food and drank their water, and admitted them to the Arya Samaj. 1 Presiding over the Depressed Classes Conference held at Harwar in March 1913, Lajpat Rai said: "We are today being pressed down by the dead-weight of the ignored depressed classes; we must float or sink with them. In their strength is our strength and in their weakness our fall."2 He urged the abolition of untouchability by advocating the investiture of the sacred thread upon the Untouchables. Protesting against their oppression he continued: "No greater wrong can be done to a human being ... than to put him in circumstances by the force of which he may come to believe that he is eternally doomed to a life of ignorance, of servitude and misery, and that any ambition for his improvement is a sin... I am a Hindu and a firm believer in the doctrine of Karma, I also believe that everyman makes his own Karma and is thus the arbiter of his own destiny."4

In addition to his attack on Indians' treatment of the Untouchables, he complained that since in India people and state (Indians and the British Government of India) were not one and the same, the Government did not recognize the responsibility of the state to provide the people with

Lajpat Rai's speech "On the upliftment of the Depressed Classes", Lahore 1914, I.O.L. Tract 1110, p.27.
 Presidential speech of Lajpat Rai in the Depressed

Presidential speech of Lajpat Rai in the Depressed Classes Conference, Lahore 1913, I.O.L. Tract 1110, p.8.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.16.

free elementary education, housing for the poor, old age pensions, and wider diffusion of wealth. Thus, while Lajpat Rai condemned Western materialism, he sought the benefits of the European welfare state. In fact, he endeavoured to combine the principles of the Arya Samaj with Western ideals of socialism, and believed that it was possible to derive advantage from the gains of the West and yet remain immuned against its defects.

In view of the concession in the Indian Councils Act of 1909 for separate electorates to the Muslims, Lajpat Rai held the Congress responsible for having failed throughout its existence to protect the interests of the Hindus.² The Muslims were a minority in India but formed the majority in the Punjab, hence he believed that the Hindus were elbowed out by the Muslims, and he reiterated his contention that the Congress should be a Hindu movement in name and in fact. 4 In 1906 Lajpat Rai wrote: "It is my firm conviction that Hindus shall never cease to be Hindus, and Mahomedans shall never cease to be Mahomedans. Their religious ideals are so different that it is impossible to expect a complete union. But they could make common cause in politics since they have common grievances against non-Indians." Yet in December 1909, he observed in the Punjab

^{1.} Indian Review, October 1908, "Social Efficiency", p.691.
2. Punjabee, 29 June 1909.

<u>Ibid.</u>, 1 July 1909. <u>Ibid.</u>, 13 October 1906, in Home Prog. 7590, July 1907.

Hindu Conference, that the attempt of the Congress to bring about unity between Hindus and Muslims failed, and that it was essential for Hindus to close their own ranks first and cease to raise "the parrot cry of Indian unity." He declared, "In the present struggle between Indian communities I shall be a Hindu first and an Indian afterwards." Nevertheless, he emphasised that the "political salvation of India must come out of a combination and union of all communities into one national whole." In 1911 when hostile feelings between the Arya Samaj and Muslims were intensified, he established the Hindu Elementary Education League whose aim was to promote the study and use of Hindi. He revived the Urdu-Hindi controversy and urged Punjabis to boycott Urdu literature.

In April 1914 Lajpat Rai went to England with the intention of staying there some months, but his return to India was disallowed until February 1920.

Banerjea went to England in May 1909 as the representative of the Indian Press to the Imperial Press Conference. He thanked Lord Morley who presided over a session of the Conference for the reforms, and expressed his belief that they were bound to give Indians "a definite, effective and real measure of self-government", but again

^{1.} Indian Review, December 1909, p.932.

^{2. &}lt;u>lbid</u>.

^{4.} P.N.N.R. Zamindar (Lahore) 24 August 1911.

^{5.} Surendranath Banerjea, The Trumpet Voice of India, Speeches Delivered in England in 1909. Madras 1917, p.15.

qualified Indian self-government in terms of "the cement of the Empire" and added, "it is not inconsistent with the paramountcy of British rule in India." After the close of the conference Banerjea delivered speeches in several places. 2 in which he urged the modification of the partition of Bengal and pleaded for Indian control over the Indian budget. On 1 July 1909 Sir William Curzon-Wyllie, Political Secretary at the India Office, was assassinated in London. Banerjea promptly expressed in public meetings and in the Press his sense of detestation, and continued the theme of partitioned Bengal, but the murder of Sir William Curzon-Wyllie put Englishmen in no mood to hear about Indian grievances. Banerjea adduced this reason for his failure to persuade Morley to release the Bengali deportees. Morley described the interview to Minto as follows: "B. nearly made me cascade with his compliments - their Guru, a Great Man, then (by noble crescendo) the Greatest Man since Akbar!!! I hope he'll balance the little account between us two, by swearing that you are far Greater than Aurungzebe."4 In his last public speech at Caxton Hall before his return to India, Banerjea regretted the apathy of the British public towards India and appealed for Englishmen's support by reiterating his

l. Ibid., 30.

^{2.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.268-282.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.275. 4. Morley's <u>Recollections</u>, Vol.II, Book V, p.313.

contention that the electors of Great Britain were the real rulers of India. On his return to India, Banerjea revived the idea of holding a session of the Congress in London and opined that it would create a profound impression in England. In contrast to Banerjea's optimism, Lord Curzon thus expressed the need to retain India under Imperial rule: "If you have an Empire you must have Imperialism, Imperialism being the essence or spirit of Empire... Were India to be lost, she herself would reel back into chaos, and the British Empire, at any rate in Asia, would perish." He emphasised that India was the only part of the British Empire which was an Empire and that but for India and the maintenance of her security, Britain would not have extended her rule to Egypt, Aden, or the Cape, Mauritius, Ceylon and Burma. He frankly acknowledged that the abundant population of India supplied the vital labour force for the plantations of Trinidad and Jamaica and for the mines of South Africa, while the Indian army fought British battles and safeguarded the British Empire in Asia. 5 Hence he concluded in emphasising that British rule in India "must

5. Ibid., p.24.

Speeches and Writings of the Hon. Surendranath Banerjea. ed. G.A.Natesan, Madras 1918, p.360.
 Indian Review, October 1909, "A Session of the Congress

in London", pp.721-722.

3. Lord Curzon's speech on "The True Imperialism", The

Nineteenth Century and After, January-June 1908, p.158.
4. Lord Curzon, "The Place of India in the Empire", Address delivered on 19 October 1909 before the Philosophical Institute of Edinburgh, I.O.L. Tract 1048, p.10.

for as long as we can see remain in British hands."1

Yet for Banerjea, the place of India in the Empire was primarily that of mutual co-operation which was destined to grow into equal brotherhood. His experience in the Imperial Press Conference in which he deliberated with representatives from England, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Burma and Ceylon, on subjects of Imperial unity and Imperial defence, strengthened his belief in the brotherly membership of the Empire. He was entertained at lunches and dinners where "the talk was frank, cordial and free from reserve and restraint."2 He was introduced to prominent people; was greatly impressed by luncheon entertainment given by the Earl and Countess of Warwick at their castle; he visited among other places, the Foreign Office and Windsor Castle; and gratifyingly noted the compliments he received for his speeches. 4 In short, he felt an equal member of the British Empire, and was convinced that India too was to become an equal partner in the Empire.⁵

In November 1910 Lord Hardinge succeeded Lord Minto as Viceroy, while Lord Crewe was appointed Secretary of State for India in succession to Lord Morley. On 12 December

Ibid., p.39.
 Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.261.
 Ibid., pp.262-263.

Ibid., p.266.

1911, at the Delhi Durbar of King George V and Queen Mary, was announced the modification of the partition of Bengal, by which the two areas of Bengal were reunited, while Calcutta was replaced by Delhi as the new capital. At the same time, the Government of India published its Dispatch to the Secretary of State in which it pointed out that "in the course of time, the just demands of Indians for a larger share in the Government of the country will have to be satisfied, and the question will be how this devolution of power can be conceded without impairing the supreme authority of the Governor General in Council", and suggested, "gradually to give the Provinces a larger measure of self-government until at last India would consist of a number of administrations, autonomous in all provincial affairs, with the Government of India above them all."

The Delhi Durbar, the unification of Bengal, and the Dispatch, greatly pleased the moderates. Banerjea claimed that the modification of the partition of Bengal was the triumph of constitutional agitation. Notwithstanding Lord Crewe's emphatic assertion in June 1912, that the Dispatch could by no means be construed as a declaration for Dominion Self-Government for India, Banerjea interpreted the Dispatch as follows: "To us these words will be like the column of smoke and the pillar of fire illuminating our path in that

^{1.} Report of the twenty-sixth I.N.C. Calcutta 1911, p.39.

grand march to the promised land where awaits the blessing of Self-Government."1

In January 1913, Banerjea successfully stood for election to the Bengal Legislative Council and to the Imperial Legislative Council. Although under the 1909 Regulations, a dismissed Indian Civil Servant was not eligible for election. Banerjea's disqualification for membership in the Bengal Legislative Council had been removed in 1910 by Sir Edward Baker, Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal, while in February 1913, Lord Hardinge approved Banerjea's election to the Imperial Legislative Council.²

The Nayak thus commented on Banerjea's election: "Surendranath has now again got an opportunity to sit in the Bengal Legislative Council as leader of the unofficial Members. Again will the Council Chamber echo to the sound of his voice, his oratory will sweep torrents, again there will be profuse shedding of crocodile tears at the sorrow of the country and the people. We are reminded at this moment of the old days, of boycott, of Surendranath's resignation from his Honorary Magistrateship; of the efforts to associate boycott with religion; of the ardour with which the Swadeshi vow was administered; of the sonorous speeches made on the banks of the river at Kalighat. We are reminded how Surendranath found out that he bore the

^{1.} Report of the twenty-seventh I.N.C. Bankipur 1912, p.90. 2. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.292-293.

sacred Brahmanical thread, how he exhibited it in public and made an open exhibition of his Brahmanicism. One by one all these things come back to our recollections; how many images of thee, how many different guises are pictured on the mirror of our mind now ... Oh, thou of many guises, of diverse speech who has played many parts, and art the foremost of the Babu community of Bengal, just ponder on thy many guises in the mirror of the past, and just explain to us who thou art and what is thy guise? For twenty years we have been thy follower, but without so far knowing thee for what thou really art ... You are now an Hon'ble Member of Council, going to be courted and honoured like a Prince or a Minister of State. You have put on the mark of loyalty on your forehead and are paying frequent visits to Government House. But do you ever for an instant now think of those whom you stirred up into enthusiasm and fury, whom you brought the ruin in a body? Do they - the men who acted as your humble agents who went to jail having taken part in picketing, who gave up the University which they called "a slave house", who went on strike and gave up service under Government - do they ever now rise before your mind?... Can you give up the ideal which you have held up before the people, to their ruin? As our senior in age you are worthy of all respects, but know that you cannot retain your old influence over Bengalis. People have come to know you for

what you really are"... When the policy of 'rallying the Moderates' was taken up by Lord Minto, the full measure of these men [Banerjea and Ambica Charan Mazumdar] was revealed. All these have opened the eyes of their countrymen. Whatever value Government may put on their pretentions their compatriots have long ago found out that they are mere asses in lion's skin."

Banerjea remained in the Imperial Legislative
Council from 1913 to 1916, when he lost his seat to
Bhupendranath Basu. During 1913 to 1914, he moved resolutions
which recommended the separation of judicial and executive
functions in the administration of criminal justice; the
modification of the 1910 Press Act whose provision for high
security from offending newspapers led to their extinction; and the extension of local self-government to allow Municipal
Councils to elect their Chairman, to exercise independent
control over their budgets, and to form village panchayats
with power to manage sanitation and schools.

The resolutions were defeated by the official majority in the Council.

It was this feeling of frustration - of having

^{1.} B.N.N.R. Nayak, 10 January 1913 (Written by the editor Birendra Chandra Ghosh).

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, 14 January 1913. See also the <u>Dainik Chandrika</u> of 3 January 1915.

^{3.} Speeches and Writings of Hon. Surendranath Banerjea. ed. G.A.Natesan, Madras 1918, pp.204-210.

^{4. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.162-174. 5. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.175-185.

the ability to move resolutions only to realise they were of no avail - which rendered the 1909 reforms a disappointment for Congressmen.

Yet the main grievance which sustained the otherwise emasculated Congress was the racial discrimination of Indians in South Africa. In 1911, when Gandhi reported to the twenty-sixth session of the Congress on the discrimination of Indians in South Africa, and in 1912. when Gokhale returned from South Africa and described 2 Gandhi's Satyagraha, the protest resolutions of the Congress against the abusive treatment of Indians in South Africa were the resolutions which sparked life into the otherwise dormant proceedings of the Congress. In November 1913, Lord Hardinge too expressed the deep and burning sympathy of Indians for the passive resistance of their compatriots in South Africa. The key note of the 1913 Karachi Congress was the South African question. In addition to Congressmen's natural sympathy for Indians in South Africa, the main reason for their protests was the realisation that Indians lacked equal citizenship both in South Africa and in India. "Indian Nationalism grew to its strength in Africa."4

1930, p.78.

^{1.} Report of the twenty-sixth I.N.C. Calcutta 1911, pp.107-110.

^{2.} Report of the twenty-seventh I.N.C. Bankipur 1912, p.58.

^{3.} Lord Hardinge, My Indian Years, London 1948, p.91. 4. Edward Thompson, The Reconstruction of India, London,

In May 1914, Gandhi and Lajpat Rai were the proposed candidates for the presidency of the twenty-ninth session of the Congress to be held in Madras. Gandhi returned to India in December 1914 but was to refrain from political activity for a year.

Lajpat Rai declined the invitation to preside over the Madras Congress and explained in his letter from England² that contrary to the belief of Congressmen in Madras, he had not reconciled his political opinions with those of the Congress. He added that since the Congress was affected by fear of the Government and fear lest it would offend the Muslim members, its language was that of humility and helplessness, and since his intention was to denounce the leaders of the Congress who obtained membership in the Councils, it was inexpedient for him to preside over the Congress, while the prospect of discussing ordinary platitudes in a presidential speech merely to gain honour, did not appeal to him.

Although the Madras Reception Committee initially recommended Lajpat Rai for the presidency, on second voting, Dinshaw Wacha, Subramanya Tyer, G.A.Natesan, Nawab Syed Mohamed and Fazul Haque succeeded in exerting pressure on the committee to disown Lajpat Rai. Justifying this

^{1.} The Hindu of Madras, 14 May 1914.

^{2.} The Tribune, 14 November 1929, "Congress Politics in 1914".

^{3.} Ibid.

action, Subramanya Iyer explained that since Lajpat Rai was persona non grata to the Government and to the Muslims, his election to the presidency was inopportune. In fact, Muslim members of the Congress warned that they would not attend the session if Lajpat Rai presided. Thus Lajpat Rai's nomination was both turned down and rejected, and Bhupendranath Basu was elected instead. Furthermore, Annie Besant's proposal in the Subjects Committee of the 1914 Congress to change Articles I and II of the constitution in order to admit the extremists back to the Congress was rebuffed by Pherozeshah Mehta.

The 1914 Congress pledged its whole-hearted support to England in the war. Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, attended the Congress when the resolution of unswerving allegiance to England was passed. Supporting the resolution, Banerjea emphasised that the Congress would not trade in its loyalty to England.⁴

During 1914-1915, Banerjea addressed over thirty public meetings in which he advocated recruitment for the defence of the Empire.⁵

In contrast, Lajpat Rai asserted that Indians should not support England in the war as mercenaries. 6 In the

^{1.} Ibid.

^{2.} P.N.N.R. Jhang Sial (Lahore) 28 October 1914.

^{3.} B.N.N.R. Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31 December 1914. 4. Report of the twenty-ninth I.N.C. Madras 1914, p.99.

^{5.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.300.
6. Tribune, 14 November 1929 "Congress Politics in 1914".

introduction to his autobiography, written in November 1914 in New York, he praised terrorists in India for their "valour and patriotic sacrifice". In particular, he extolled the avengement on Narendra Gossain (the approver in the Alipur conspiracy case who was murdered in jail by two revolutionists who were later executed) in terms of "a day will come when people will take wreaths of homage to their statues."2 Furthermore, he wrote: "The bomb thrower on Lord Hardinge did a memorable act unique for its valour."³ He regretted that the secret societies lacked the support of wealthy people and that their revolutionary acts were regarded by the masses as sheer madness. Asserting that the revolutionists "spread the gospel of freedom", he deplored the fact that educated Indians regarded their efforts as futile and detrimental to India, charged them with selfishness and cowardice, and concluded, "they [educated Indians] desire liberty but they are not prepared to make any sacrifices for it. If the British declared they would quit India in a week's time, 90% of them would send petitions begging of them not to be forsaken... they were brought up in comfort and fear the hardships entailed in political unrest and revolution ... they profess desire for 'liberty' but they prefer to continue to enjoy

^{1.} Rowlatt Report, p.22. 2. Lajpat Rai, <u>Autobiography</u>, p.4.

their comfort though it means continuance to wear the badge of slavery. They are slaves to lucre, status and comfort...

Those who blame the extremists party for 'having injured the cause' by prompting Government repression, do not realise that under foreign rule, peace unalloyed by repression would be fatal. The political consciousness created by the extremists in a decade could not have been created by the moderates in half a century. For a subject nation, nothing is more fatal than peace ... liberty cannot be won without sacrifice."

Yet it would be wrong to infer from Lajpat Rai's praise for the terrorists that he approved of their aim to oust the British out of India. In August 1907, Minto had written to Morley that Lajpat Rai was connected in a revolutionary plot with the Amir of Afghanistan, but no proof of this charge was ever furnished. The Englishman published the allegation on 10 September 1908, and in a suit against the Englishman, the Calcutta High Court awarded Lajpat Rai Rs.15,000 damages for libel. In November 1914, Lajpat Rai was invited by two members of the Ghadr party - Chandra Chakravarti and Heramba Lal Gupta - to a meeting of Indian students of their Hindustani Association in New York, in which Chakravarti gave an

^{1.} Ibid., p.8.

^{2.} Mary, Countess of Minto, India: Minto and Morley,p.251.
3. Indian Review, July 1909, p.555.

anti-British and pro-German speech. When pressed to speak, Lajpat Rai said: "I am an Indian patriot and I wish freedom for my country. I have no sympathy with the Germans nor have anything against them. Considering our present circumstances we will rather stay in the British Empire as a self-governing part than go out to be governed by another nation." At another meeting of Ghadr members, Lajpat Rai was told by one Baikal Ultab that a rebellion was imminent in India, that it will be backed by the Amir of Kabul, and that Lajpat Rai should co-operate without fear, since India would be free in three months time. To this, he answered that he wished neither the Amir nor the Germans in India, and called Baikal Ultab a fool and a liar.²

In December 1914, Lajpat Rai was approached by
Heramba Lal Gupta in Boston, and was informed by him that
the Germans were eager to have his support on any terms of
agreement, and asked whether he would co-operate. To which
he answered "No!" At Los Angeles, Heramba Lal Gupta again
pressed Lajpat Rai, and on German instructions offered him
the leadership of the Indo-German organization. It was
again flatly refused. In December 1915, Lajpat Rai attended

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, Recollections of his life and work for independent India while living in the United States and Japan. ** York 1919, p.2.

(For the background of Chandra Chakravarti and Heramba Lal Gupta and their revolutionary conspiracies with German agents, see Rowlatt Report pp.52-53).

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.6. 3. <u>Ibid</u>., p.10.

^{4.} Ibid.

a meeting of Indian students in New York, in which his few words of greetings were interpreted by the Chairman, Ram Chandra Mazumdar, as an indication of his sympathy with the Ghadr movement. Yet this was strongly repudiated by Lajpat Rai who protested against his having been tricked and misrepresented by Ram Chandra Mazumdar. In 1916, Chandra Chakravarti was appointed head of the Ghadr party in America, and on his return from Germany was instructed to persuade Lajpat Rai to go to Germany, but again the offer was rejected. 2

In assessing the revolutionists in America, Lajpat Rai disparaged their idea of liberating India by means of German help, and expressed his conviction that in the very remote chance of its success, German rule would prove far worse than British rule. He concluded in observing that the Ghadr leaders brought nothing but discredit to their cause both in America and Germany, that they embezzled their funds, and opined that they would have been the worst possible rulers had India fallen into their hands.³

Notwithstanding the unsuccessful attempt to enlist Lajpat Rai to the Ghadr party, the Indian Nationalist Committee at Leipzig, published in 1917 his article entitled

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.34 (for Ram Chandra Mazumdar's part in Ghadr, see Rowlatt Report, pp.52-53).

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.38.

^{3.} Ibid., pp.44-48.

"Reflections on the political situation in India" with the following introduction: "Insulted and disillusioned India will realise frustration after the war and will tread upon the red path of revolution to complete the work begun by the patriots who waged the first war of Independence in 1857. Lajpat Rai's 'Reflections' is a warning and assertion that nothing short of organized armed force will free the helpless millions of India from the murderous tentacles of the British octopus." In the article, Lajpat Rai described British rule as tyrannical and oppressive, noted that neither the moderates nor the extremists desired the immediate severance of India from British rule, and continued, "the spread of revolutionary ideas and the development of the movement for independence will not be stopped... 2 Repression only intensifies the discontent... 3 India has entered on a new phase, her sons have begun to feel that it is worth while to die in the cause of freedom ... They die in order to show their countrymen the path to liberation."4 On the other hand, he belittled the hopes of the moderates to receive administrative concessions after the war, and added that if they were to be granted, they

^{1.} Lajpat Rai's article was written in Lahore in 1914 before his departure to England and America.

^{2.} Lajpat Rai, Reflections on the political situation in India, Lahore 1914, ed. and published by the Indian Nationalist Committee, Leipzig 1917, p.4.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.16.

^{4.} Ibid., p.21.

will be given in a spirit of a master who rewards his servant or slave for his good behaviour.

In India, the enthusiastic expression of the 1914 Congress of support for England in the war, was dimmed by the end of 1916. The war and its many-sided effects produced a complete transformation in the attitude of Indians towards British rule and towards the hitherto acknowledged superiority of the West.² The change coincided with the death in 1915 of the three most prominent leaders of the moderates: Pherozeshah Mehta, Gokhale and Subramanya Tyer. The 1915 Congress was still dominated by the moderates, yet bereft of Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, it could no longer keep out the extremists who entered the Congress in 1915 and swelled its ranks.³

In the presidential address of the 1915 Congress, Satyendra Sinha urged "a frank and full statement of the policy of the Government as regards the future of India", 4 in order to satisfy the new generation of young Indians. He stressed that the goal of Indian self-government should be attained in gradual stages and that Indian patriotism could be reconciled with India's partnership in the British

^{1. &}lt;u>Tbid.</u>, p.42.

See Percival Spear, <u>India</u>, University of Michigan Press 1961, Chapter XXXI, pp.337-346.
 In comparison with the small number of moderate

^{3.} In comparison with the small number of moderate delegates to the Congress during 1908 to 1914, the number in 1915 was 2,259.

^{4.} Report of the thirtieth I.N.C. Bombay 1915, p.23.

Empire. Looking back, the presidential address of Sinha was "the swan song of the old moderate leaders."1

At the 1915 Congress, Annie Besant tried to enlist the support of the Congress to form a Home Rule League. Her attempt failed due to the opposition of Banerjea who argued that the formation of a Home Rule League would overlap and weaken the Congress. 2 After the death of Pherozeshah Mehta, Gokhale and Subramanya Iyer, Banerjea became the most important leader of the moderates. But his opposition to the Home Rule League marked the last successful move of the moderates to check the ascendancy of radicalism in the Congress. In September 1916 Annie Besant formally established her Home Rule League. Banerjea's refusal to join it resulted in the first serious phase of his descending popularity. Yet, as he explained, "I had helped to build up the Congress. It was a part of my life work, my pride and my privilege, and it was not in me to do aught which, in my opinion, would weaken its influence."3

At the 1916 Lucknow Congress, the extremists headed by Tilak, Gandhi, Annie Besant and Bipin Chandra Pal, wrested the control of the Congress from the moderates. "The Congress", Tilak declared, "had done its work as a deliberate body". 4 He called for action and voiced the

T.Walter Wallbank, India in the New Era, University of Southern California 1951, p.100.
 Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.237.

^{3.} Ibid., p.238. 4. Report of the thirty-first I.N.C. Lucknow 1916, p.85.

demand of the Congress for Home Rule, i.e. India to be a self-governing Dominion in which Indians would have control over the Central Legislative Council with the exception of military matters and foreign affairs, and complete Indian control over all matters in the provincial governments. Both the Congress and the Muslim League pressed jointly for these demands.

Until 1915 the moderates' Congress voiced national aspirations but it was an exclusive body whose watchword was caution. From 1916, the Congress was still composed of lawyers, journalists, teachers and merchants, yet, under the control of the extremists it became the national forum and constituted the vanguard of militant nationalism.

During the first six months of 1917, Annie Besant stirred an all-India campaign for Home Rule. Her arrest in June 1917 aroused widespread protests which intensified the agitation for Home Rule.

In view of this forceful agitation and in view of the change produced by the war, the Government could no longer depreciate the Indian demands. The Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, had posed the ever argued questions "What is the goal of British rule in India and what are the steps on the road to that goal?", and after much debate, the Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu declared on

^{1.} Cambridge History of the British Empire, Vol. V. Cambridge University Press 1932, p.587.

20 August 1917 in the House of Commons: "The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of 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." For the first time British policy concretely envisaged national parliamentary government to an Indian Dominion. Yet the declaration added the qualification that the realisation of this goal will be achieved by successive stages whose time and measure will be determined by the British Government and the Government of India.

The 1917 Calcutta Congress met under the glow of the August declaration. It was presided over by Annie Besant whose election to the presidency was a successful challenge to Banerjea's leadership in Bengal. The session clearly marked the undisputed control of the extremists over the Congress under the leadership of Lokamanya Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and C.R.Das.

When the Montagu-Chelmsford Report was published on 8 July 1918, Annie Besant denounced its provisions for the gradual transfer of power as "unworthy to be offered by

^{1.} Reginald Coupland, <u>India: A Re-Statement</u>, p.lll.
2. Hamendranath Das Gupta, <u>Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das</u>.
Delhi 1960, p.35.

England or to be accepted by India." In the special conference of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee held on 11 July 1918, Banerjea advocated the acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Report, while C.R.Das led the majority decision of the conference to reject the proposed reforms. Henceforth Banerjea's partial command in Bengal over national decisions was taken over by C.R.Das. 2 A special session of the Congress was called in August 1918 at Bombay to criticise the inadequacy of the proposed reforms. Banerjea had asked the postponement of the session in an attempt to avert a schism between the moderates and the extremists, but his request was refused. From Surat 1907 to Bombay 1918, the tables had been turned upon him. He left the Congress and headed the separate All-India Moderates! Conference which convened on 1 November 1918.

Describing his sad feelings on leaving the Congress, Banerjea wrote: "We had contributed to build up the great National Institution with our life-blood. We had raised it up from infancy to adolescence, from adolescence to maturity, and now, in full view of the crowning reward of our lifelong labours, we found the sacred temple of national unity swayed by divided counsels, resounding with the voice of conflict and controversy, and divorced from the healing accents of

^{1.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.305.
2. Hamendranath Das Gupta, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das,p.36.
3. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.306.

moderation and prudence. We could not but secede; for the difference between those who captured the machinery of the Congress and ourselves was fundamental."

In his presidential address to the All-India Moderates' Conference, Banerjea defined the Moderate party as "the friends of reform and the enemies of revolution."2 He called upon moderates "to grasp the Government hand of fellowship" with enthusiasm, and to recognize the August declaration as the epitome of Britain's mission in India. He asserted that the declaration constituted the fulfilment of the aspirations of Dadabhai Naoroji, W.C.Bonnerji, Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, and stressed (in what must have been an expression of his personal feelings) that the acceptance of the declaration was a unique chance to realise one's hopes and efforts in one's lifetime. He explained the secession of the moderates from the Congress in terms of an unavoidable move which resulted from the fact that the moderates acknowledged the qualification of gradual advances in correspondence to gradual proof of fitness, and emphasised "there is no short-cut to constitutional developments in politics." He contended that the soundness of the moderates' position was unquestionable since it was

^{1. &}lt;u>Tbid</u>., p.307.

^{2.} Presidential address of the Hon.Surendranath Banerjea at the All-India Moderates' Conference. Bombay November 1918, p.1.

^{3.} Ibid., p.21.

supported by the British Committee of the Congress and warned that unless the proposed reforms were accepted, they might be lost altogether. Banerjea was still thinking in 1918 in terms of the cautious 1895 Congress. but though he did not visualise India as a complete independent state, he envisaged 1947 when he observed: "The Reform will mark the indissoluble union between England and India, by making India an equal partner in the great confederacy of the free states of the Empire." Concluding his presidential address Banerjea urged the moderates' conference to send "the best men, representing the culture, the wealth, the public spirit of India, to plead before the bar of British public opinion to support the scheme."2

Accordingly, in May 1919, Banerjea led the moderates' deputation to England to give evidence before the Joint Select Committee. Other members of the deputation included Shrinavasa Shastri, C.Y.Chintanami and Tej Bahadur Sapru. In London, Annie Besant who had veered to the moderates, was "a tower of strength to the deputation". Tilak who was also in London, gave evidence before the Joint Select Committee and was anxious to support the proposed reforms. 4 In fact by 1919, Tilak proved the observation he had made in 1907 that "the Extremists of today will be

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.23.

Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.322. Ibid., p.321.

Moderates of to-morrow, just as the Moderates of to-day were the Extremists of yesterday." While the details of the proposed reforms were worked out in London, in India the recommendation of the Rowlatt Report to try seditious cases without juries or witnesses was enacted in January 1919.

"The Rowlatt Act was the parent of the Non-Co-operation movement." Mahatma Gandhi's declaration of hartal, his arrest, the riots in the Punjab, the Amritsar massacre and above all the vote of approval of repression by the House of Lords, resulted in Gandhi's insistence upon disassociation from the "Satanic" Government of India.

In February 1920 Lajpat Rai returned to India and was elected in September president of the special Calcutta Congress. During his stay in America, from 1916 Lajpat Rai actively propagated Home Rule for India. He argued that even in the event of independent India splitting up into a number of political units, this was still preferable to remaining under the political, physical and economic emasculation of British rule. He argued (inaccurately) that while English political ideas negated the totalitarian philosophy of Heinrich von Treitschke, in India, British rule acted upon the doctrines of the Prussian professor

^{1.} Tilak's speech, "The Tenets of the New Party" Calcutta, 2 January 1907. I.O.L. Tract 1010.

^{2.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.300.

^{3.} Lajpat Rai, Young India, an interpretation and a history of the nationalist movement from within. New York, 1916, pp.17-41.

since the interests of the people were overridden when they clashed with the interests of the state. He pointed out that under Muslim rule, the Muslims had no Lancashire-like industries to protect, nor had there been an India Office in Arabia or Persia, while under British rule, India for the first time in her history was ruled from the outside by an alien race, with the result that "for the first time in the political history of India it has become a political disqualification to be an Indian." In 1919 he denounced the moderates for having justified their acceptance of the Montagu -Chelmsford Report by stressing the need for patience and sobriety, scorned their timid argument that excessive criticism of the proposed reforms might result in their complete retraction, and emphasised that the reforms were to be conceded not as a matter of favour but because the pressure of circumstances in India made it no longer possible to postpone them. Moreover he asserted that even if the proposed reforms were to collapse, the outcome would be preferable since they will be either replaced by a more democratic scheme or by a policy of repression which will serve to invigorate the Indian movement for liberty. 3 He condemned the moderates for having traded in the name of

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.48. 2. <u>Ibid</u>., pp.75-78.

^{3.} Lajpat Rai, A Call to Young India. India Home Rule League, New York 1919, in India's Will to Freedom, a collection of Lajpat Rai writings. Madras 1921, pp.20-22.

patriotism and the masses and for having stigmatized the extremists as 'youngsters'. 'demagogues'. 'firebrands' and for calling the mass agitation 'mobocracy', - the same epithet which the Anglo-Indians had previously applied to the moderates themselves. 1 He protested that though the moderates were in a minority, they desired to rule the majority even more autocratically than when they had been in a majority. 2 Referring to Banerjea, Lajpat Rai wrote: "A leader who puts his own past services and sacrifices in the forefront of his arguments, puts himself in an awkward and somewhat ridiculous position ... Vain boasting of past sacrifices in the cause of the country!"3 And again, "The greatest democratic leader of Bengal is always anxious to keep on the side of the big property holders. He is very happy when they call him the 'Tribune of the People'. His clarion voice gives utterance to beautiful phrases... but when the time comes for lofty action he is always on the side of property, privilege and power ... moderation is good so long as it does not become stale and sterile, excessive moderation is as dangerous to national development and national welfare as excessive extremism. Demagogy is detestable, but for some, applause is the breath of life."4

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp.23-24. 2. <u>Ibid.</u>, p.25.

Ibid., pp.30-31.

While Banerjea could envisage only the limited goal of India as an equal partner in the Empire, Lajpat Rai looked beyond the stage of independence, and asserted that complete independence for India would be disadvantageous so long as Indians lacked the determination to remove their own social and economic oppression. Clarifying his contention, Lajpat Rai wrote: "We want to preach the gospel of social democracy. We know that we cannot fly the flag of socialism ... [but] the present constitution of society is wrong and unjust. It is cruel and barbaric. We want equal opportunity and equal justice for all."2 He emphasised that it was essential to bring about an agrarian reform which would provide each peasant sufficient land to enable him to live a decent life, and added that unless this was accepted as the primary need for India, the question of the transfer of power to Indians remained immaterial, since it would only result in the substitution of one class of capitalist masters by another. 3 In his "Message to Punjabis" on 15 August 1919, he wrote: "We are neither fit nor ripe for a militant revolutionary struggle. We want a revolution but not of force or violence... Organise the middle class, the peasants and the workers. Follow Gandhi!"4 While in his letter to Gandhi, he wrote: "We have to work with them

Ibid., pp.33-34.
 Ibid., p.37.

[peasants and labourers] in a spirit of co-operation and not to work for them in a spirit of patronage." In Marxist terms he declared, "We believe that the ryots and the working men in India and elsewhere are being exploited and robbed by the classes in possession of the means of production and distribution."2 But he emphasised that he had no belief in the Marxist theory that a country must first pass through a capitalistic phase before the proletariat could exert itself, and stressed that Indians should not aim to adopt the European capitalist system based on industrialism. Referring to the proposed Montagu-Chelmsford reforms he contended, "The Government of India is a government of capitalists and landlords of both England and India. Under the proposed scheme, the power of the former will be reduced and that of the latter increased. The ugly feature of the scheme is in the possibility of its giving too much power to the profiteering class, be they the landlords of Bengal and Oudh, or the millionairs of In the same vein he exclaimed, "What are we aiming at? Do we want to copy and emulate Europe even in its mistakes and blunders? Do we want to rise in order to fall? Does the road to heaven lie through hell? We shall not be a

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.69, "The Greatest need of the Country", <u>Young</u> <u>India</u>, 13 November 1919.

^{2.} Lajpat Rai, The Political Future of India. New York 1919, p.53.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.201-202.

^{4. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.202.

party to any scheme which shall add to the powers of the capitalists and the landlords, and will introduce and accentuate the evils of the industrial civilization ... We want to avoid the evils of the class struggle. The only way to meet Bolshevism is to concede to the peoples their rights. Otherwise the discontented and exploited countries will be the best breeding centres for it. India must come to its own soon or else not even the Himalayas can bar the entry of Bolshevism to India. A contented, self-governed India may be proof against it; a discontented, oppressed India would perhaps offer the most fertile field."2

The remarkable new note in Lajpat Rai's writings during 1919-1920 was his advocacy of Hindu-Muslim unity. He urged Muslims and Hindus to take mutual pride in the achievements of Hindu and Muslim heroes and saints and wrote: "If Mother India had an Asoka she had an Akbar too, if she had a Chaitanya she had Kabir also. For every Hindu hero she can cite a Mahomedan hero. We may be as proud of Syed Ahmed Khan as of Ram Mohan Roy and Dayananda." He modified his championship of Hindi and suggested Hindustani as the national language for India.4

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, "The Problem of India", Modern Review, December 1919, p.606.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.202.

^{3.} Lajpat Rai, "The teaching of patriotism", Modern Review, June 1919, pp.628-629.
4. Lajpat Rai, "An All-India scheme and All-India language",

Modern Review, October 1919, p.383.

On his return to India, he pursued his new advocacy of Hindu-Muslim unity and stressed that it should not be adopted as a measure of political expediency. He denounced the moderates' decision to work the 1919 reforms as national treason, and asserted that the co-operation of conquered men in the administration of a conquered country was an admission of the right of the conquerors to rule over the conquered. 2 On the other hand, Banerjea claimed that the moderates saved the reforms "from being wrecked by wild extravagance" and called for constructive work instead of non-co-operation.4

In an attempt to bring about reconciliation between the moderates and the extremists, Lajpat Rai invited the moderates to attend the special Calcutta Congress of September 1920. Banerjea turned down the invitation in the following letter to Lajpat Rai: "You are a convinced Nonco-operationist, most of the Provincial Congress Committees declared in favour of Non-Co-operation. Under the circumstances I feel that my presence at the Congress can serve no useful purpose since mine will be a voice crying in the wilderness."5

^{1.} Lajpat Rai speech "Towards Freedom" in Bombay in

February 1920, in India's Will to Freedom, p.84. 2. Lajpat Rai, "Non-Co-operation", July 1920, ibid., pp.107-110.

^{3.} Report of the second All-India Conference of the Moderate Party, Calcutta, 30 December 1919- 1 January 1920, p.11. 4. Ibid., p.44.

^{5.} The Hindu, 2 September 1920, letter dated 30 August 1920, significantly from Simla.

The key note of the special Calcutta Congress was Gandhi's resolution for complete Non-Co-operation including the boycott of the Legislative Councils. Gandhi impressed upon the Congress that the reforms were "a dangerous trap which concealed gilded chains that enslaved the country", and promised independence in one year provided complete Non-Co-operation was adopted. In the presidential speech, Lajpat Rai avoided his own commitment on Non-Co-operation but in winding up the session he warned that Gandhi's plan would not be practiced effectively and would not succeed in paralysing the Government. However, Gandhi's resolution was approved by a majority vote.

Following the special Calcutta Congress, Lajpat Rai contended that Gandhi's resolution on complete Non-Co-operation was not binding. He urged its application only in a gradual form, and expressed his disapproval of the item to withdraw children and students from Government sponsored schools.

The thirty-fifth session of the Congress met in Nagpur in December 1920 to ratify the Non-Co-operation resolution of the special Calcutta Congress. On the eve of the Nagpur session, Lajpat Rai attempted to form with C.R. Das and Madan Mohan Malaviya an opposition block against

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, 9 September 1920 (There is no Report of the special Calcutta Congress).

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>.

^{3.} P.N.N.R. Bande Mataram, 19 September 1920.

Gandhi. 1 Yet on the opening of the session Lajpat Rai was pressed by the Punjabi delegates to support Gandhi fully or else they would no longer recognize him as the leader of the Punjab. 2 In the session Gandhi declared the following new creed of the Congress, "The object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means."3 supporting this resolution, Lajpat Rai explained that the word Swaraj was deliberately chosen for its ambiguity in order to enable Indians to remain within the projected Commonwealth or to go out of it according to their own preference. "As to the British Empire", he continued, "I would rather be a slave than willingly consent to be a part of an Empire which enslaves so many millions of human beings. I do not want to share the rights and responsibilities of such an Empire."4

While the Nagpur session declared complete Non-Cooperation, the moderates met under the new name of 'The
National Liberal Federation of India' at Madras and passed
a resolution which emphatically disapproved of the policy of
Non-Co-operation.⁵

^{1.} Statesman, 18 November 1928, obituary on Lajpat Rai.

^{2.} Ibid.

^{3.} Report of the thirty-fifth I.N.C. Nagpur 1920, p.47.

^{4. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.52.

^{5.} Report of the third session of the National Liberal Federation of India, Madras 1920, Resolution VI.

In January 1921, when Non-Co-operators were renouncing honorary titles and were resigning from the Legislative Councils, Banerjea was knighted and appointed Minister of Local Self-Government.

The moderates and the extremists were now poles apart.

EPILOGUE

In accepting knighthood and ministerial office. Banerjea incurred severe denunciation. Comments ranged from, "Lucky Sir Surendranath Banerjea, he will now earn Rs.64,000 per annum from the pockets of his starving countrymen"; 1 to, "It will help him to die unhonoured, unwept, and unsung."2 He was called a political imposter, a renegade, and a traitor, and was completely alienated from the nationalist movement. In 1906 Banerjea was the hero of Barisal when he was fined by Mr. Emerson, Commissioner of Dacca Division, yet in 1921, when he toured Bengal as a Minister, a hartal was observed wherever he went, and the same Mr. Emerson came to Barisal to ensure his protection.

In November 1923 Banerjea was defeated in the elections to the Bengal Legislative Council by Bidhan Chandra Roy, an insignificant Swarajist candidate 4 - a fact which patently made Banerjea's defeat all the more humiliating and upon which Banerjea commented: "The dominance of the Swarajists has demoralized the public life of Bengal. The purity of the past is gone. Force and fraud have become determining factors in deciding public issues."5

^{1.} Amrita Bazar Patrika: cited in Englishman, 3 January 1921. 2. P.N.N.R. Sikh (Lahore) 2 January 1921.

^{3.} Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.351-353.
4. Statesman, 25 November 1923 (by 5,688 to 2,283 votes).
5. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, p.382.

Banerjea's A Nation in Making is dedicated "To the memory of the founders and early builders of the Indian National Congress, whose achievements the present generation is apt to forget, but who have placed India firmly on the road to constitutional freedom to be attained by constitutional means." It is interlarded with retrospective remarks such as "The practice of throwing overboard our veterans, of calling them men of yesterday had not yet begun"; 1 "He called me his political guru; but so did many others without his fervour or devotion, and who are [now] too ready to fling mud at their guru"; 2 "We worship our gods of clay and stone in the firm faith that the Divine Spirit dwells therein, but the living gods who move about us and amongst us, doing, daring, dying for the country, are nowhere in our estimation ... A nation that does not know how to honour its heroes does not deserve to have them and will not have them."3

In contrasting his popular election to the Bengal Legislative Council in 1892, with the Non-Co-operation movement, he wrote: "What a change now from those times - what a deterioration in the public life of the province, when mendacity and malice are now the weapons... employed by those who call themselves the apostles of self-government

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.102.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.203.

^{3. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.263-264.

and promise Swaraj to their countrymen! Swaraj means selfrestraint." He exaggeratedly represented his role in the
1905-1906 agitation against the partition of Bengal in the
following terms: "We religiously avoided unconstitutional
methods and the wild hysterics that breed and stimulate
them. Even when attacked by the police, we did not
retaliate. We shouted Bande Mataram at each stroke of the
police lathi, and then appealed to the constituted courts
of law for redress. Passive resistance we practiced. Soulforce we believed in, but we never were under the delusion
that it could be employed to any useful or national purpose,
except by men trained in the practice of self-restraint and
the discipline of the public life."²

Although Banerjea ranked below Pherozeshah Mehta or Gokhale, he was the trumpet voice of the Congress. Whoever presided over the Congress, Banerjea was, session after session, its central figure. The following observation of the Calcutta correspondent of the Madras Standard illustrates Banerjea's role in Bengal: "Mr. Surendranath Banerjea has gone up country on health holiday... Until Mr. Banerjea comes back to town no attempt will be made to send delegates to the National Congress. It is he who goads the lethargic people here to action in this and other political matters. He is in short the main spring of all political

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.125.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.286.

^{3.} C.Y. Chintamani, Indian Politics since the Mutiny, p.68.

action in Bengal."1

Banerjea rejected the charge that he turned traitor by contending: "For self-government, step by step, stage by stage, I have worked through life. I worked for it when really no body in India dreamt of it ... when the Government treated it as a fantastic dream ... Our efforts, persistent, and strenuous, have changed all this ... The message of August 20th is a tribute to our success. We were now invited to co-operate and to join hands with the Government in order to ensure the success of the very thing for which we had been fighting for nearly half a century... Should we have rejected this offer ...? I have no hesitation in saying that it would have been unwise, unpatriotic, almost treacherous to do so ... Therefore ... did I join the Government in a ministerial position ... It is not we who have changed, but the Government which according to its lights, is adopting itself to the rapidly progressive tendencies of modern India."2 And again: "In my case I claim that I have never changed in fundamentals ... In the first years of my public life, it was all opposition - strenuous, persistent and unremitting. But when at last the Government showed signs of an advance to meet the popular demand, and took definite measures towards that end, my opposition gave place to a

^{1.} Bengalee, 3 November 1894. 2. Banerjea, A Nation in Making, pp.390-391.

readiness for co-operation... To oppose where we should co-operate would be the height of unpatriotism; it would be something worse, it would be treason against the motherland."

On the other hand Banerjea criticised the leaders of the Non-Co-operation movement for having stirred mass agitation which bred hatred to political and religious opponents and culminated in Hindu-Muslim feud.²

He justified the acceptance of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms by emphasising that "the ideal must be subordinated to the practical... Evolution is the supreme law of life and affairs. Our environments, such as they are, must be improved and developed, stage by stage, point by point, till the ideal of the present generation becomes the actual of the next."³

His ideal was a self-governing India within the British Empire. "The Empire is yours, but it is also ours", he declared before a meeting of English Rotarians in Calcutta, "You are the natural heirs; we are the adopted children of the Empire." And wrote: "The Imperial civic spirit must have its roots in local patriotism... what is the Empire, but the Commonwealth of a congeries of self-governing nations, each protecting and safeguarding its special interests, with justice to all, and with an eye to

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp.312-313.

^{2. &}lt;u>Ibid</u>., p.302.

^{4.} Ibid. p. 336.

the solidarity of the Imperial system." Throughout his career Banerjea consistently adhered to this ideal.

When he died in August 1925 at the age of seventyseven, he was the last of the veteran Congressmen and was rightly termed "The pioneer and father of Indian Nationalism."2

Lajpat Rai lived until 1928. In October 1920 he was elected president of the first All-India Trade Union Congress in which he declared: "Militarism and Imperialism are the twin children of Capitalism", and called for the organization of labour against Indian capitalists and against the Government. 3 In the 1920 Nagpur Congress he supported Gandhi's resolution for complete Non-Co-operation and during 1921 advocated civil disobedience. Contrary to Banerjea's emphasis on gradual and peaceful advancement, Lajpat Rai stressed that peace and order under British rule amounted to peace of the graveyard. He charged the moderates with treason for having supported Government's repression of the Non-Co-operation movement. He asserted that, "To be loyal to a foreign Government is disloyalty to

^{1. &}lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p.373.

<sup>See Englishman, 7 August 1925, Statesman, 7 August 1925, Times (London) 7 August 1925.
Report of the first session of the All-India Trade</sup>

Union Congress, Bombay 1920, p.18. 4. Lajpat Rai, "Peace and Life", Modern Review, June 1921, pp.743-745.

the country and its people... The moderates are anxious to maintain the present Government even with its shortcomings because they have no confidence in the capacity of the people of India to set up a Government... The moderates think that the country is not ripe yet, nor fit for Swaraj. In their judgement Swaraj means the voluntary gift of the control of Indian affairs by the British Parliament to a handful of educated people." They want 'Reforms' from above, we want to build a National State from below... It is our duty to declare plainly that the form of representative Government which prevails in Great Britain is not our goal; that the European form of democracy which prevails in Europe is not our ideal; and that we should rather be saved from the economic life and ideals of Europe than become rich by adopting them. We want a democracy that will recognize no masters and slaves... we want a democracy in which all will be brothers and co-workers... If the British Government were sincerely anxious to help us to a state of self-government, then the best, the wisest and the most practical thing for it to do would be to leave us free to organize our own Government in our own indigenous way... The British say: 'prove that you are fit to govern yourselves and we shall retire '... But fitness for selfgovernment will come only from power. The measure of our

^{1.} Nationalists versus Moderates, Madras 1921.

power to impose our will on them will be the proof of our fitness... By no fiction can it be postulated that the Indian people are a part of the British nation and citizens of the British Empire... For any Indian nationalist to build any hopes on the English sense of justice, or on English promises and pledges is the merest moonshine and pure delusion... let us once and for all understand that there is no use in deceiving ourselves ... There can be no willing co-operation between a foreign government and a subject people. Let us not hug our yoke to our bosom and be proud of it simply because it is gilded and velveted. The honours they confer on us and the places and the privileges they bestow are the price of our shame and the evidence of our subjection ... One cannot understand how a member of a subject people can make an alliance with the rulers - in order to make their rule more effective - and still claim to be a sincere patriot desiring the freedom of his country. The two things are entirely incompatible and inconsistent. There can be no Empire without dependent and subject peoples."1

In January 1922 Lajpat Rai was imprisoned and was released in September 1923. By April 1925 he became exasperated by the failure of Non-Co-operation and criticised Gandhi for being too much of an idealist with regard to

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, <u>Ideals of Non-Co-operation</u>, Madras 1921, pp.40-112.

Hindu-Muslim relations. While in November 1920 Lajpat Rai called for Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis that "though our religion is different, we live on the same earth and under the same sky, our race and descent are the same, forget the bitter memories of old for the sake of Swaraj,"2 in May 1925 he protested against the gains made by Muslims at the expense of party divisions among Hindus. 3 He was elected president of the Hindu Mahasabha of the Punjab in May 1925. but strongly emphasised that the Hindu Mahasabha should limit its activity to non-political issues, 4 and strove to clarify this reservation in the session of the Hindu Mahasabha on 10 December 1925 as follows: "We are prepared to embrace Muslims as brethren, but in no case, will we allow Muslim or any community to dominate over the other communities in politics."5

On 8 December 1925 Lajpat Rai successfully contested election to the Central Legislative Council. When he entered the Council in 1926 he joined the Swarajist party and was elected its deputy leader, but he repudiated the 'walk in walk out' policy; resigned, and formed with Madan Mohan Malaviya the Independent Party in order to counterpoise the

^{1.} Lajpat Rai, "The Present Political Situation in India",

Hindustan Review, April 1925, pp.240-248.

2. Speech at Rawalpindi, in Lajpat Rai, India's Will to Freedom, p.164.

<sup>Hindustan Review, April 1925, pp.240-248.
The Hindu (Madras) 14 May 1925.
Ibid., 10 December 1925.</sup>

Muslim members in the Council. In pursuing this policy and on his assertion that the Congress should back the Hindu Mahasabha, 2 it may seem that he abandoned the idea of Hindu-Muslim unity. In December 1924 he asserted that the Punjab should be divided on the basis of communal electorate. 2 Magnifying this Choudhary Rahmat Ali wrote: "The Caste Hindu leader, Lala Lajpat Rai ... suggested the partition of India into Hindu India and Muslim India in 1924."4 Yet it would be more credible to rely on the following declaration of Lajpat Rai, which he made in December 1928 at the session of the Hindu Mahasabha: "In my judgement the cry of a Hindu Raj or of a Muslim Raj is purely mischievous and ought to be discouraged. The correct thing for us to do is to strive for a democratic Raj in which the Hindus, the Muslims, and the other communities, may participate as Indians and not as followers of any particular religion."5

In his writings from 1919 he emphasised the need to prevent the development of Indian nationalism into chauvinism, 6 and noted: "The world is tending to become one

^{1.} Ibid., 22 November 1928, and Statesman, 18 November 1928.
2. Ibid., 17 December 1925.

^{3.} Tribune, 21 December 1924. 4. Choudhary Rahmat Ali, Pakistan the Fatherland of the Pak

Nation, Cambridge 1947, p.217.

5. Modern Review, December 1928, p.741.

6. Lajpat Rai, The Political Future of India, p.208, and Modern Review, June 1919, "The teaching of patriotism", p.626.

family. Anyone who aspires or plans to obstruct the process is a traitor to his country as well as to humanity at large... The unity of Asia is going to be brought about by Europe and European thought. Fear of Europe will unite Asia, and then the fear of Asia in its turn will bring about the unity of Europe and Asia." Hence he contended that the future peace of Asia and Europe depended upon whether India remained in bondage or whether she became free, 2 and wrote: "As long as India is under the political and economic domination of the white people... Asia and Africa would remain exploited by Europe. India's political subordination is the key to the political bondage of all the coloured races of the world." Or in other words, "Europe's dominance over Asia virtually began with the conquest of India and God willing will end with her emancipation."4 Yet in declaring his creed, he stressed that the essential problem for India was not how to turn out the British but how to create harmony and union, 5 and in his last written essay came out against the demand for immediate complete independence, because he believed it impeded constructive political and social work, and advocated the acceptance of

Lajpat Rai, The Problem of National Education in India. London 1920, pp.81-84.
 Lajpat Rai, India's Will to Freedom, pp.3-4.

Modern Review, June 1926, p.708.
 Lajpat Rai, Unhappy India: A Reply to Miss Katherin Mayo's Mother India. Calcutta 1928, Introduction XVIII. 5. The People, 25 July 1925.

Dominion status.

On 30 October 1928, the ostracised Simon Commission arrived at Lahore. In defiance of orders which prohibited public demonstrations in or near the railway station,

Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya headed a procession to the station with black flags. On their refusing to disperse, the police charged with lathies and struck Lajpat Rai. The procession was broken up but regrouped and was addressed by Lajpat Rai thus: "Every blow that was hurled at us this afternoon was a nail in the coffin of the British Government."

The assault upon him aggravted his failing health, and he died on 17 November 1928. "He died as he lived, a fighter in the cause of national freedom." 3

In assessing the overall contribution of the moderates and the extremists towards the attainment of India's independence, among other factors, the militant agitation of the extremists rather than the constitutional methods of the moderates brought about the transfer of power in 1947. Yet, taking broadly the whole of India's history, it should be pointed out that the moderates were the real revolutionaries in their successful effort to

^{1.} Modern Review, November 1928. "Complete Political Independence Versus Dominion Status", pp.600-601.

^{2.} Times (London) 31 October 1928.
3. The Hindu, 22 November 1928.

introduce parliamentary democracy to India which was foreign to Indian traditional political ideas and government. In this respect the extremists were traditionalists who sought inspiration from India's past, but again, they accelerated the revolution which was started by the moderates.

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