

Speeches and Writings of  
**GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE**

**VOLUME TWO : POLITICAL**



Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915).

Speeches and Writings of  
**GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE**

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VOLUME TWO : POLITICAL



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## P R E F A C E

Three editions of Gokhale's Speeches and Writings were published by Messrs. G. A. Natesan and Co., of Madras : the first in 1908, the second in 1916 and the third and last in 1920. As there had been no further edition and as the third edition was out of print, the Deccan Sabha of Poona, which is a sister institution of the Servants of India Society and of which Gokhale was one of the founders and first Secretary, thought it would be doing a service to the public if it brought out a new edition of Gokhale's Speeches and Writings, specially as it was understood on inquiry that Messrs. G. A. Natesan and Co. themselves had no intention of republishing the Speeches and Writings. The scheme of publication of the speeches prepared by the committee appointed by the Sabha envisaged the publication of the Speeches and Writings in three volumes : the first to contain Gokhale's economic speeches, the second his speeches on political subjects and the third educational and other. The first volume containing his speeches on the budget and other economic speeches was brought out by the Sabha in 1962. But for several reasons, the Sabha found itself unable to carry the scheme to its conclusion.

The task was then taken over by the Servants of India Society itself which, as is a matter of common knowledge, was founded by Gokhale. The work of editing the volume was entrusted by the Society to a Committee consisting of Prof. D. G. Karve, Shri S. G. Gokhale and Shri D. V. Ambekar (convener).

Making a careful list of all Gokhale's speeches in the legislatures and copying and comparing of the texts of the speeches with the official proceedings were first undertaken so that no speech should be left out and the text printed in this volume may therefore be relied upon as a faithful copy of the original. The first part of this volume containing the speeches delivered in the Legislative Councils is exhaustive and contains everything that Gokhale said, whether in the Imperial or the Bombay Legislative Council, on various subjects that engaged their attention.

In respect of the other speeches included in this volume, however, the policy adopted by the Committee was to include only speeches and writings of which the available texts could be considered reliable, if not authoritative. It had to reject some material which did not appear to answer this description. It may be hoped, however, that the reader will find in the volume a widely representative selection of the many speeches Gokhale made outside the legislature, in India, England, and South Africa.

Special efforts have been made to bring to light some valuable material, which, though historically important, had remained unpublished in earlier selections. To mention only a few instances, the reader will for the first time find in this volume the full texts of Sir C. Y. Chintamani's statement explaining the circumstances in which Gokhale felt constrained to refrain from voting

against the obnoxious Press Act which he fought tooth and nail by every means in his power, and Lord Sinha's letter in the same context (pp.71-74). Gokhale's press statement (pp.37-38) protesting against the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai which, joined to his private efforts, is generally believed to have largely influenced Lalaji's release also belongs to this category. His interview with *The Manchester Guardian* in which he ventilated the reported grievances of the Poona public in regard to the excesses of British soldiers in the course of the enforcement of anti-plague measures and connected papers (pp.160-72) will provide the reader the relevant material which should facilitate a fuller and more informed appraisal of the apology incident. Other examples are : Gokhale's speech on the notorious Crawford case, one of his earliest utterances (pp. 137-42), which drew from *The Times of India* strong criticism for its "trenchancy and vigour" and his statement on the Congress split at Surat (pp. 242-51) which gives a firsthand account of the happenings there.

Brief introductory notes have been given at the beginning of every speech so as to make its context clear. Foot-notes have been given, where necessary, to explain personal and other allusions. Sub-headings have also been inserted at appropriate places, which, it is hoped, will facilitate perusal.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help we have received from the staff of the Servants of India Society's Library and especially the Librarian, Shri M. V. Sovani, by way of prompt supply of necessary reference books. Our special thanks are also due to the Assistant Librarian, Shri V. D. Divekar, who prepared the index purely as a labour of love.

In spite of all possible care on our part it is likely that some mistakes, especially in printing, might have cropped in. If occasion arises to bring out a second edition, every effort will be made to eliminate these defects. Any suggestions from readers to make the work more useful will be gratefully received.

Poona  
February 28, 1966

D. G. KARVE  
D. V. AMBEKAR

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## INTRODUCTION

### GOKHALE AND HIS POLITICS

#### *Spiritual Impact*

Mahatma Gandhi, in his brochure, *Gokhale — My Political Guru*, on p. 55, observes as follows :

It was a case of love at first sight, and it stood the severest strain in 1913. He seemed to me all I wanted as a political worker — pure as crystal, gentle as a lamb, brave as a lion, and chivalrous to a fault. It does not matter to me that he may not have been any of those things. It was enough for me that I could discover no fault in him to cavil at. He was and remains for me the most perfect man on the political field.

One can easily imagine, after a reading of the Political Speeches and Writings of Gokhale, how the innate nobility of his nature, his dedication to the cause of freedom and prosperity for his countrymen, and above all the religious and humanistic spirit in which he did all his public work produced a deep impression on a kindred spirit. Gokhale enunciated in the Constitution of the Servants of India Society what he considered to be the requisites of a public worker in India in the following words :

Public life must be spiritualized. Love of country must so fill the heart that all else shall appear as of little moment by its side. A fervent patriotism which rejoices at every opportunity of sacrifice for the motherland, a dauntless heart which refuses to be turned back from its object by difficulty or danger, a deep faith in the purpose of Providence which nothing can shake — equipped with these, the worker must start on his mission and reverently seek the joy which comes of spending oneself in the service of one's country.

That the emotional and spiritual impact between Gokhale and Gandhi was not one-sided is borne out by the rich meed of appreciation which Gokhale paid to Gandhi almost from the first moment of contact with him. He rarely mentioned Gandhi's name without coupling it with some words of appreciation and respect. The following extract from the record of the 24th session of the Indian National Congress held in Lahore (pp. 417-25) is a typical illustration of the manner in which Gokhale used to refer to Gandhi. At this meeting while proposing a resolution which, among other things, expressed admiration for the patriotism and courage of Indians in South Africa, and offered " warmest encouragement to Mr. M. K. Gandhi and his brave and faithful associates, " Gokhale remarked :

They (Indians in Transvaal) appointed at that meeting a deputation to proceed to England and that deputation was headed by our great and

illustrious countryman, Mr. Gandhi. Fellow-Delegates, after the immortal part which Mr. Gandhi has played in this affair I must say it will not be possible for any Indian, at any time, here or in any other assembly of Indians, to mention his name without deep emotion and pride. Gentlemen, it is one of the privileges of my life that I know Mr. Gandhi intimately and I can tell you that a purer, a nobler, a braver and a more exalted spirit has never moved on this earth. Mr. Gandhi is one of those men, who, living an austere simple life themselves and devoted to all the highest principles of love to their fellow beings and to truth and justice, touch the eyes of their weaker brethren as with magic and give them a new vision. He is a man who may be well described as a man among men, a hero among heroes, a patriot amongst patriots, and we may well say that in him Indian humanity at the present time has really reached its high watermark.

On neither side can the words used by one in describing the other be construed as the mere expression of polite appreciation. Between the two there was an unmistakable bond of mutual understanding and support. It was this intimacy of the soul which made Gokhale say,<sup>1</sup> almost a few hours before his demise in February 1915, to Gandhi that

But whether you are formally admitted as a member or not (in the Servants of India Society), I am going to look upon you as one.

As will be clear from many a passage contained in this publication, in several essential principles and ways of approach to their fellow-men Gokhale and Gandhi reflected each other's standards of judgment and behaviour. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu,<sup>2</sup> who had exceptional opportunities of knowing both Gandhi and Gokhale intimately, spoke of Gokhale as "The great saint and soldier of national righteousness."

It is remarkable that both in Gandhi and Gokhale sympathetic observers marked righteousness as the most outstanding characteristic. Often righteousness is balanced by lack of practical insight and vigour. Neither Gandhi nor Gokhale suffered from this weakness. In response to the respective challenge of their times, and the opportunities of their environment, Gokhale carried on his struggle for the vindication of national righteousness in the legislative chambers of the British overlords in India, and Gandhi marshalled and led to success his disciplined bands of non-violent Satyagrahis in many a pitched battle with the armed forces of Government. The mass appeal and the organizing capacity of the two stalwarts differed in marked degree, but the message which the two sought to convey was identical.

#### *Early Steps*

It is now a hundred years since Gokhale was born and it is half a century since he left the scene of his aspirations and efforts. Of the

<sup>1</sup> GANDHI — *Gokhale — My Political Guru*, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> SAROJINI NAIDU — *Reminiscences of Gokhale*, p. 22.

less than 50 years of his life almost half was spent in active public life. Born in May, 1866, Gokhale lived upto February 1915. It was not till the year 1889, however, that he made his first notable appearance on a public platform. Only three years before that date he had been brought into contact with Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade who was recognized on all hands as the doyen of devoted students of public questions, and of constructive social, economic and political workers. Only a year before this fateful meeting Gokhale had joined the band of patriotic and dedicated workers of Maharashtra who established the New English School, the Deccan Education Society, and the Fergusson College in Poona. At different times, till he left the Deccan Education Society in 1902, Gokhale taught Mathematics, English, History, Economics and Politics to students of the Fergusson College. Joining a body of lay missionaries at the age of 19 was an outstanding act of dedication which assumed forms of higher and higher sublimation as Gokhale passed through life. But his habits of deep and careful study, as well as insistence on apt and lucid diction, could only have developed through the daily labour which Gokhale had to undertake as a part of his academic duties. Gokhale's life-long appeal to young and especially to educated people appeared to be natural in one who entered public life through the portals of a school established by patriotic Indians.

The founders, and early life-members, of the D. E. Society were interested in Education not merely as scholars. They took to education as the most potent instrument of national regeneration. Consistently with their duties as educationists they participated, according to their inclination and capacity, in other fields of public activities. Gokhale chose for his special extra-curricular interest the field of political activity and reform. He became Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Conference in 1888. Such conferences as supporting organizations of the Indian National Congress were then being set up in the several provinces. As Secretary of one of the most active and influential among these bodies, Gokhale commenced the career of an Indian Congressman in which he was to find the fulfilment of his life's mission. In the same year, 1888, Gokhale accepted responsibility as Editor of the English side of an Anglo-Marathi weekly journal, called *Sudharak* ( Reformer ) of which Agarkar, the famous social reformer of Maharashtra and a founder of the Deccan Education Society, was the Chief Editor.

The *Sudharak* was essentially a non-sectarian journal devoted to bringing about comprehensive reformation among the people of India. Freedom and equality among men were held to be essential pre-conditions of individual and national progress. It was in this concept that education, in its wider sense, was sought to be promoted as the chief instrument of national regeneration. In fact such journals were, in the thinking of the founders of the Deccan Education Society, a necessary supplement to their scholastic activities. Neither Agarkar, nor Gokhale recognized any limits to the ambitions and aspirations of their nation. They felt convinced, however, that unless the institutional

framework of Indian society was reorganized so as to free the individual from restrictive social practices the fullest realization of the potentialities of Indian progress in the modern age would not be possible. Like education, freedom also must be carried to all members of the society, irrespective of class, creed, or sex, if humanity is to grow to the highest limits of its capacity.

#### *Western Influence*

Both as student and teacher, Gokhale was influenced by the writings of eminent British philosophers and statesmen. Of these John Stuart Mill and Edmund Burke appeared to have been most favoured. Many of Gokhale's ideas which lay at the root of his appreciations and suggestions concerning current problems were derived from such classics as Mill's *Essays on Liberty*, and *Representative Government* and Burke's *Reflections on the French Revolution*. The moral revolt against the degrading effect of foreign autocracy, which Gokhale personified, was fully sanctioned, if not initially suggested, by Mill's ideas on the dignity of man and progress of society. The clear understanding of the process of constitutional change, and in particular appreciation of the healthy and lasting results of gradual reform, were contributions of Burke. The trait of moderation commonly attributed to Gokhale is referable only to what he considered to be an acceptable next step towards his goal of limitless progress for the individual and the society. The words which Gokhale used in controversial discussions were generally soft and in this respect he was inclined to share the well-known British trait of habitual understatement. As will be seen in several critical passages in this book, his language was always polished and not overtly emotional. But it was adequate to convey the full implications of his position in every situation.

#### *Public Platform*

The virtue of gradualism so favoured by Gokhale is fully illustrated by his own career of increasingly important positions held by him and by the expanding sphere of his service to the nation. In the very first year of his career as a recognized public worker, he made three important speeches. Of these one was concerned with what may have normally passed as no more than an anti-corruption case against a senior official of the Government of Bombay, to wit Mr. Crawford, Commissioner, Central Division (pp.137-40). But when legal proceedings instituted against this official by the Government were sought to be stalled and sabotaged on racial grounds it became necessary for public-spirited citizens to come out with strong support for official action to uphold purity in public administration, irrespective of considerations of race. Gokhale harped on this theme of racial equality in India, and elsewhere in the British Empire, throughout his life.

In the same year, 1889, Gokhale made his debut on the Congress platform. It is not without some stirrings of political and personal interest that one notices the fact that Gokhale's very first contribution to a public debate from the Congress platform, on a subject of constitutional reform in India, was in

the shape of seconding an amendment proposed by Tilak (pp. 144-45). The official resolution was in support of a scheme of Council Reform in which it was suggested that Provincial representatives on the Supreme Legislative Council should be elected directly by Municipal and Local Boards. Tilak's amendment amounted to a narrowing of the electorate to the elected members of the Provincial Councils. There was much to be said in favour of this more indirect method of election, and between them Gokhale and Tilak said it. But this amendment was lost. Gokhale had many a future occasion of success within the Congress. But his subsequent avowal that his generation must be content to serve their countrymen more by their failures than by their successes appears to have an origin going as far back as his very first participation in public debate. His second participation in a Congress discussion, that on a resolution concerning the Indian Public Services (pp. 146-48) was more favourably received. Gokhale continued to take a lively and a serious interest in the Indianization of Public Services, which he considered to be essential politically, economically and culturally. Even at the time of his death he was a member of a Royal Commission on Public Services in India.

#### *Institutional Responsibilities*

Gradually, however, Gokhale came to occupy more responsible positions, and his participation in public debates, both within and outside the Congress, came to be received with greater respect. In the year 1890 he became Secretary of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha which was then among the foremost of India's public associations for political work. In addition to his duties as Secretary, Gokhale assumed responsibilities as Editor of the quarterly Journal of the Sabha. Among the contributors of this Journal were persons like Ranade and G. V. Joshi, the latter being the first Indian publicist to make significant use of official statistics in support of popular representation of views. Gokhale was to receive in later years almost as much collaboration from Joshi as he received guidance from Ranade. During the next year, Gokhale had to take up more organizing responsibility within the Deccan Education Society, of which body he then became the Secretary. He added further to his educational responsibility in 1895, when he became Fellow of the University of Bombay. But that year was to be more significant in Gokhale's political career as a Congressman. He was Secretary of the Reception Committee of the Poona session of the Congress. It may be recalled that the very first session of the Congress was to have been held in Poona, but due to the prevalence of plague in that city that plan had to be dropped.

#### *Justice to India*

At an earlier session of the Congress (1893), speaking of the Indian Councils Act, 1892 (pp. 157-59), Gokhale had some important observations to make to which he often harked back in later years. Those referred mostly to subjects like expansion of Councils, especially of the non-official and elected elements in them, and conferring upon them more positive functions in respect of the

budget and of moving resolutions on measures of public importance. A more important speech of that year was, however, the one on Home Military Charges delivered by Gokhale at a public meeting in Bombay presided over by Pheroze-shah Mehta (pp. 149-56). In moving the adoption of a memorial on the subject to be submitted to the British House of Commons, Gokhale brought his remarks to a close with the following observations :

Gentlemen, England is strong, but let her not abuse her strength by extorting from poor India more than she has a right to receive. England professes to be anxious to do justice to India. We have had nearly a century of these professions and it is now time we had a little of the practice of the thing.

### *The Deccan Sabha*

The years that followed the Poona session of the Congress were critical years in Gokhale's advance to political leadership. In 1896 along with his *Guru*, Ranade, and other prominent members of the Sarvajanic Sabha, Gokhale resigned membership of that body. Apart from a clash of personalities, which is occasionally unavoidable in popularly organized bodies, the principal ground for this serious split was one which was destined in later years to cause a continuing division among public men in Maharashtra, and in India as a whole. The Ranade group, to which Gokhale devoted his allegiance, believed that at the current stage of the country's growth a policy of popular education, more equalitarian and more progressive reconstruction of social institutions, and a steady building up of national political organization should have priority over campaigning for active opposition to the British Government. The other view that the first priority of public activities in a dependent country is to attain national independence at any cost was gradually attracting support among members of the Sarvajanic Sabha. To give both schools of thought full opportunity to work in support of their respective programmes, the adherents of the Ranade, or the Liberal and Moderate school, left the old Sabha, and constituted a new body, called the Deccan Sabha, of which Gokhale became the first Secretary.

The Manifesto issued by the new body contains an enunciation of the principal characteristics of programmes of action which its members sought to promote. The most significant part of this Manifesto, which is said to have been drawn up by Ranade himself, runs as follows :

The spirit of Liberalism implies a freedom from race and creed prejudices and a steady devotion to all that seeks to do justice between man and man, giving to the rulers the loyalty that is due to the law they are bound to administer, but securing at the same time to the ruled the equality which is their right under the law. Moderation imposes the condition of never vainly aspiring after the impossible or after too remote ideals, but striving each day to take the next step in the order of natural growth by doing the work that lies nearest to our hands in a spirit of compromise and fairness.

After all political activities are chiefly of value not for the particular results achieved, but for the process of political education which is secured by exciting interest in public matters and promoting the self-respect and self-reliance of citizenship. This is no doubt a slow process but all growth of new habits must be slow to be real.

### *First Meeting with Gandhi*

The ideals, values and methods of political life inscribed in this declaration were to play a determining role in shaping Gokhale's own views on public questions, and in influencing his relations with the representatives of the British Government on the one hand and with the leaders of several political groups within the country on the other. It is noteworthy that it was exactly at this stage in the career of Gokhale, and in fact at the very moment when the principles of the party of Liberalism and Moderation were taking shape, that Gandhi had his first meeting with Gokhale. What Gandhi was then primarily interested in was to seek the support of Indian public men for the struggle which the Natal Indian Congress was waging against the Colonial Government to secure their rights as settlers. The "freedom from race and creed prejudices," and "the equality under the law" incorporated in the Manifesto were not mere empty words for Gokhale. He was prepared to back them with active support, whether it was in India or Natal. It was this first meeting between the two that laid the foundation of an abiding intimacy which was richly valued on either side.

Gokhale's first visit to England was undertaken in 1897 for the purpose of tendering evidence before the Welby Commission on behalf of the Deccan Sabha. The high merit of both the written and the oral testimony presented by him had been appreciated on all sides. Gokhale soon came to be recognized as one among the few well-informed and responsible exponents of the Indian view on public finance and administration in India. This first visit of Gokhale to England was, also, destined to be of great historical interest for the future of the political relationship between India and Great Britain. Like many a young graduate Gokhale was well steeped in the words of great liberal philosophers of England. Both for his own writings, and for his interpretation of the thoughts of other liberal philosophers and statesmen, Morley had a special attraction for educated Indians. At least in part he was their inspirer of a love for political liberty and their source of reassurance that under England's overall protection they would attain to that happy stage.

That the Liberal Party of Great Britain was then in opposition lent special prestige to them as friends and collaborators of those Indians who were striving to ensure the early realization of British pledges to India. When he was in England Gokhale called on Morley and attempted, among other things, to interest him and, through him, the Liberal Party in the activities of Indian politicians. From what Sir William Wedderburn, one time President of the Congress and always its most prominent exponent in U. K., said later on this

initial contact between Gokhale and Morley seems to have been at least partially responsible for Morley's acceptance of the India portfolio when it was offered to him several years later. It is more than probable that this circumstance influenced Gokhale in his attitude of obvious prepossession for and confidence in Morley and the British Liberal Party.

That Gandhi's briefing on the position of Indians in South Africa had not been neglected by Gokhale was borne out by the publication, in the same year, of an article of his in the *India Quarterly* published in London ( pp. 399-408). The main theme of the article was insistence on securing equality of treatment among citizens of all the races which constituted the British Empire. In normal circumstances with memories of the Welby Commission, meeting with Morley and other leaders in U. K., and publicity to the plight of Indians in South Africa, Gokhale should have returned in contentment, if not in triumph, to India. Instead, as luck would have it, he had to face the severest trial of his career in the very hour of his setting foot on the Indian soil.

#### *Apology Incident*

That was the well-known incident of his Apology ( pp. 160-72 ). He had felt it to be his duty as a public man to stand up for his countrymen, when he was in England. The need for bold action had arisen in two somewhat divergent ways. On the one hand several friends from Poona, whose sense of responsibility he had then no cause to doubt, had written to him complaining in specific terms of the high-handedness and misbehaviour of some among those who were in charge of anti-plague measures in Poona. On the other hand, Indian correspondents of British papers and several writers in the British Press were severely criticizing leaders in India, especially those in Poona, for their lack of a sense of loyalty and responsibility. As a public man Gokhale felt it to be his duty to vindicate his own and his colleagues' reputation for loyalty and responsibility, and also to place before the British public the kind of happenings in Poona which had created an unusual stir in the Indian mind. In doing this he was acting as an honest public leader. His reference to the atrocities committed by some British soldiers in the course of the execution of their duties had created a wave of resentment in England. It was this that had also roused the wrath of the whole Anglo-Indian community. When on his return Gokhale found that his private correspondents, on whose information he had relied, were unable or unwilling to substantiate their complaints the only course open to him, as a gentleman, and as a respectable public man, was to tender an apology. An apology, which is worth anything either to the giver or to the receiver, has to be a full and unqualified one, and it has to be addressed to those who are the real sufferers of the wrong that is sought to be corrected by the apology. Gokhale rose magnificently to the occasion and thereby enhanced his own worth as a man and as a respectable leader of his countrymen. That in doing so he earned the odium of a large number of his less informed and less conscientious countrymen was the penance he had to



go through to attain the sublimity of his "Righteousness" which struck a responsive chord in Gandhi and Sarojini Naidu.

After the apology, characteristically enough, it was the plague in Poona which attracted his first attention. He took active and energetic part in organizing relief for the victims and their relations. As he gradually recovered his mental calm and took up the threads of numerous public activities he found much in his environment to encourage him to further efforts at national service. In 1899 he was elected a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. Gokhale always had more than his average share of a sense of public responsibility. When later on, in 1903, he was elected Joint General Secretary of the Congress, he toured the country delivering public speeches on current political problems. After his retirement from the Fergusson College in 1902, which also was the year in which he was elected President of the Poona Municipality, Gokhale became almost a whole-time worker for the Congress. Whatever he did in India or abroad was done largely on behalf of the Congress.

#### *Bombay Legislative Council*

He spent only a short span of two years as a member of the Bombay Legislative Council. During his term of membership when the Mofussil Municipalities Bill came up for discussion Gokhale made an important speech in the course of which he had to declare his views both on the nature of Municipal Government and on the provision of communal electorates contained in the Bill ( pp. 115-34 ). He observed :

We value local self-government not only for the fact that local work thereby is better done, but also for the fact that it teaches men of different castes and creeds, who have long been kept more or less apart, to work together for a common purpose. There are in all conscience causes for differences enough among the different sections of this land, and I submit that the legislature should not, in the best interests of the country, without the very strongest reasons, give any statutory recognition to these differences. There is nothing in the nature of local self-government which implies any conflict between the interests of one section and another. If the Council will turn to the list of " obligatory duties " and " optional duties, " it will be seen that, except perhaps on the question of slaughter houses there is no chance of conflict of interest arising between the different communities. And on that particular question, if the Hindu Councillors anywhere neglected to construct slaughter houses for the benefit of Mohamedans and other inhabitants, Government have it in their power, under the provisions of the " Control Chapter", to require recalcitrant municipalities to perform that duty. Then, if different sections are to be represented, why talk of the Hindu Community as a whole by itself ? There are so many castes and sections of the community, and some of them can stand so wide apart from one another, that it will be necessary to recognize their differences, and then where are the Government going to stop ?

What Gokhale thought as an unsound and almost absurd formula was ultimately retained in the Act. When later on the electoral principle was accepted for legislative councils, even what Gokhale thought were absurd limits of carrying communal representation to castes among the Hindus were also reached. It is only fair to add that in this speech Gokhale ended his remarks by stating : "I have no objection to Government providing for sectional representation by means of election provided they guarantee to the general rate-payers a minimum of half the seats." But the first pronouncement of Gokhale on the subject of communal representation brings out his general position in clear terms. Another part of his speech on the same Bill brings out his views on the important subject of separation of powers. While he upholds the principle of an executive separate from the deliberative body of the Municipal Council for large cities like Bombay, he favours the conferment of executive functions on popular bodies in the smaller mofussil towns.

*Imperial Legislative Council*

When in December, 1903, an Amending Bill was moved in the Imperial Legislative Council to extend the scope of the Official Secrets Act of 1889 to cover even civil information, in addition to information bearing on military matters to which the original Act referred, Gokhale had an important speech to make both on the first and second readings (pp. 5-17). Gokhale was a member of the Select Committee set up to consider the Amending Bill. Along with two other non-official members, Mr. Bose and Nawab Saiyyad Mahammud, Gokhale had appended a minute of dissent to the Select Committee's Report. Speaking about the minute Gokhale said :

We have expressed that dissent in the mildest terms which we could possibly find to convey our meaning. We did this both to mark our sense of the conciliatory manner in which the Hon'ble Member-in-charge of the Bill received many of our suggestions and in the hope that by thus removing from our dissent all trace of the angry criticisms to which the Bill has been subjected, we might make it easier for Government to proceed further in the direction of meeting the objections urged by the public.

In spite of this gentle technique, which was always the characteristic Gokhale way, no further concessions were made by Government. Intervening later in the course of discussion Gokhale was constrained to observe :

Nowhere throughout the British Empire is the Government so powerful . . . relatively to the governed as in India. Nowhere, on the other hand, is the Press so weak in influence as it is with us. The vigilance of the Press is the only check that operates from outside, feebly, it is true but continuously, upon the conduct of the Government, which is subject to no popular control. It is here, therefore, if anywhere, that the Legislature should show special consideration to the Press, and yet here alone it is proposed to arm Government with greater power to control the freedom of the Press than in any other part of the Empire.

*Work of the Congress*

In the Congress session held at Madras in December, 1903 Gokhale, who was unable to be present, was elected Joint General Secretary. His elevation to this official position in the non-official Parliament of the Indian people made him forget even more completely than before all thought of everything except service of the country through the Congress. Speaking at Madras in July 1904 (pp. 173-80) he reviewed the history of the Congress during its existence of about twenty years, and asserted that considering the difficulties in their way, the position of strength occupied by the British bureaucracy in India and the many weaknesses among its people, they had indeed not done badly. Alluding to the recent rise of Japan, especially its industrial progress, he insisted on the inner unity between political and industrial advance and urged his countrymen to emulate the Japanese in their patriotism and discipline. He felt convinced that if the Congress persisted with greater vigour and tenacity in the task of political education, and organization of the people, they would soon attain the freedom and welfare of the country as a self-governing part of the British Empire. Speaking about the people who indulge in counsels of despair he said :

Those who say that nothing is to be gained by political agitation they really do a great disservice to the country; they do nothing themselves and they only paralyse the efforts of others. It is said that history furnishes no example of a subject people rising by such methods as ours. I have myself paid some attention to history; and if I have been convinced of one thing more than another, it is this: that you can never have a perfect parallel in history. It is impossible for circumstances to repeat themselves, though you have the common saying that history repeats itself. It may be that the history of the world does not furnish an instance where a subject race has risen by agitation. If so, we shall supply that example for the first time. The history of the world has not yet come to an end, there are more chapters to be added.

During the remainder of his life of a decade or so Gokhale himself added a few brilliant chapters, though the most significant of all was left to be added by his "younger brother"<sup>1</sup> and his stalwart supporters. Even in this speech Gokhale showed a keen awareness of the need to have greater discipline and greater devotion in the political life of the country.

"The day has gone by," he said, "when politics could afford to be amateurish in this land. It has been amateurish in the past; but the struggle is growing keener and keener and it is necessary that men should take up the duties and responsibilities of public life in the same manner as they choose their profession and devote their energies to it."

It is obvious that the need to have in each State at least a small band of

<sup>1</sup> GANDHI — *Story of My Experiments with Truth*, translated by M. Desai, Navajivan Karyalaya, 1933, p. 537.

devoted and dedicated public workers which was engaging Gokhale's thought for some years past, was now assuming a more definite shape. Within less than a year of this speech in Madras, on June 12, 1905 at Poona, Gokhale administered the vows of membership to three of his colleagues along with whom he founded the Servants of India Society.

### *The Servants of India Society*

Besides the organizational features of the new body and the discipline of dedication to national service placed on members, the constitution of the Society also outlines the goal and programmes which the members are expected to follow ( pp. 181-86 ). It states among other things, that

Its members frankly accept the British connection as ordained, in the inscrutable dispensation of Providence, for India's good. Self-Government within the Empire for their country and higher life generally for their countrymen is their goal.

The Servants of India Society will train men prepared to devote their lives to the cause of the country in a religious spirit, and will seek to promote by all constitutional means the national interest of the Indian people. Its members will direct their efforts principally towards (1) creating among the people, by example and by precept, a deep and passionate love of the motherland, seeking its highest fulfilment in service and sacrifice; (2) organizing the work of political education and agitation, basing it on a careful study of public questions, and strengthening generally the public life of the country; (3) promoting relations of cordial goodwill and co-operation among the different communities; (4) assisting educational movements, especially those for the education of women, the education of backward classes and industrial and scientific education; (5) helping forward the industrial development of the country; and (6) the elevation of the depressed classes.

Several years later Jawaharlal Nehru<sup>1</sup> observed in his *Discovery of India* : "Gopal Krishna Gokhale once wrote in his gently ironical way of the inscrutable wisdom of Providence which had ordained the British connection for India. Whether it was due to this inscrutable wisdom or some process of historic destiny or just chance, the coming of the British to India brought two very different races together." Every student of history, most of all every great man, is entitled to read and interpret history in his own way. But quite obviously when Jawaharlal Nehru traced a gentle irony in Gokhale's avowal of the inscrutable wisdom of Providence, the full facts about Gokhale's philosophical and moral position could not have been placed before him. Gokhale was gentle, indeed sometimes very gentle. But he was never ironical, least of all about Providence. His faith in a Providence governing the destinies of men and nations was not a mere short cut or euphemism for chance. He

<sup>1</sup> J. NEHRU — *Discovery of India*, p. 239, Signet Press, Calcutta, 1948.

believed, as did Ranade, in a benevolent influence guiding the life of the world. Wisdom and benevolence were attributes of Providence which both were content to accept, though certain happenings in themselves may not be so easily explicable to the limited knowledge of even the most knowing and farsighted among men. Gokhale, in fact, following Ranade, rationalized to his own satisfaction, the implied benevolence of "the coming of the British to India." Against the background of India's political and cultural history both of them felt that contact with the modern world of science and organization, as also with the political values of freedom and a national state was indispensable for a national movement of regeneration in India. There may be legitimate criticisms of this view, but it was not ironically conceived. In much of the programme of practical action indicated for members, the implications of this view were clearly spelt out. Indeed many of these items were adopted, in mass or in detail, by a number of other organizations as well. Later on when Gandhi outlined his constructive programme some of the tasks prescribed by Gokhale for his colleagues were enjoined on Gandhi's followers as well.

#### *Mission in England*

Soon after the establishment of the Servants of India Society Gokhale undertook a visit to England on behalf of the Congress. His mission, on this second journey to U. K., was to explain to the British people the state of public feeling in India regarding the repressive acts of the regime of Lord Curzon, and in particular about the crowning piece of his arrogant disregard of Indian public opinion, the partition of Bengal. As it happened, that was also the time when a fresh General Election was to be held in U. K. and the Liberal Party which in opposition had shown sympathetic interest in India's claims to progressive self-government was expected to come into power. Curzon personified the stony and cold attitude which the entire bureaucratic government of India had adopted towards the demands of the Congress. Discontent was daily becoming more and more widespread and a crisis in Indo-British relations and in the internal political movement in India was fast developing. Leaders of the Congress, at least some among them, felt that if India's case was at this juncture placed before the British public and the new British Government the crisis may be forestalled. This was a delicate and by no means a very hopeful mission. The choice of Gokhale to carry it out, and his acceptance of the responsibility are indicative on the one hand of the great confidence placed in his patriotism and statesmanship by his colleagues and, on the other hand, of a fully restored vigour and balance of mind of Gokhale himself.

The most challenging assignment of the tour was a speech in Manchester on Indian Discontent (pp. 321-25). It is true that Manchester was a stronghold of Liberalism and as such had a receptive atmosphere, so far as the general political theme is concerned. But the agitation for boycott of British goods started in Bengal had disturbed the mood of all connected with the British textile trade and even some of the friends of India in Great Britain

attempted to dissuade Gokhale from undertaking the Manchester assignment. Gokhale, however, was keen on explaining to the politically active section of the population of Manchester the real significance of the boycott of British cloth. He made it clear to his audience that the boycott did not signify on the part of the people of India any animosity either against Great Britain in general or against Manchester in particular. He recounted, with his characteristic lucidity, the background and the ugly features of the whole scheme of partition. He told them how all avenues of normal constitutional agitation in India and in Britain had been exhausted. An effective appeal to the British public could thus be made against the perverse policy of the bureaucracy in India and the British Government of the day in no other peaceful way than the boycott which all classes of people in Bengal had spontaneously adopted. This speech, far from being resented by the listeners, marked the beginning of a definite change in the attitude of the Liberal Party towards the Partition issue.

The really important group of speeches was, however, addressed to more sophisticated audiences in London. On some of these occasions also, Gokhale had to speak before informed and interested but by no means very sympathetic gatherings. His address to the East India Association on Self-Government for India ( pp. 350-57 ) must have jarred on the ears of at least some die-hards in the audience. In fact Gokhale felt called upon at the end of his speech to thank the Association all the more heartily because of this recognized disagreement. But it was exactly on such occasions that the respectful, objective and firm style of Gokhale ensured for him a substantially courteous reception. Moreover, even if no immediate agreement was obtained the seeds of doubt and faint stirrings of second thoughts were planted in the minds of several members of the opposition. This is exactly why the British bureaucrats in India disliked these visits of Gokhale which ensured for him notable reception both in the British Press and among the leaders of Parliamentary opinion. Gokhale invariably appealed to the conscience, the feeling of honour and the high constitutional principles of the British people. He successfully turned the ire of the British people to their bureaucratic representatives in India by stating :

There is no doubt that the old faith of the people in the character and ideals of British rule has been more than shaken and its place is being steadily taken by a conviction that however great England may be, she is not great enough to forego voluntarily the gains of power from considerations of mere justice or national honour. I do not say that such a view is quite just to the average man or woman of this country . . . but the people of India can judge of the intentions of Englishmen only from their experience of those who go out to India to exercise authority over them.

He reminded his audience that " After all, India's willing acceptance of the British connection can only be based on reason or enlightened self-interest." He went on to assert that, " They want their country to be a prosperous, self-governing integral part of the Empire, like the Colonies, and not a mere poverty-

stricken, bureaucratically held possession of that Empire." The full significance of this speech can be realized if we note that it was made in England to an audience of retired Anglo-Indian bureaucrats and their mostly conservative backers well before the Calcutta Congress at which Swaraj, that is the status of a self-governing colony of the Empire, was declared to be the goal of the Congress. It was after this claim to freedom and prosperity on behalf of his countrymen that Gokhale uttered his grave warning to the British people:

And here I repeat that unless the old faith of the educated classes in the character and ideals of British rule is brought back, England will find on her hands before long another Ireland, only many times bigger, in India.

By comparison his other speeches on the need for political reform in India were addressed to more friendly audiences in London. Speaking at the National Liberal Club on England's Duty Towards India (pp. 340-49), he traced a natural ideological alliance between Indian reformers and British Liberals. He urged on them as the new Party in power to proceed firmly with the task of reconciliation and reconstruction in India, which was neglected and disfavoured after Lord Ripon had laid the foundations of local self-government. The absurd anomaly of wooing Japanese support against Russia, while alienating the Indian people, needed an early correction. So did the policy of racial discrimination against coloured inhabitants and settlers in Crown colonies like Transvaal, which in this respect were often worse than the self-governing colonies like Natal.

Speaking to the New Reform Club in November, 1905 (pp. 333-39), Gokhale recounted the full story of Lord Curzon's complete undoing of all the assurances of the British Sovereign and of the aspirations of the Indian people. Racial discrimination in the due process of law and in the services, suppression of the liberties of citizens, officialization of university managements and reduction of the powers of local self-governing bodies were only a few of the several measures of his regime which had created an explosive situation in India. The moral which Gokhale derived from this story, for himself and for the well-meaning among the British people, was that so long as the system of foreign bureaucratic rule has not been replaced by Indian self-government the declared goals of British policy in India will not be realized. Having made the declarations of racial equality and given the assurances of equal protection of laws, having started modern institutions of education and government, England ought not to flinch from taking the crucial steps forward, long ago anticipated by Macaulay and Ripon. The system of government where supreme power is vested in persons who are only temporary residents of the country was unnatural.

The only solution that is possible — a solution demanded alike by our interests and by your interests, as also by your national honour — is the steady introduction of self-government in India.

The echoes of several sentiments expressed by Gokhale in the course of his public speeches in England on this occasion (1905) are clearly traceable in

later correspondence and pronouncements of Morley and Minto. In fact it is doubtful whether in the absence of the favourable background and opinion created by Gokhale, the reforms of 1909 could have been incorporated into the parliamentary programme of the new Liberal Government in Great Britain. Not only in the acceptance of the urgent need for political reform, but in regard to at least some of the broad outlines of the constitutional scheme Gokhale's influence was unmistakable.

*President of the Congress*

The most important political speech which Gokhale made in this eventful year (1905) was his address as President of the Congress session held at Banaras (pp. 185-209). Not only the fact that he attained the honour of this high position at a comparatively young age, but the unerring justice of his observations and the broad vision of his future aspirations justify Jawaharlal Nehru's statement<sup>1</sup> that "Gokhale was considered one of the Elder Statesmen even when he was in his late thirties." The political situation in India was at that time so tense, almost so desperate, as to test even Gokhale's statesmanship to its last limit. To start with, there was the impending visit of the Prince of Wales. The country, and especially Bengal, was in no mood to come out with declarations of loyalty and welcome. On the other hand the cause of securing Indian political reform through an Act of the British Parliament was not likely to be helped by an attitude either of sullenness or of hostility towards a representative of the British Crown. Gokhale had the insight and the courage to state that the Crown in the British Constitution is above party politics of the Government of the day. The King represents the permanent non-partisan elements of British policy, such as are reflected in the Queen's Proclamation, which was a charter of India's rights to freedom and equality within the Empire. In welcoming the Prince the people of India were expressing their loyalty to the fountain of these cherished ideals of British rule in India.

While Gokhale had a series of hard things to say about Lord Curzon's administration he had also to be fair to the new incumbent of the office of the Viceroy, Lord Minto. There was no reason to judge him before he had an opportunity to initiate his own policy. In anything that he did to retrace the repressive measures and other undesirable features of his predecessor's rule, the Viceroy was entitled to have the fullest cooperation of the Indian people. Lord Minto himself could ask for no more. This attitude of reciprocal conciliation adopted by Gokhale in his Presidential speech and thereafter went a long way in creating a bridge between him and the other Congress leaders on the one hand, and the new Viceroy and the new Government of His Majesty at Home, represented by the Liberal Cabinet of Campbell-Bannerman, on the other. The prolonged negotiations about reform which had to progress through the changing vicissitudes of Indian and British politics could not have been brought

<sup>1</sup> J. NEHRU — *Autobiography*, p. 195 (The Bodley Head, 1947).



to a constructive and fruitful end in the absence of an atmosphere of responsive cooperation created for the new representative of the Crown who succeeded Lord Curzon.

For Curzon as a devoted and capable administrator Gokhale had great regard. But as a representative of the British Crown sent to direct the Government of India according to the terms of the Proclamation and the several Parliamentary enactments no worse choice could be imagined. Curzon had no respect either for the people of India or for their culture. He mistrusted their loyalty and their competence. He suppressed with vigour even the natural outlet to free expression or free civic organization of the people. By the time he left the shores of India, frustration of all the politically-minded people in the country and their estrangement from the bureaucratic rulers was so extreme, especially over the partition of Bengal, that Gokhale felt constrained, to observe :

If all Indians are to be treated as no better than dumb-driven cattle; if men, whom any other country would delight to honour are to be thus made to realize the utter humiliation and helplessness of their position in their own, then all I can say is " Good-bye to all hope of cooperating in any way with the bureaucracy in the interest of the people. " I can conceive of no graver indictment of British rule in India than that such a state of things should be possible after a hundred years of that rule.

Gokhale had very much at heart the cause of Indian industrialization and he wholeheartedly approved of the creed of Swadeshi as a policy of voluntary protectionism. He had also approved and appreciated the political results of the boycott movement in Bengal. In principle for a similar cause in similar circumstances he would not object to a general or prolonged boycott. Expatriating on this somewhat complex subject, he explains his position as follows :

This (boycott movement) they did with a two-fold object, first as a demonstration of their deep resentment at the treatment they were receiving, and secondly, to attract the attention of the people in England to their grievances, so that those who were in a position to call the Government of India to account might understand what was taking place in India. It was thus as a political weapon, used for a definite political purpose, that they had recourse to the boycott; and in the circumstances of their position they had every justification for the step they took. And I can tell you from personal experience that their action has proved immensely effective in drawing the attention of English people to the state of things in our country. But a weapon like this must be reserved only for extreme occasions. There are obvious risks involved in its failure and it cannot be used with sufficient effectiveness unless there is an extraordinary upheaval of popular feeling behind it.

It is obvious that Gokhale had no ideological or conscientious objection to boycott as a political weapon. He felt that in the India of 1905 its general adoption was not warranted either by need or by feasibility. It is interesting

to note that some leaders who then held very advanced positions on this subject demurred to Gandhi's non-cooperation movement in 1920 as too premature and too costly. This only shows that with great leaders of political, as of armed conflicts, judgments in the choice of strategy and weapons are apt to differ. It is only the issue of the struggle which renders post-facto validity to many a hazardous venture.

In his Presidential address Gokhale minced no words in denouncing the evils of economic drain or blood-letting in a system of absentee capitalism, or of the dwarfing of a subject race under the autocratic rule of another. "The goal of the Congress," as he put it, "is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in course of time, a form of Government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing colonies of the Empire." While effective self-government is unequivocally demanded, as regards the form of government Gokhale was not quite certain that any particular type then obtaining in British colonies could with advantage be bodily transferred to India. For instance, as he later on indicated in many of his speeches on reform, he was inclined to favour some constitutional checks on the omnipotence of the legislature. He had his own views also on the matter of group or indirect elections, and he would have favoured a much greater measure of regional decentralization of power than was normal in British colonies. A study of the German federal, and the French local, governments had influenced Gokhale's views on the internal structure of a self-governing state. The stage at which an overall view of a desirable and complete constitution for India could or need be taken was not reached while Gokhale lived. It is, however, important to record that beyond the principle of self-government within the Empire he made no commitment as regards the suitability to India of any other feature of the British or of the colonial system of Government.

While invoking the authority of Gladstone's dictum — "It is liberty alone which fits men for liberty. This proposition like every other in politics, has its bounds, but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, wait till they are fit." Gokhale felt that there is a definite advantage in a gradual, rather than sudden or cataclysmic, transformation from an autocratic to a democratic way of living: "for it is a reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility required for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only." No question of ethics or of the bonafide desire of British Parliament to grant powers of self-government is raised in this context. Later experience in India, and in other countries attaining independence through several ways, fully indicates the advantage of gradualism favoured by Gokhale. From another angle, it is significant to note that a new regime tends to be sustained by the means through which it is brought into being. On this subject, at a later stage Gandhi<sup>1</sup> has made his position clear in similar terms. "It is true we cannot rise till our political condition is reformed. But

1 GANDHI — *Gokhale — My Political Guru*, p. 50.

it is not true that we should be able to progress if our political condition undergoes a change by any means and in any manner."

Gokhale had an obvious ideological and emotional commitment to Morley. He hoped for noticeable progress of Indian political reforms during the latter's tenure of office as Secretary of State in the Liberal Cabinet. He owned to some pessimism as to the influence which the obstructionist bureaucracy may exercise on Morley's progressive intentions. All these somewhat conflicting thoughts are best expressed in his own words :

The new Prime Minister (Campbell-Bannerman) is a tried and trusted friend of freedom. And as regards the new Secretary of State for India, what shall I say ? Large numbers of educated men in this country feel towards Mr. Morley as towards a Master, and the heart hopes and yet trembles, as it had never hoped or trembled before. He, the reverent student of Burke, the disciple of Mill, the friend and biographer of Gladstone — will he courageously apply their principles and his own to the Government of the country or will he too succumb to the influences of the India Office around him, and thus cast a cruel blight on hopes, which his own writings have done so much to foster ?

Gokhale was so conscious of the difficulties that lay in the way of India's progress to freedom that he emphasized the moral, more than the substantive, advantage of a popular struggle. "The real moral interest of a struggle," he said, "such as we are engaged in, lies not so much in the particular readjustment of present institutions which we may succeed in securing, as in the strength that the conflict brings us to be a permanent part of ourselves. The whole life of a people, which is broader and deeper than what is touched by purely political institutions is enriched even by failures, provided the effort has been all that it should be. For such enrichment the present struggle is invaluable."

Exalted as this moral optimism was, it would have left the large audience of Congressmen somewhat cold, had Gokhale not added a peroration in which he invoked Ranade's prophetic words :

With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly by all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and lastly, with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world, and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny.

#### *Crucial Five Years*

The quinquennium which followed the Banaras session of the Congress was one of the most crucial and significant in the political history of India. Following on the partition of Bengal, and the wave of a resurgent anti-Western feeling originating from the Japanese victory over Russia, all types of intensive political activity was spreading in the country. The prestige of the Westerner was shaken and verbal as well as physical challenges to its pretensions were

freely offered. A number of organizations, not strictly limited to political objectives, were started with a strong revivalist trend. Within existing political bodies such as the Congress, a vigorous challenge was being offered to the old leadership represented by Gokhale which was accused of being over-trustful and not sufficiently enterprising. Gokhale fully sympathized with the ultimate objective of national freedom, and he was not too sure that even if Morley did agree to move as far and as fast as Gokhale desired, the influences surrounding him in England and in India would allow him to do so. Gokhale, however, felt that considering the stage at which general political education and consciousness of the Indian people were, it was desirable, as the next step, to get out of the new British Government as full a measure of advance as possible. By using the new opportunities to consolidate our position and to equip ourselves to take a longer step in future, he thought we would be acting in the best interests of the country.

In any case, so far as he himself was concerned, Gokhale felt that to back Morley in his progressive and liberal measures, and to influence their formulation to the best of his opportunities was the most positive contribution which he could then make to the progress of the nation. Friends of India in England had realized that Gokhale's appeal to the initially well-inclined section of the British public was a valuable asset in securing parliamentary support for progressive policies in India. It was in response to such a feeling that during 1906 Gokhale undertook two journeys to England. Morley's firm refusal to support the high-handed measures of the Lieutenant-Governor of East Bengal had raised a veritable storm against him. By his speeches in London on the state of things in East Bengal Gokhale was able to convey to the British public the flagrantly un-British nature of Fuller's rule in East Bengal (pp. 358-63). Even elementary rights of citizenship such as those of education, free speech, and public meetings were peremptorily violated, sometimes by mere executive action. There was no prospect of local feeling being pacified so long as this state of things continued. The reactions of the East Bengal situation on the rest of the country were also most undesirable. The good intentions of the British people and the promises made in their solemn declarations had to be vindicated by suitable action. Gokhale felt that nothing short of a removal of the Lieut.-Governor from the scene of his high-handed actions would meet the requirements of the case (pp. 364-67). Morley persisted in his firm refusal to back Fuller, and the latter eventually resigned. Fuller's discomfiture came as a reassuring factor in an otherwise gloomy situation. But the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy never forgave either Morley or Gokhale for the part which they had played. In their own way both continued to draw on themselves the full measure of open and concealed opposition from official quarters in India to all measures designed to recognize the claim of Indians to equality and to freedom.

For the part played by Gokhale in representing to the British public India's case on several subjects of national importance he was thanked by a formal

resolution moved at the Congress session held in Calcutta at the end of the year (1906) (pp. 212-14). In acknowledging this outstanding mark of grateful appreciation of his fellow-workers Gokhale emphatically called upon them to treat Morley's efforts at liberalizing the Indian government with sympathetic appreciation and to lend to them maximum co-operation. He again made it clear that the actual extent of these reforms may not be all that they desired, but it was only by accepting them and working them in the spirit in which they were offered that advance to further more liberal stages would be facilitated. Throughout this period almost all of the public speeches of Gokhale addressed to his countrymen contained a strong plea for appreciative co-operation with the new Secretary of State in his attempts to liberalize and popularize the system of government in India.

### *Reforms and Political Agitation*

Early in 1907 Gokhale addressed two important public meetings one in Allahabad and the other in Lucknow. The former meeting was presided over by Motilal Nehru (pp. 215-22). Gokhale said that the new century had opened with a new consciousness of hope and strength in the East and even Lord Curzon's administration had been a blessing in disguise as it had helped to rouse the political consciousness of the people. In the course of his remarks Gokhale clarified his own position on several important questions of political objectives and methods. As regards the goal to be reached by patriotic efforts of workers he observed :

I recognize no limits to my aspiration for our motherland. I want our people to be in their own country what other people are in theirs. I want our men and women without distinction of caste or creed to have opportunities to grow to the full height of their stature unhampered by cramping and unnatural restrictions. I want India to take her proper place among the great nations of the world, politically, industrially, in religion, in literature, in science and in arts. I want all this and feel at the same time that the whole of this aspiration, in its essence and its reality, will be realized within this Empire.

The whole concept of constitutional agitation was subjected to an analytical review and Gokhale stated his choice of methods in the following terms :

What were the methods they were entitled to employ ? The first idea suggested was that physical force was excluded. Proceeding with the consideration further, three things were excluded—rebellion, aiding or abetting a foreign invasion, and resort to crime. Roughly speaking, barring these three things, all else was constitutional. No doubt everything that was constitutional was not necessarily wise or expedient. Prayers and appeals to justice lay at one end. Passive resistance, including even its extreme form of non-payment of taxes till redress was obtained, lay at the other end.

On the subject of wisdom or expediency of any particular method at a

given moment opinions may differ. In particular any suggestion of a complete dissociation from governmental organization was unacceptable to Gokhale. As he put it: "the idea that they should leave the authorities severely alone and seek to attain their goal independently of them was inadmissible."

That the bureaucracy would generally be hostile to reforms was only to be expected. A sudden or cataclysmic change, even if it could be brought about, was not the best way to ensure their progress through conflicting claims and unfamiliar lines of organization. Above everything else he exhorted his countrymen not to be impatient and not to be deterred by only small gains and frequent failures.

Nation-building is nowhere an easy task. In India it is beset with difficulties which are truly formidable and which will tax to the uttermost all our resources and all our devotion. Let us not forget that we are at a stage of the country's progress when our achievements are bound to be small, and our disappointments frequent and trying. That is the place which it has pleased Providence to assign to us in this struggle, and our responsibility is ended when we have done the work which belongs to that place. It will, no doubt, be given to our countrymen of future generations to serve India by their successes. We, of the present generation, must be content to serve her mainly by our failures.

Not a very palatable thought but fully realistic and prophetic. What the generation of Gokhale and the Chairman, Motilal Nehru, in spite of their best efforts failed to attain, the generation of the Chairman's son, Jawaharlal Nehru, triumphantly achieved!

The speech at Lucknow which followed within a week was devoted largely to the Swadeshi movement (pp. 223-35). As a method of a kind of voluntary protection to national industries Gokhale welcomed the movement. His understanding of the basic interdependence of nations even under a regime of protectionism was, however, too sound to make him a supporter of a general boycott of foreign goods. Even in this speech, however, Gokhale's mind was really on the coming reforms, and the possible emergence within the Congress of a feeling of impatience and dissatisfaction with them. He tried to minimize this possibility by telling the audience:

In the struggle that lies before us, we must be prepared for repeated disappointments. We must make up our minds that our progress is bound to be slow, and our successes in the beginning at any rate, comparatively small. But if we go to work with firm faith in our hearts, no difficulties can obstruct our way for long, and the future will be more and more on our side. After all, the industrial problem, formidable as it is, is not more formidable than the political problem.

At this stage Gokhale was really in a very difficult position. The obstructionist and repressive bureaucracy in India was doing all it could to drive patriotic Indians, especially the educated youth, to a position of extreme opposition. The impact of this growing volume of resentment on the more

aggressive and recalcitrant groups within the Congress was bound to cause a serious rift in that body. On the other hand Morley had either not the courage, or indeed the effective political power, to arrest the growth of intolerance and opposition among the ranks of the bureaucracy in India. The measure of reform which both Morley and Minto, especially the latter, proposed was so meagre that even in the most favourable circumstances effective control of Governmental power would continue to remain with the foreign bureaucracy. Even Gokhale could not be so optimistic as to hope that the reforms, if and when they came, would extend to sharing executive power of government with representative Indians. In these circumstances little was left for Gokhale to do beyond exhorting his countrymen to patience and to constructive co-operation, and to press on the British authorities the need of a very early and a very large measure of political reform. In doing this he earned the immediate disfavour both of his countrymen and of the main British architects of the impending reforms, Morley and Minto.

#### *Morley-Minto Reforms*

Both Morley and Minto were convinced that the political relations with India and the form of its administration were unnatural. Lord Morley<sup>1</sup> in a communication to Minto hoped that "If we can hatch out some plan and policy for half a generation, that will be something, and if for a whole generation, that would be better. Only I am bent, as you assuredly are, on doing nothing to loosen the bolts." Minto,<sup>2</sup> if anything, was moving even more slowly and reluctantly. Regarding Gokhale's prodding in respect of political reform he observes: "Gokhale was very interesting and, I thought fair. The whole thing is a tremendous problem and there is a dead wall of official resistance always ready to obstruct anything which can be twisted into meaning interference with British official rights." Writing to Morley, Minto<sup>2</sup> admits that "the more I see, the more convinced I am that we cannot continue to govern India with any hope of tranquility until we give her educated classes a chance of a greater share in the government of the country." And yet both Minto and Morley spoke in terms of unmitigated disapproval of Gokhale's insistence on the rights of Indian leaders to conduct a peaceful agitation, and on the need so to enlarge the scope of reforms as to meet the demands of at least the more reasonable among the Indian leaders.

On the subject of Lala Lajpat Rai's deportation without trial (pp. 37-38), Gokhale had entered a strong protest. Referring to this Minto<sup>2</sup> writes to Morley:

As to Gokhale, if he chooses to play with fire he must take the consequences. We can't afford to let him tamper with the Army, and if he says any-

<sup>1</sup> MARY COUNTESS OF MINTO — *India, Minto and Morley*, 1905-1910 (Macmillan, 1934), pp. 113, 161, 240, 418, 237.

<sup>2</sup> MARY COUNTESS OF MINTO — *India, Minto and Morley*, 1905-1910 (Macmillan, 1934), pp. 109, 127, 150, 163, 235-6, 417.

thing to me as to what has occurred I shall tell him straight to his face. I am thoroughly disappointed in Gokhale; I had liked what I had seen of him and believed that he was honest at heart, but the part he has played of late has disgusted me. As an honest moderate he has lost a great opportunity of discountenancing rank sedition and what you tell me of his references to your speech shows either that he is incapable of understanding the real friends of India or that he is, as you say, as big a revolutionist as Lajpat and the rest of them.

Within three months of his having penned this petulant communication to Morley, the Viceroy<sup>1</sup> had to pen another in which he confessed that :

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 logically justify their further imprisonment.

Morley on his part felt hurt that Gokhale, instead of taking the opportunity to compromise with the British Government and accept the partial concession to his demands, was still pressing for further reforms to avoid a split among Indian leaders of the Congress. Instead of recognizing the patriotism and love of justice and fairness on the part of Gokhale, Morley<sup>2</sup> accused him of merely being an inept politician. In a communication to Minto he says :

One of the most interesting things that have come my way this week is a letter from Gokhale dated Oct. 11, 1907. The one absorbing question, he says, is how the split in Congress, now apparently inevitable, is to be averted. I have often thought during the last twelve months that Gokhale, as a party manager, is a baby. Now, if I were in Gokhale's shoes I should insist on quietly making terms with the bureaucracy on the basis of Order plus Reform. If he would have the sense to see what is to be gained by this line, the 'split' when it comes should do him no harm, because it would set him free to fix his aims on reasonable things, where he might get out of us sixty or seventy per cent of what he might ask for.

Thus, when put to the test, even Morley, on whom Gokhale looked as on a Master, expected him to make terms with the bureaucracy on a sixty per cent basis, forgetting his aim and willingly forsaking his comrades for his official allies ! Had Gokhale been no more than a partisan or a factious politician probably he would have made himself personally more acceptable to the Secretary of State and to the bureaucracy. His standing out for the liberties of colleagues, with whom he did not always see eye to eye on everything, or his exerting himself to keep the Congress united by pressing on the British Government the need and the justice of larger reform measures was not to the liking of their lordships. On the other hand his opponents in the Congress accused him of too much of a compromising spirit and of deliberately working to undo the more advanced positions reached at the Calcutta

1 See foot-note 2 on p. xxxi. 2 See foot-note 1 on p. xxxi.



Congress. In the correspondence which he published in a Calcutta paper on the subject of the debacle at the Surat session of the Congress (pp. 242-51) the soundness, and at the same time the difficulties, of his position as an honest servant of the Congress and of India are fully revealed.

*Lala Lajpat Rai*

It was on this incident, the deportation of Lajpat Rai and the persecution of the other leaders of the Punjab without even the shred of any evidence of wrong-doing on their part, that Gokhale based his strong attack (pp. 18-36) on a Bill to authorize prevention of meetings likely to promote sedition or to cause a disturbance of public tranquility :

That a man like Lala Lajpat Rai, loved by thousands not in his province only, a man of high character and of elevated feeling, a keen religious and social reformer, and a political worker who, whatever his faults, worked only in broad daylight, should have been suddenly arrested and deported without a trial — this was a proceeding which stunned the people throughout India. And as regards the Rawalpindi case, what shall I say! For four months the whole country witnessed the spectacle of the venerable Lala Hansraj, a man as incapable of promoting disorder as any member sitting at this table — with other gentlemen equally respectable, rotting in the lock-up on a charge of inciting to violence and conspiring against the Crown ! It will be long before the memory of the suffering of these men is wiped from the public mind. Meanwhile the country is waiting to see how the authorities deal with those who brought these sufferings on them by producing evidence which the trying Magistrate has pronounced to be 'most untrustworthy, and probably fabricated' ! With these things happening in the country, is it any wonder that the voice of those who counsel patience and moderation and self-restraint should be for the time at a discount among their countrymen? The occurrences of the last six months have afforded ample encouragement to those who like to talk strongly and do not occasionally mind talking wildly.

He again reminded the Viceroy and the other Councillors that when one speaks of Loyalty in India he speaks not of a sentiment similar to that of feudal Europe or of Rajput India, but of a feeling of attachment to British rule and of a desire for its stability based on enlightened self-interest, on an appreciation of what the rule has on the whole done for the people in the past and of the conditions which it ensures for future progress. In spite of Gokhale's reasoned opposition this Bill was put on the statute book. When the Act came for a renewal at the end of three years Gokhale recalled his opposition to the original Act, which he described as a Draconian piece of legislation (pp. 39-46). He supported the description by reference to a case in East Bengal in which members of a local community were proceeded against under the Act for meeting to consider what steps they should take to meet the situation created by a strike of barbers !

*Decentralization and Democracy*

While attending to the best of his ability to urgent problems created either by his more ebullient colleagues in the Congress or by the determined official opponents of equality and freedom, during proceedings in the Council Gokhale was doing all he could to activate, accelerate and broaden the course of British official policy of liberalization and democratization of governmental machinery in India. The note which he submitted to the Royal Commission on Decentralization (pp. 252-63) emphasized two points of basic significance for the evolution of a federal democracy. The officials' interest in decentralization was confined to seeking more powers of independent action for the Provincial Governments. Gokhale felt convinced that unless this process of official decentralization was simultaneously accompanied by a measure of popularization of the provincial governments they would only emerge as "little despotisms." They would be a greater source of local tyranny or high-handedness than the system under which a central Government for all India has to decide a policy before it can have effect anywhere in the country. Gokhale stood for a substantial provincialization of all internal administration on condition, however, that the Provincial Governments were suitably democratized. Gokhale's preference for decentralization with democracy did not stop at the provincial stage. He desired, and recommended, that District Administration also should be decentralized and democratized in two ways. Functions which could be left to the District Local Boards should be administered by those bodies, and their composition should be progressively popularized. Functions which continue to be the responsibility of the District Collector or Commissioner as representative of the Provincial Government should be administered by him in consultation with an Advisory Council which also should be increasingly democratized. This proposal about the District Boards and Councils (pp. 88-108) sought to give effect to a plan of all-round local self-government through elected bodies adumbrated by Ranade. In almost every speech or writing of Gokhale on the subject of Governmental reform this part of constitutional reorganization is given a prominent place. He was aware of the most obvious objection on the score of avoidable duplication of bodies. This he sought to meet by a further proposal to broaden, at an appropriate stage, the functions of a fully democratized District Board so as to include certain advisory responsibilities and rights concerning provincial administration within the district as well.

*Order with Reform*

Morley's prescription for India, Order with Reform, which he tried unsuccessfully to "sell" to Gokhale was administered none the less during 1908 with vigour as regards the former and considerable hesitation and weakness as regards the latter. By a ruthless exercise of authority both under the ordinary and extraordinary criminal law a veritable reign of terror was let loose in the country. It was the belief of the Viceroy and his

Anglo-Indian advisers that unless special powers of coercion were vested in Government the life and property of Europeans were not safe. They were persuaded further to believe that unless the European population in India was so reassured they may take the law into their own hands and a civic disaster would follow. Considering the relative positions of the armed strength of the Government and the utter helplessness of a completely disarmed people, this cry of Europeans in danger was nothing but a bureaucratic ruse to soften the Viceroy's and especially the Secretary of State's enthusiasm for reform. While Minto recognized the need to incorporate into government some elements from among loyal Indians, his actual programme to give effect to this policy was both elementary and crude. He appears to have favoured a Council of Notables, or of Nabobs as Morley put it. This body of about sixty completely nominated members was to act in a purely advisory capacity. When Minto found that his proposal did not evoke favourable reception he suggested a small expansion of councils, with official and nominated majorities. In fact he preferred to continue the earlier system of having a confirmatory stage of nomination even after preliminary elections for the "elected" seats had taken place. Minto had quite a number of advisers who held that the Indian Government was the inheritor of the absolute powers of the Great Moghul and what the British Parliament expects its representatives in India to do was to give this despotism a constitutional procedure. Morely did not countenance these constructions and suggestions. For him a progressive democratization was the only course which events in India could legitimately take, though he would try his best to steady the course as much as possible.

In fairness to Morley it must be recognized that in addition to the powerful obstacle of the European and official blocks in India, the non-official public opinion in England, even in the Liberal party, had not been sufficiently educated and oriented in respect of Indian self-government. What Gokhale was doing in this direction, in India as well as in England, was, therefore, of the utmost value for the success of even the limited plans which Morley envisaged. Reactionary officials occasionally expressed strong resentment against the close contacts maintained by Morley, and to a certain extent also by Minto, with Gokhale. Speaking of one such attempt Morley<sup>1</sup> wrote to Minto: "I have an invincible faith in what Mathew Arnold called 'sweet reasonableness.' Sir Charles Elliott, former Lieut.-Governor of Bengal, abhors the idea of holding any communion with Gokhale until he has openly and formally denounced the extremist press. As if it were of no importance or advantage to us to be on terms with men like Gokhale!" Minto, who had more normal and frequent occasions to meet Gokhale, however, never ceased to regret that certain members of the British Parliament allowed themselves to be influenced more by men like Gokhale than by men on the spot, that is, by the Viceroy and the bureaucracy.

<sup>1</sup> See foot-note 1 on p. xxxi.

*Minto's Impatience with Parliament*

On this note of dissatisfaction with the British Parliament, Minto allowed himself to be carried to the point of challenging the propriety of Parliamentary intervention in Indian affairs, and of prophesying an end to British rule in India if the Parliament continues to evince any active or positive interest in the conduct of Indian Government. Writing to Morley, early in 1908, he<sup>1</sup> says :

I am quite ready to join in admiration of British Parliamentary history, but the modern House of Commons is absolutely incapable of understanding Indian humanity, and the influences of many creeds and traditions, and is to my mind perhaps the greatest danger to the continuance of our rule in this country.

And he further added :

When you say that if Reforms do not save the Raj nothing else will, I am afraid I must utterly disagree. The Raj will not disappear in India as long as the British race remains what it is because we shall fight for the Raj as hard as we have ever fought, if it comes to fighting, and we shall win as we have always won. My great object is that it shall not come to that. But it may do so, and if it does it will not be our fault here. It will be because the conditions of India and the characteristics of its population are not understood at home.

Minto, a well-intentioned man no doubt, was all the while vacillating between the progressive proddings of Morley helped by Gokhale, and the reactionary and defiant pressures of British bureaucracy and their supporters. For this somewhat bellicose declaration on his part Morley could only respond by his testimony to the sense of responsibility shown by members of Parliament, even by the Radicals among them, and he<sup>2</sup> added :

"So when you say that the modern House of Commons is 'Perhaps the greatest danger to the continuance of our rule in India' I cannot for the life of me discover any evidence so far for any proposition of that formidable kind — quite the contrary." As regards Minto's claim to a free hand for the men on the spot, Morley had just to point out that : "This notion of the free-hand is really against both letter and spirit of law and constitution."

For Gokhale's plans of securing the maximum political reform in the shortest possible period he had a willing ally in Morley, though even his vision and capacity were restricted in several ways. For Minto it was easier to appreciate the bureaucratic rather than the Indian, or the British Parliamentary viewpoint as represented in a series of communications by Morley. Gokhale was often in the difficult and unenviable position of having to advise both Minto and Morley in their respective programmes of immediate action. In these situations Gokhale had not only to keep out of consideration his own long term perspectives and goals to which he gave free expression in his own

<sup>1</sup> See foot-note 2 on p. xxxi.

<sup>2</sup> See foot-note 1 on p. xxxi.

public as well as private utterances, but he had often to give advice on differing approaches to the same problem adopted by Minto and Morley. This was bound to give rise to occasional misunderstandings of his position both among official and non-official circles.

#### *Mohamedan Representation*

A very glaring case of such misunderstanding arose in connection with a note on reforms (pp. 287-90) submitted to Morley in September, 1908. The broad outlines of this note were in keeping with Gokhale's ideas on the subject to which he had given public expression on several occasions. An expansion of the Central and Provincial Councils, elected majority in the latter, and non-official majority in the former, inclusion of Indians in Executive Councils, powers of discussion and of moving of resolutions on the budget, right of moving resolutions on all items of public importance, provision of a veto to the Governors in provincial, and to the Governor-General in both central and provincial matters, and a reform of the district administration were some of the important features of Gokhale's own proposals. On the question of separate elections for Mohamedans, a point of agreement had not been reached. Gokhale's personal view of the subject was, as he had made clear on several occasions, that elections should be held by the general body of voters for all the elective seats. If any strong sense of exclusion existed among the Mohamedan voters because of their having been able to put into the legislature a smaller number of members than what by their proportionate strength in the population they were entitled to, supplementary elections for the requisite number of seats should be held through the voters of that community. Such an arrangement was feasible in the immediate context, as a certain number of nominated seats were still available. Moreover, as the role of the legislators was to be only a representative and largely advisory one a few numbers on one side or the other did not matter. It appears that initially the Government of India was favourable to this idea, but Morley in presenting his proposals to Parliament outlined a new scheme of his own which bore no resemblance to Gokhale's ideas. Some critics of his felt this to be an evidence of what they called Hindu Intrigue in London. It was to repudiate this insinuation that Gokhale had to explain the full circumstances in a letter to *The Times* (pp. 304-06).

It appears, however, that Gokhale's position on communal electorates continued to be misinterpreted here as well as in England. In a speech in Marathi delivered on behalf of the Deccan Sabha (pp. 307-12) he addressed himself directly to the Hindu-Mohamedan question. Like so many Indian leaders, before and after him, he was convinced that without communal unity a stable and progressive national State could not be established. Equally well in the atmosphere of common subjection to an alien rule the prospect of all-round realization of this truth appeared to be dim. The past history of India was of little direct help in an early forging of bonds of communal unity against such

odds. Taking all these circumstances into account, Gokhale has given an overall assessment of the subject in this important speech.

Over the greater part of India the two communities had inherited a tradition of antagonism, which, though it might ordinarily lie dormant, broke forth into activity at the smallest provocation. It was that tradition which had to be overcome. . . . Spread of education, a wide and efficient performance of civic duties, growth of national aspirations and a quickening of national self-respect in both communities were among the forces which would ultimately overcome the tradition.

In the best interest of their public life and for the future of their land, they must first have elections on a territorial basis in which all communities without distinction of race or creed should participate and then special supplementary elections should be held to secure the fair and adequate representation of such important minorities as had received less than their full share in the general elections.

The Government of India's original proposals had been very much on these lines, proportionate representation for the Mohamedans, partly through general, and partly through special, electorates. The Secretary of State, however, having proposed, from the highest motives, as they could all see, a scheme of his own and having afterwards found it necessary to abandon it and fall back on the Government of India's proposals, did so in language which opened the door to large demands by the Moslem League (both special electorates and weightage).

When any one urged that his community was specially important and should, therefore, receive representation in excess of its fair share, the undoubted and irresistible implication was that the other communities were comparatively inferior and should receive less than their fair share. That was a position to which naturally the other communities could not assent.

#### *Legislative Reform*

Representation of minorities was only one, among several important aspects, of constitutional reform in which Gokhale failed to carry conviction either to the Government of India or to the Secretary of State. In his note submitted to Morley (pp. 287-90), Gokhale had urged the formation of budget committees of the legislature both at the centre and in the provinces. His own experience of budget discussions had convinced him by then that speeches made by a few members on the non-official side after a budget is formally presented by Government is not the best way to seek to influence budgetary action in the interests of the people. If while the budget is in the process of preparation, and in any case before it is put to the vote, non-official representatives could sit with the officials and discuss their views on policy as well as its implementation in detail, the extent and timeliness of non-official influence may be enhanced. Incidentally, this procedure may help to train non-official members in the responsibilities connected with public revenue and expenditure.

Gokhale did not find it easy to persuade his colleagues to adopt an attitude of co-operation towards a scheme of reforms with which he himself was not in complete agreement. Speaking on the subject at the (1908) Madras session of the Congress (pp. 291-99), he explained why he thought that in spite of the limitations of the scheme a policy of grateful appreciation was justified. Taking the reform of the Councils and the further reforms which may come as a result of the Decentralization Commission together, he felt that a substantial advance would be made. It was, in his opinion, not reasonable at that stage of the progress of our national movement to expect effective control over either legislation or administration. He felt, however, that the new reforms provided for what he called "responsive association from within." This would ensure preventive influence over undesirable legislation. A constant attitude of antagonism would produce no constructive results. Even the ultimate veto of the Governor or the Governor-General could be rendered ineffective by a tradition of responsible association among official and non-official members. In this respect the appointment of Indian members to the Secretary of State's Council, and to the Executive Councils of the Viceroy and Governors had a special relevance. Further progress towards a fuller sharing of powers can only be made through a wholehearted and competent discharge of the limited responsibilities and powers conferred on them.

#### *Indians in South Africa*

During these eventful years there was only one subject for which Gokhale allowed his concentration on Reforms to be partially diverted. That subject was the one for which he held himself almost completely at the disposal of Gandhi to act in support of Indians in South Africa. In a public meeting held in Bombay in September, 1909 (pp. 409-16), Gokhale regretted that racial discrimination against Indians should continue to be imposed in a Crown Colony, Transvaal, in spite of the strong opinion expressed against it both in India and in South Africa. He wholeheartedly supported Gandhi in his stand, and in particular in his campaign of passive resistance, against which so much criticism was offered, even by some of his usual supporters. The following passage from Gokhale's speech brings out his complete understanding with Gandhi, and, what is more significant, his acceptance of passive resistance when all other means have proved ineffective.

In fighting for the principle that no humiliating disabilities shall be imposed by the statute book of a British Colony on Indians as Indians, Mr. Gandhi is fighting for the assertion of our claim to that equality with which our hopes for the future are bound up. I have heard it said by some friends, mainly Englishmen, that though they originally sympathized with the Indians in this struggle Mr. Gandhi's resort to Passive Resistance, involving as it does defiance of the laws of the Colony, has alienated their sympathies. Now I do not in the first place think that this is quite a fact, for we see the Committee in England, presided over by Lord Ampthill, backing up the

passive resisters as strongly and as cordially as ever. Again even if a few Englishmen have grown cold in their sympathies, I am sure none of us here feels anything but the highest admiration for the manner in which the struggle has been carried on by our side. I think, and I say this deliberately, that in the circumstances of the Transvaal, Passive Resistance, such as that organized by Mr. Gandhi, is not only legitimate, but is a duty resting on all self-respecting persons. What is this Passive Resistance? Passive Resistance to an unjust law or an oppressive measure is a refusal to acquiesce in that law or measure and a readiness to suffer the penalty instead which may be prescribed as an alternative. If we strongly and clearly and conscientiously feel the grave injustice of law, and there is no other way to obtain redress, I think refusal to acquiesce in it, taking the consequences of such refusal, is the only course left to those who place conscience and self-respect above their material and immediate interests.

On the South African question Gokhale and Gandhi agreed that the issue and the time both justified resort to Passive Resistance. It is conceivable that he may not have agreed either with Gandhi or some one else as to the propriety of adopting Passive Resistance in respect of some other issue or at some other time. But that in Gokhale's armoury of the weapons of constitutional agitation Passive Resistance occupied a place reserved for readily usable items cannot be denied. The moral which Gokhale drew from the plighy of Indians in South Africa was :

The root of our present troubles in the colonies really lies in the fact that our status is not what it should be in our own country. Men, who have no satisfactory status in their own land, cannot expect to have satisfactory status elsewhere.

#### *Passive Resistance*

That Gokhale's acceptance of passive resistance as a legitimate method of a citizen's political action in appropriate conditions was a conclusion arrived at after mature thought is further borne out by his remarks on the subject when the situation in Transvaal was under discussion at the Lahore Congress (pp. 417-25). Gokhale in moving for adoption of the relevant resolution said :

Our appeal to our own countrymen is this : a small colony in Transvaal is doing its duty in the matter. (Improvement in the conditions of indentured labour). It has done nothing unworthy but everything worthy. It is engaged in what is known as the passive resistance struggle. What is the passive resistance struggle? It is essentially defensive in its nature and it fights with moral and spiritual weapons. A passive resister resists tyranny by undergoing suffering in his own person. He pits soul force against brute force; he pits the divine in man against the brute in man; he pits suffering against oppression; he pits conscience against might; he pits faith against injustice, right against wrong. A passive resister



deliberately and openly violates the requirements of an unjust law or order for the simple reason that he cannot conscientiously submit to that law or order. He does not seek to evade the consequences of that law but invites them and he glories in them. It is a spiritual struggle essentially in keeping with the highest traditions of Indian spirituality. I repeat that our countrymen have done nothing unworthy. On the contrary, everything that they have done is worthy of them.

All through his active political life since 1899 Gokhale was tilting his lance of reason — be it in the shape of sweet reasonableness — against the armed might, the brute force, of the bureaucracy. Even if he could he would not, as a civilized and conscientious human being, easily bring himself to pitting his own brute force against bureaucratic brute force. But by this time, his contact with Gandhi and the progress of the just struggle of Indian settlers in South Africa under the latter's leadership, had shown to him the existence of a political weapon even more potent than reason in dealing with brute force. The mass support, the discipline and sacrifice, and selfless yet competent leadership, such as that of Gandhi, may not be forthcoming on every issue, however just it may be. But if a vicious system refused to bend under normal pressure of political agitation, for Gokhale, "passive resistance is not only legitimate, but it is a duty."

#### *Performance of Reformed Councils*

It was a great irony of history that the very first measure presented before the Reformed Indian Legislature, early in 1910, was a Bill authorizing Government to demand security from Presses and Papers, and to confiscate their properties, at its discretion, as a preventive deterrent to sedition. As was to be expected, Gokhale raised his powerful voice to oppose the Bill in all its stages, and to mitigate the rigours of the proposed legislation he moved several amendments (pp. 59-74). He placed the main responsibility for such sedition as found its way into the columns of the Indian press on the provocative writings in the Anglo-Indian press, which were widely believed to be inspired by official informants and mentors. He held, along with the Viceroy Lord Minto, that there was a general improvement in the political atmosphere of the country, and that such few outrages as still disfigured the scene were outbreaks of plots laid long ago. Gokhale had to regret his somewhat compromising attitude to this Bill from his place in the Council only the next year. But at the time when the Press Bill came up for consideration, the real issue before him was to stand by the new Indian member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, Mr. Sinha who had earlier offered to resign because of his disapproval of the Government's measure.

Gokhale felt that the nature of responsibility within the Executive Council is such that the new Indian Member ought not to resign, even if he disagreed on a particular issue. In any case Gokhale felt that such action on the part of the first Indian Member so soon after his appointment would bring into jeopardy the whole policy of Indianization in places of high responsibility. To facilitate

acceptance of this position by Sinha, Gokhale on his part contented himself with a strongly critical speech and abstention from voting. The Viceroy utilized this occasion of non-official support to the Press Bill to announce the withdrawal of deportation orders on Lajpat Rai and others. For Gokhale this was unexpected, as he had privately suggested to Minto a deputation of non-official members as a suitable occasion for that announcement. Minto thought that acceptance of Gokhale's suggestion would look like a submission to popular pressure. And this he wanted to avoid. It is possible that the political calculus behind Gokhale's decision not to oppose the Bill would evoke some comment and criticism. It is equally clear however, that Gokhale was judging the Bill not in the perspective of its contents, but in that of total and long term effects of his behaviour on the occasion. The general reaction within the country to Gokhale's attitude towards the Press Bill was naturally unfavourable. This was not unexpected, and, therefore, for Gokhale it was a calculated cost. But when in the implementation of the Act he later found the bureaucracy discarding all restraint, he genuinely regretted even the negative support which he and some of his friends had given to this measure.

*Inevitability of Further Political Reform*

Both by the way in which the Press Act was administered and by the attitude generally of officers towards the new changes brought about by the Morley-Minto Reforms, Gokhale felt considerably disturbed. While he recognized the good intentions of both, Morley and Minto, and also generally the conciliatory approach of the latter he was frank in making his dissatisfaction with the actual implementation of reforms known to friends in India and in U. K. The moral which he was free to draw from this situation was that unless the scope of reforms was considerably enlarged so as to place the elected Indian element in a position of effective influence, and not merely of "responsible association from within," the real purpose of the reforms and the needs of progressive government will not be met. Morley who knew Gokhale better and who had a broader background as a political philosopher was probably not surprised at Gokhale's frustrations at the actual results of the reforms. But Viceroy Minto looked upon this attitude of Gokhale as worse than disappointing. On being informed by Morley of a letter written by Gokhale to a mutual friend in U. K. complaining about the generally hostile reaction to reforms on the part of Europeans and officials, Minto<sup>1</sup> wrote back as follows:

I am glad you sent me the extract from Gokhale's letter to his friend in England. It is very important as showing his hand, I am sorry to say. I can only call it mischievous, and written with the intention to mislead. Gokhale would not have spoken in the same sense to me. And that is the worst of him, that one cannot rely upon his absolute good faith. I know him well, admire him much, and am on most friendly terms with him. In ability and breadth of view he is a long way ahead of any Indian in political life. But he must know quite well that the picture he gave in

<sup>1</sup> See foot-note 2 on p. xxxi.

his letter is not a true one. Our repressive measures are certainly not severe and the suggestion that they will be hardly used is unjustifiable. The tendency of Local Governments will be generally the other way. Then the suggestion that the official world is opposed to reforms and advance is quite untrue. There has been an extra ordinary change in that direction. No doubt the reforms were originally unpopular generally with the bureaucracy, but the people who do not recognize their value now are very few and far between. . . . But the worst symptom in what Gokhale writes is that he apparently does not mean to accept the Reforms with the goodwill which is so important for their success. If he goes on the lines of at once picking holes in it and asking for further alterations, he will make a great mistake in a patriotic sense. After all Gokhale represents a very small minority in India but it is a dangerous minority in that undue weight is attached to its views.

The British Parliamentary perspective of the Liberal statesman, Morley, was, however, different from this Olympic pronouncement of the Viceroy of India. Morley,<sup>1</sup> writing to Minto around the same time, revising the system of administration which the two had to work together for five years, observed;

It is a terribly cumbrous and artificial sort of system, and I am not certain that it will last for ever, or even for many years to come. I suspect that you surmise the same,

The period, that followed the Reforms of 1909, was not a happy one for Gokhale. While he was prepared in good faith to accept small steps forward towards an accepted goal he was not content to swallow without a protest a malingering and disruptive attitude on the part of those who were charged with the responsibility of honest implementation of reform measures. As far as it was consistent with his essentially dedicated and hopeful outlook on his responsibilities towards the country, Gokhale felt continuously frustrated ever since. It was with great difficulty that he was trying to persuade the Indian leaders, within and without the Congress, to work the Reforms as an important step towards the realization of a higher nationhood. He received poor support for this appeal in the performance of officials, who in fact pursued their attempts at suppression of the political movement and at dividing the ranks of Indian politicians with even greater determination than before.

#### *Enlightened Loyalty and Limited Co-operation*

Within the Supreme Legislative Council itself, little improvement was visible in the Government's attitude towards legitimate political activity among the people and towards their political aspirations. The Press Act of 1910 was followed by the Seditious Meeting Bill of 1911, intended to be put on the Statute Book as a permanent measure. The speech which Gokhale made (pp. 47-58) in opposing this measure is significant in two respects. He restated his position on the theme of loyalty to Government and clearly indicated the limits within which Government in India were entitled to expect the co-operation of their subjects.

<sup>1</sup> See foot-note 1 on p. xxxi.

Just as the right of free speech is an abstract right so also the proposition that all loyal citizens must rally round the executive in maintaining law and order is an abstract proposition, and its value as a guide to political conduct must depend upon the circumstances amidst which it is sought to be applied.

And then,

after a great deal of consideration, I have come to the conclusion that while things are as they are today, our co-operation with Government cannot ordinarily go beyond two classes of measures—constructive measures taken for the moral and material well-being of the people and measures urgently and immediately necessary to deal with actual or threatened disturbances.

This mood of sullen dissatisfaction was further strengthened by happenings in South Africa. His emphasis on racial equality within the Empire, and his spiritual as well as political involvement in Gandhi's activities in the Transvaal occupied a much larger part of Gokhale's thinking than was or is generally recognized. His visit to South Africa, in 1912, was a crucial event in the formulation, confirmation and progress of his political thinking. The parting appeal which he made to Indians in Pretoria on Nov. 15, 1912 (pp.435-41) gives us an inkling of the sharpening of his reactions to the entrenched positions of the vested interests in the British Empire :

You have by no means an easy position here, and it is not impossible that it may even grow worse. But, whatever happens, do not lose faith or give way to despair. I pray to God that such a struggle as you found it necessary to wage in the Transvaal during the last three years may not have to be waged again. But if it has to be resumed, or if you have to enter struggles of a like nature for justice denied or injustice forced on you, remember that the issue will largely turn on the character you show, on your capacity for combined action, on your readiness to suffer and sacrifice in a just cause.

Soon after his return from South Africa Gokhale attended the annual session of the Congress held in Bankipur. Jawaharlal Nehru,<sup>1</sup> who also was present, found that "Gokhale, fresh from South Africa, was the outstanding person of the session. He seemed to be one of the few persons present who took politics and public affairs seriously and felt deeply about them. I was impressed by him." The main interest in politics for Gokhale after this date lay mainly in organizing the political life of the country on stronger and more cohesive lines. The work within the legislature did not by any means exhaust his capacity to be of use to his countrymen. He had accepted membership of the Royal Commission on Public Services in India on account of his life-long interest in the process of Indianization. Largely owing to his failing health he was not able to do as much for the Commission as he would otherwise have done. In fact when he passed away, in February 1915, this Commission

<sup>1</sup> J. NEHRU — *Autobiography*, p. 27.

had still to submit its report. He had, however, occasion, on account of this Commission, twice to visit England. During these visits he was able on a more direct basis to exchange ideas with friends of India in that country on the need and form of an early advance of further political reform. Strength and unity of political life in India, and an active support for Indian self-government in U.K. were the two most engrossing interests of Gokhale during these years.

#### *Post-War Reforms*

The War, which commenced in August, 1914, came as an altogether new factor in the situation. It soon became clear that not only tranquility in India but its active and wholehearted support would be needed to help Great Britain and its allies to win ultimate success in the struggle. This realization was, however, gradual and in fact, it fluctuated with the fortunes of British arms from time to time. Early in the days in the War the full implications of its lasting effects were not known. Gokhale, who was nursing a serious ailment within himself, was under a special difficulty to appraise the full implications of the situation, internal and international and, to organize suitable action. It was mostly from his sick bed that he was attending as a matter of duty to all affairs which came before him.

It was in the course of such a restricted routine that towards the middle of January, 1915 he was asked by Lord Willingdon, the then Governor of Bombay, to discuss with him the subject of further political reform for India. So far as Lord Willingdon himself was concerned, the initiative with the Government of India was to be his own. To secure fuller Indian support to the War effort he felt that a declaration of further reforms was called for. Knowing the limitations of Lord Willingdon and having no more than the first six months of the War behind him, what he would be justified in suggesting to the authorities at Simla and London was the question. Due to illness Gokhale could not succeed in arranging a meeting with two of his colleagues, Pherozeshah Mehta and the Aga Khan whom he occasionally consulted on such matters. Being pressed by Willingdon Gokhale pencilled a draft for his use (pp. 313-17). This was to have been discussed with Mehta and the Aga Khan before dispatch. Mehta did not obviously reply, and the Aga Khan only wrote back suggesting the addition of a clause regarding German East Africa, which he felt should be turned over to India after the War, for colonization by Indians. As will be seen from the scheme as it appears in this volume, this clause was in fact added at the end.

This, however, proved to be the end of Gokhale's own activity in politics, as almost on the morrow of the dispatch of the draft he breathed his last. It is important to note these circumstances attending the draft on post-war reforms in India to make it clear, firstly that it did not represent Gokhale's own considered and complete views about a long term solution of India's constitutional needs, and, secondly, that it was in no sense a testament which he addressed to his own people. The draft contained a set of proposals which,

in the opinion of Gokhale, Lord Willingdon could on his own press on the Government of India as a war measure. This draft would in all probability have remained buried in the official archives of Government, but for its publication by the Aga Khan in 1917, fully two years after it was first prepared. The Aga Khan was led on to do this because Mr. Jinnah earlier had, in his presidential address to the Provincial Conference held at Ahmedabad, outlined a scheme of Provincial autonomy which was strikingly similar to the contents of Gokhale's draft.

### *Organizing Freedom for Prosperity*

If there is any such thing as a political testament of Gokhale for his people, it will have to be sought in no single one of his writings and speeches. In all his contributions from, say, 1905, there are a number of basic concepts about a desirable political life for the people of this country. These concepts form a consistent whole of a broader life of freedom and prosperity which is the goal of political activity. Like all true lovers of freedom, Gokhale realized that important as politics is, it is by no means the only important thing in the legitimate interests of a civilized society. A variety of industrial, social and cultural associations freely and usefully operating in their respective spheres of interest must be considered to be equally necessary and important. For this reason an atmosphere and tradition of social equality and cultural freedom for all citizens in a community is essential to secure the maximum benefit out of a system of political equality and freedom. What Gokhale had to say about the evils of repression, and about the inherent value of freedom of association, meeting and expression, has universal and permanent validity.

All governments, irrespective of their outward forms, are tempted to assume executive powers over their subjects as a short cut to easy suppression of all sources of opposition. The fact that these powers are conferred on the executive by the Legislatures of the day does not take away from the fact that executive restrictions narrow the base of that free association among citizens, on which the superstructure of constitutional government rests. Especially if the controlling power in the legislature is held by a strong power group, which is for the time being securely entrenched, the risk of executive high-handedness covered with a legal cloak is all the greater. Freedom-loving citizens and their representatives have the duty to see that legal freedoms and ordinary processes of law are not denied to any citizen either by extraordinary legislation or by extraordinary procedures.

When Gokhale commenced his political life not a single member of a Legislative Council was elected in the true sense of the word. An election had to be followed by a confirmatory nomination by Government. The number of even such members was almost negligible in a legislative body of the size of a modern cabinet in many state Governments, and much smaller than the number of ministers in the Central Government of India. The Morley-Minto Councils, which owed so much to the initiative and suggestion of Gokhale, were the

last stage of political reform with which he was associated. These councils lacked effective power either in the making or in the execution of laws. Except that the first World War, which had just commenced when he died, appeared to introduce a new unforeseen element in the situation, the power of Britain and its grip over dependent areas appeared to be unchallengeable. Against such a background Gokhale could concentrate only on small and immediate but necessary and difficult tasks. Even in these, more often than not, his generation could serve the country more by its failures than by its successes. Fortunately that stage is now left behind. Even the generation to whom it was given to put up the last and the successful struggle against foreign domination has well-nigh passed out. For the political problems of the present generation, therefore, Gokhale's Writings and Speeches are useful as guides not so much on the variable detail, as on the fundamental principles of political organization in our country.

### *Indian Unity*

It was difficult to imagine a greater supporter of India's unity than Gokhale. Territorially, as well as demographically, for him India was one. Following Ranade, Gokhale saw in the British and pre-British history of India a continuous thread of intermingling of peoples and cultures from which a stronger and healthier bond of national unity would emerge, if only people knew how to utilize it. As important as unity was, however, the diversity of the country and of the people. Unity and diversity could not be simultaneously sustained except by incorporating them within the political structure in a suitable form. As far as can be derived from his words, Gokhale anticipated that in the natural course of political evolution the British Parliamentary control of Indian affairs would be withdrawn and the office of the Secretary of State for India would be merged with that of the Colonial Secretary for the maintenance of constitutional relation of a self-governing India with the Crown. Within India, Gokhale believed in reconstructing the whole edifice of administration on the principle of decentralization.

From the village panchayat upwards each district would have as much of self-contained and democratic government as was consistent with due regard to the functions of government and to the availability of the means of discharging them most efficiently. Even in respect of such matters of local administration as had to be left to the final authority of the Provincial or national governments, Gokhale expected the local representatives of these more central authorities to seek advice from the representatives of the people in each district. The government of each constituent province should have full authority for administering all subjects of internal administration: The Central Government should have exclusive responsibility for only such functions as have primarily an all-India application, such as defence, foreign relations, currency and external trade. But over the rest of the field of predominantly internal interest, Gokhale would give to the All-India Government only certain reserve of powers which

would ensure that any serious flaws in the governments of the provinces would be corrected in time.

#### *Limited Parliamentary Government*

As for the relationship of the Executive with the Legislative branch of government, Gokhale does not approve of the prevailing British model which was installed by the self-governing colonies of the Empire. He did not contemplate that the heads of State would be just constitutional heads with no ruling functions. While administration would be directed by minister-level functionaries appointed by governors, they would not be necessarily removable by a majority in the legislatures. The influence of the legislature would be indirect. Fresh taxation could not be levied without the support of the legislature. Ordinary legislation would, of course, be subject to the sanction of the legislatures, but powers of veto, and in certain cases powers of issuing ordinances, would be vested in the heads of State. As Gokhale has specifically stated in one or two places, he visualized the role of legislatures in India to be nearer that of the Reichstag in the Germany of his days than that of the Parliament in Britain. If a new description is to be found for such a system in which the legislature has effective influence but no automatic control, it would be "limited parliamentary government," on the analogy of "limited monarchy."

It appears that, though not as a substitute for direct election by individual voters, but as a supplement to such elections, Gokhale favoured group elections by special electorates, such as Universities, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, big landowners and Municipalities. The particular associations or bodies which would constitute an appropriate group for such elections would vary with time and circumstance. When the legislative councils were in their very infancy it was too early to think in terms of a second chamber either in the provinces or at the centre. Gokhale naturally makes no reference to this item. The question, therefore, as to whether the election by particular interests or groups which he favours has a special reference to either the lower or the higher chambers, or to both, will have to remain a moot one.

#### *Political Education*

Apart from the structure and policy of Government, Gokhale attached special importance to certain aspects of active political interest on the part of the citizens themselves. By far the most important need in this respect is the provision of facilities for the systematic and careful study of public questions by citizens generally, and in particular by those who assume representative or official responsibilities. In his own day, he was almost the only member on the non-official side of the legislature who devoted himself to a study of important public questions. It cannot be claimed that he studied all public questions. Finance, governmental structure, status of Indians within the Empire and education were subjects which ranked high in the attention which Gokhale bestowed on them. But in any normal system of popular government,



unless a large number of citizens, and certainly all those who, either in an official or a non-official capacity, have to attend to public affairs make it a point to study the questions in which they are interested, processes of popular government would not be made to function intelligently and fruitfully. The wider the scope of the franchise, and the greater the responsibilities assumed by governmental bodies, the greater would be the need for a systematic study of public questions. Contributions of public men, in or out of office, would be valuable in proportion to the study that has gone into their formulation.

It does not appear that Gokhale would have been content with a single Society of Servants of India established by him at Poona. Both during the days of struggle and organization for the attainment of the status of a self-governing nation and also for the current operation of a democratic State, when one was established, there was need for suitable institutions of devoted public servants, who would make it their life's mission to study selected subjects of public importance and to help in organizing and guiding public activity. Pluralism, both within the sphere of government and outside, and a general decentralization of social organization were favoured by Gokhale.

The tasks prescribed for members under the Constitution of the Servants of India Society (pp. 181-86) are really the essential purposes for which political workers must continue to exert themselves at all times. Patriotism, national service, communal harmony, spread of education, industrial development, and elevation of the handicapped sections of the community are at least as important at present as they were at any time before. In fact the hazards of a free life for a developing country make the importance and urgency of these tasks even greater. By the analogy of Japan what Gokhale said in his presidential address at the Banaras Congress (pp. 187-209) is specially apt at the present stage of our existence.

India needs today above everything else that the gospel of this devotion (to motherland) should be preached to high and low, to prince and to peasant, in town and in hamlet, till the service of motherland becomes with us as overmastering a passion as it is in Japan.

The following passage from his speech which he delivered in Allahabad, under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru, may well be treated as the theme in support of which all his political speeches and writings were made :

Every one must recognize that their main work is to build up the strength of our people. That work, roughly speaking, is threefold. First, the promotion of a closer union among the different sections of the Indian community — between the Hindus and Mohamedans — and among the different sections of the Hindus themselves; secondly, the development of a stronger and higher type of character, firm of purpose and disciplined in action; and, thirdly, the cultivation of an intense feeling of nationality throughout the country rising superior to caste and creed and rejoicing in all sacrifice for the motherland, accompanied by a spread of political education among the masses. (pp. 219-20).

## IMPORTANT EVENTS IN GOKHALE'S LIFE

- 1866, May 9 Birth at Kotluk (Ratnagiri District).
- 1876 Migration to Kolhapur for education.
- 1881 Passed matriculation examination.
- 1882 Studied in Rajaram College, Kolhapur.
- 1883 Studied in Deccan College, Poona.
- 1884 Graduated from Elphinstone College, Bombay; and joined the Law Class.
- 1885 Joined New English School, Poona (started in 1880), as a teacher.
- 1886 Became a Life-member of the Deccan Education Society, Poona (founded on Oct. 24, 1884), and began teaching in Fergusson College.  
Introduced to Ranade.
- 1888 Elected Secretary, Bombay Provincial Conference.  
Edited English columns of the *Sudharak*.
- 1889 First participation in the National Congress.
- 1890 Secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha and Editor of its Quarterly.
- 1892 Appointed Secretary of the Deccan Education Society.
- 1895 Worked as Secretary to the Reception Committee of the National Congress which met at Poona.  
Elected Fellow, Bombay University.
- 1896 Resigned Secretaryship of the Sarvajanik Sabha and helped in starting the Deccan Sabha, of which he became the first secretary.  
First meeting with Gandhiji.
- 1897 First visit to England for giving evidence before the Welby Commission.  
Apology incident.
- 1898 Organized plague relief measures at Poona.
- 1899 Elected member of the Bombay Legislative Council.
- 1901 Elected member of the Imperial Legislative Council.
- 1902 Went on furlough from Fergusson College.  
Elected President, Poona Municipality.
- 1903 Elected additional Joint General Secretary to the National Congress.
- 1904 Made C.I.E.  
Formally retired from Fergusson College.
- 1905 Founded the Servants of India Society (on June 12).  
Second visit to England as a Congress delegate to represent India's case in view of the impending British General Election.  
Presided over the National Congress at Banaras.

IMPORTANT EVENTS IN GOKHALE'S LIFE      li

- 1906      } Third and fourth visits to England to agitate for the prospec-  
1908      } tive reforms.
- 1907      Lecturing tour in Northern India.
- 1908      Gave evidence before the Decentralization Commission.
- 1910      Inauguration of the Ranade Industrial and Economic Institute.
- 1912      Visit to South Africa.
- Appointed member of the Public Services Commission.
- 1912, 1913 } Fifth, sixth and seventh visits to England in connection with  
and 1914 } the work of the Public Services Commission.
- 1913      Organized financial assistance for the Indian struggle in South  
            Africa.
- 1914      Declined offer of K.C.I.E.  
            Attempted a Congress compromise.
- 1915, Feb. 19 Death at Poona.

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Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom Mahatma Gandhi himself called 'Mahatma' and whom he regarded as his 'political guru,' was unquestionably one of the makers of modern India. His career was a remarkable one—graduate at eighteen, professor at twenty, secretary of the Provincial Conference at twenty-one, editor of an influential journal, the *Quarterly* of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha at twenty-four, secretary of the Reception Committee of the National Congress at twenty-nine, an important witness before a Royal Commission (the Welby Commission) at thirty-one, Provincial Legislator at thirty-four, Imperial Legislator at thirty-six, president of the National Congress and founder of the Servants of India Society at thirty-nine.

For about twenty-five years Gokhale occupied a very prominent place among Indian political leaders and had many opportunities of delivering political speeches at the National Congress, in the Legislatures and on the public platform. His whole life was characterized by selfless dedication to the service of the people. His rare patriotic fervour, his constructive statesmanship and his spiritual outlook greatly attracted Mahatma Gandhi. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi, 'he (Gokhale) does not seek to rouse the feelings of his audience. His only aim is to convince his hearers of what he has to say. His ammunition is his wealth of facts and figures; his arguments persuasive and full of enthusiasm, and his style simple but chaste and firm.'

This volume of Gokhale's political speeches and writings faithfully brings out his political philosophy and his method of work. It will, like Volume I, prove of inestimable value to research workers, students of politics and, above all, the large number of Indian citizens who now have the opportunity to serve their country by successfully working the system of democratic rule for the realization of which Gokhale gave the best years of life.

Professor D. G. Karve was a member of the Deccan Education Society for more than twenty-five years and was head of two of its important colleges. Since his retirement from that body he has been member of the fourth Finance Commission; Director, Programme Evaluation, Planning Commission; Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India; Vice-Chairman, State Bank of India; Vice-Chancellor, University of Poona, etc. He is also closely connected with the Servants of India Society as its Associate.

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