

THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES

The Right Hon.
V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

Publisher
S. VISWANATHAN

By the same Author and Editor :

THE OTHER HARMONY

A collection of the author's writings and
speeches.

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THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES

A SELECTION FROM THE WRITINGS AND SPEECHES

OF

The Right Hon'ble
V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

P.O., C.H., LL.D., D.LITT.

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

When "The Other Harmony" by the Right Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri was published, a number of requests to publish further selections of his speeches and writings were received. This book is in response to such requests. It is greatly regretted that, owing to difficulties in getting paper, it has not been possible to use uniform and better quality of paper for printing this book.

Another book of the Author, "Lectures on the Ramayana." is in the press and will be published shortly.

Madras }
25th July 1946 }

THE PUBLISHER

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THE GRAND OLD MAN*

DADABHAI NAOROJI (1825—1917)

I

Twenty-three years ago on the last day of June 1917 I was one of several thousands of people in Bombay who passed beside a body lying in state. It was that of Dadabhai Naoroji ; and then I heard from the first storey a voice as of one reciting our Sama Veda. The more I listened, the more the similarity struck my mind. But I was unable to account for it, and when I inquired, I learnt that certain priests of the Parsi community were reciting sacred texts from the Zend Avesta for the salvation of the soul of the great dead. I then vividly realized that the Hindus and the Parsis were at one time alike in their culture and civilization, in their ceremonials, rituals and sacrifices. The centuries that have passed have sundered the two communities in these respects, and to-day there are thousands of the youth of both communities who have scarcely an idea of their common origin. Later in the day I mingled among the vast crowds who followed Dadabhai Naoroji to

* From the text of two lectures delivered on Dadabhai Naoroji to the students of the Annamalai University in 1940.

the Tower of Silence. It was remarkable how varied were the communities represented,—not only Parsis, but Mohammadens and Christians and Hindus, people of every colour and sect, people of both sexes and all ages, seeking as with one sorrowing heart to follow him to his final resting place. It was a great testimony to his unique position as one beloved of all races in India, each recognising him as its own. Dadabhai Naoroji himself has more than once in his life declared 'I am a Hindu, I am a Mussalman, I am a Christian and I am a Parsi, but above all I am an Indian'. His great compatriot Mahadev Govind Ranade often expressed the same sentiment with the profoundest conviction and sincerity. The understanding that had been reached six months previously at the Lucknow Congress between Hindus and Muslims was then fresh in our memory, and seemed to herald the day when all the different peoples of India would realise they were but parts of one common nationality. It was this hope, this forward-looking hope, that animated us who thronged the streets of Bombay, mourning the Grand Old Man, the embodiment for many years of that hope and aspiration.

Dadabhai's life was ninety-two years in extent; seventy-five of these were in the last century and only seventeen in the present to which many of you belong. Dadabhai had acquired a unique reputation and standing. He had come to be called the Grand Old Man of India; He was regarded as our Gladstone. Gladstone, Morley and other eminent publicists of the day admitted Dadabhai to their friendship and recognized his extraordinary worth

as a student of public affairs, as a constant worker for the welfare of his country, as a vigilant watchman forever championing the cause of his native land. No words that I have will adequately describe the veneration in which he was held by his countrymen. Take Ranade. Perhaps next after Dadabhai himself, the greatest name in Western India, he was called the modern Rishi by general consent. He spoke of Dadabhai not merely with affection and reverence but as the leader whom he was to follow; in matters of Indian economics and finance they agreed almost to a point. I will next mention the Mahatma whose name stands unique amongst Indians and has a high place in the world's roll of greatness. The Mahatma spoke to Dadabhai as a humble student would to his Headmaster. He constantly reported to him of his doings in South Africa and asked for advice. In so many words he would say, 'Please chide me if I go wrong, please put me right; I am like your son in every respect.' My master Gokhale used to say that he felt a spiritual glow in his bosom when he stood in the presence of three people,—the Mahatma was one of them, his master Ranade was another and over both these and in a class of his own he would mention Dadabhai. I remember once hearing him speak about Dadabhai. He described him in his Madras speech in the year 1908 as 'the foremost Indian of our time, the man without self or stain, our aged chief who bears on his head the snow of years, but carries in his heart the fire of youth.' In Dadabhai's later days he was subjected to much criticism for the bitterness of the language that he employed in condemning the reluctance of the British people to

advance us constitutionally and economically. Europeans used to condemn Dadabhai for the severity of his attack and the way in which he questioned British sincerity. That did not much offend Gokhale. What offended him was that, echoing these British critics of Dadabhai, some Indians also used to speak censoriously of him as the man who was spoiling the good work of his sober compatriots by alienating the sympathy of the British people. Once Gokhale cried out in his anger referring to such Indians: 'Whoever condemns Dadabhai for the bitterness of his language, he does not understand anything; whoever repudiates him, he is none of us; whoever tries to lay rude and irreverent hands on him, strike him down.'—Strong and violent language; but it indicates the depth to which Gokhale's feeling was moved when he contemplated young and inexperienced people who had no great public achievement to their credit wagging their tongues to condemn this great hero.

Dadabhai's greatness was many-sided. He was the first Indian to become Professor in days when even High School education was rare and was imparted by Europeans. Now of course Indian Professors are to be found everywhere, but, at the time Dadabhai was elevated to the rank, it was an unprecedented promotion to an Indian and the whole country rejoiced; to the end of his day Dadabhai, who had many names, also rejoiced in the name of Professor Dadabhai.

Then he was almost a pioneer, why *the* pioneer, of 'female education' in the Bombay Province. You will be surprised that I use the words 'female edu-

cation'. The word 'female' has fallen into disrepute only recently. In those days the education of woman was, without any suggestion of disrespect, called 'female education'. It is remarkable that in those days even in the Parsi community, which now stands in the vanguard of Indian civilisation, where women are almost held as the equals of men, where they marry or not at their will, where they marry as late as they like, where they inherit property and go about freely,—amongst them in Dadabhai's youth female education was considered a luxury and an impropriety. Dadabhai organised a band of young men whose duty it was to go from house to house, pleading with the parents to allow them, not to enter the premises,—that would have been considered too bold in those days—but to sit on the outer verandah and teach the girls of the family and then depart to another house. This pioneering work they did for several years, Dadabhai being the most enthusiastic leader of the party. Later in his old age he used to say 'I remember old parents would often come out and say "Get away, we don't want our girls to be taught by you chaps. We will throw you down the steps if you mount them."'

Then Dadabhai was the first to start journalism on a considerable scale. He started papers both, in Gujarati and in English and for many years conducted them himself taking no remuneration whatever. The first paper that he published was '*Rast Gofar*'—'The Speaker of the Truth'—a paper which held a high place in Indian journalism for seven decades until it was amalgamated with another paper. Besides, he organized many societies for the

diffusion of learning; but I must mention in particular his activity in connection with the first political agitation in our country. In conjunction with other enthusiastic spirits of the day, he first started a political association, following the example of Bengal, which was of course the Premier province in many respects, being the earliest province to feel the touch of western civilisation. You all know that Dadabhai achieved the eminence of being the first Indian member of Parliament. He had several years of hard struggle, wooing one constituency after another before he obtained a seat in the Mother of Legislative Houses. The event, at the time it took place, was regarded both in England and in this country as of the most paramount significance, not only for our future welfare but for the maintenance on the highest level of beneficence of the connection between the two countries. Then he was the first to agitate for the economic welfare of India and the equitable adjustment of financial relations between England and India. There was so much injustice perpetrated by those who were responsible in London that his efforts in the direction were rewarded by the appointment of a Royal Commission, the first Royal Commission to inquire into Indian affairs; and of that Royal Commission Dadabhai Naoroji himself was appointed member, an honour perfectly unprecedented in those days and looked upon as charged with great meaning for India's progress. He was among Indian publicists the one man who, in the old days of the Congress, was President on three different occasions, being asked on the last occasion, i.e., in 1906 to take the responsibility of conducting the proceedings because

of great difficulties which his great name and influence alone could conquer. I shall have to refer to this occasion presently. Then, when he had retired permanently and came back to India in the closing years of his life, (he came back when he was eighty-two and lived till he was ninety-two,) he had the unique honour of being visited by Viceroys and Governors who paid him the homage due to a long life devoted to the service of his country.

I had the honour of meeting him on two occasions. The first was in the beginning of the year 1907 in Calcutta just after he had finished his work as president of the Indian National Congress in December 1906. Mr. Gokhale, having then started the Servants of India Society, took its members to interview the great patriot. Mr. Gokhale, who had in him the elements of the old Indian *sishya* making obeisance to the old Indian *guru*, thought that, if he took his first members to Dadabhai, who was the embodiment of patriotism, they should receive an inspiration which would elevate them for their lives. I heard Dadabhai say then that it had been the dream of his life to organise a band of young men dedicated to the service of the country. In our presence he congratulated Mr. Gokhale on having been able to achieve what had been his own ambition but remained unfulfilled. Some years later, when I had been four years in the Servants of India Society and we decided to start a branch in Madras, Mr. Gokhale once more decided that it would be best for us before launching the organisation in the southern capital to go to Dadabhai and ask for his blessings. We were five people at the time, my

lamented friend Venkatasubbaiya* being one of them. I remember we went to Versova where the old man was then staying, a few miles from Bombay. He had been previously told of our visit, and those who guarded him with zealous care warned us not to stay in his presence for a long time or engage him in any arduous conversation; we were just to say who we were, why we went there, and what we desired. It fell to me to be the spokesman of the small deputation. I well remember the glow of pride and zeal and inspiration that we felt when the old man said 'Well, you are Gokhale's young men going to establish yourselves in a new place. Go, you have my blessings. I wish you well.'

Well then, ladies and gentlemen, do you think we should be doing wrong or wasting our time if we studied the life of such a man? Let us devote a little time to the study. It will certainly be rewarded in abundance; for the lessons of his life are many and great, and if I can convey to you the influence that he exercised upon his contemporaries and upon his followers, if I can communicate a touch of that to you, I shall have done, it seems to me, not the least of my services to this University.

Dadabhai was born in the year 1825. His early life seems to have been rather remarkable. He belonged to a priestly family. You know Brahmana families divide into two broad classes—those that devote themselves to the work of religion, of learning scripture themselves, teaching it to others, and officiating at private and public ceremonies of a religious character. They are called *vaidiks*, the *lowkiks* being those who follow secular occupations

* A member of the Servants of India Society.

and do not, generally speaking, study or chant the Vedas. The distinction is well preserved by the Telugus, among whom there is even to-day a pronounced feud between the *neogis* and *vaidiks*. The Parsis divided also into two such broad divisions. Dadabhai belonged to a priestly family, but like others among us here, he was the first in his family to depart from the profession, take to English education and forget all about his family traditions. His family had a curious title. They were called *Dordi*, that word means, it would appear, a rope made of coir, the cotton fibre. The members of this family from generation to generation were remarkable for their strength of will. They neither wavered nor wobbled, and we shall see how Dadabhai himself often exhibited a certain degree of resolution which was by his friends called obstinacy. He was proud of it. Once when he was talking to the Gaekwar of Baroda, of which he was the Dewan and the Gaekwar asked him to pursue a certain course of conduct, Dadabhai turned upon him and said 'You forget, Maharajah, that I am a *dordi*. I am like a rope of coir, well twisted. You can burn it if you want, but you cannot untwist it. The resolution that I have made I will carry out.' We shall come upon that characteristic again and again in his life.

He had the misfortune to lose his father at the age of 4, but then he was blest in his mother as many another great man was in the world's history. He used to say of his mother that she made him what he was. She was a remarkable woman. Although uneducated, she sympathized with Dadabhai in his early efforts to spread female edu-

cation and supported him warmly. He was brought up to be a good, industrious, god-fearing, honourable man. He has told us himself how as a little fellow he was very good-looking, of exceedingly fair complexion and beautiful limbs. Therefore they used, it seems, to dress him up in gaudy clothes, and, in processions and public gatherings, present him to the spectators as a show. In particular, it seems, they would dress him up as an Englishman in court dress and call him 'Junglow' which meant an Englishman in those days. Long years afterwards when he went to England and was appointed a member of the Imperial Institute and in that capacity had to welcome Queen Victoria, Dadabhai says 'I was dressed fully as a courtier at St. James's and I recalled vividly those early days. I was then only a sham Junglow, now I am a real Junglow.' When he was young, and was in a small school, the teacher was very careless and allowed the children to do what they liked, and he and his fellow pupils would come out into the streets and play all day long or sometimes sit on a verandah and enjoy themselves. Dadabhai says that at these gatherings, he was the unquestioned leader for the reason that he had the marvellous faculty of telling stories, which he calls spinning yarns. The fellows used to listen to him with the greatest admiration and that laid the foundation, he says, of 'my ability to lead and tell things in impressive language'. We all know how in our early years our home training is such that we habitually use foul language. We are not very refined in our conversation even in the hearing of ladies. We often say ugly things that we should not say, and find it very hard to change this habit

later on. Now Dadabhai, it seems, caught himself once using bad language and then went to a place all by himself and there took an oath 'I will never again use bad language' and he kept it to the end of his days. I wish we did so. Another peculiar habit of those early days has some significance to-day. In the Parsi community it would appear on all occasions of importance it was the habit of the elders not only to take a little liquor, intoxicating liquor, but to force it upon the children even against their inclination until it became a habit with them too, so that the Parsis from very early days were given to the use of liquor. In Dadabhai's family it was a daily habit. One day there was no liquor in the house and his mother told him, 'There is the shop opposite. You go and have your drink and come back.' Dadabhai went to that shop where he found the surroundings and the people such that he decided there and then to give up liquor, and from that day he became a total abstainer.

Dadabhai was very good at mathematics. He showed it very early by his ability to work sums rapidly in his head. In mental arithmetic he was unapproachable. In those early days school buildings were unknown; classes were held in the outer verandah, what we call 'pial' here and often of evenings the school-boys were made to come out and stand on the road side, where a great crowd would gather and the teacher would ply them with questions in mental arithmetic. Always the palm went to Dadabhai. While other boys hesitated he would rush forward, it seems, with a beaming face and win the applause of the multitude. Once a European lady happened to visit the school where

he was, and she has given us in a few words a pen picture of Dadabhai. The description strikes us now as remarkable, seeing that he was a little fellow at that time and that it required great prevision, as it were, to say that he would be anything remarkable in life. I will just read a few sentences:

'A little Parsi lad with an overhanging forehead and small sparkling eyes, which peculiarly attracted attention. The moment a question was proposed to the class he quickly took a step before the rest, contracted his brows in deep and anxious thought and with parted lips and fingers eagerly uplifted towards the master, rapidly worked his problem and blurted out the solution with a startling haste. The little fellow seemed wholly animated with a desire of excelling, and his mental capabilities promised him a rich reward.'

In those days, as in the days of our early schools here, a pupil had to do what we call *guru susrusha*. The guru and his wife were entitled to the services of the pupil. They might be asked to sweep the floor, to carry fuel and do odd jobs, not only for the school house but for the residence of the master. And the biographer of Dadabhai* says facetiously: 'This is a remarkable instance of manual training being introduced in our schools.' We must now refer to a great drawback of those days, a drawback out of which the Indian community is slowly rising, but from which complete emancipation is still distant. That was the early marriage both of boys and girls. When I mention that in the Parsi

*Mr. R. P. Masani.

community the practice was very common, you will see what rapid strides they have taken in the matter of social reform. Dadabhai was married at the age of 11 and his wife had attained the age of 7 at the time.

Then Dadabhai was removed to an English school founded through the great efforts of the Governor Mountstuart Elphinstone. He founded a Society called the Native Education Society and established an English School. Dadabhai gives us an account of that school, but we are chiefly concerned with the English book that he read. I have not seen the book, but would like to do so. It was by a man named Watt and was called the *Improvement of the Mind*. It would appear that it was written in simple and direct language avoiding all ornament and rhetoric, and Dadabhai says that he resolved in imitation of this author always to model his style on the lines of clearness and simplicity, and never run after anything striking or flowery. As he himself says: 'I bade farewell to the fine and to the flowery.' Two ideas seem to have struck him at this time upon which he worked all his days. First the education in these schools was free and therefore he said he must struggle hard to introduce free education in India. Again he realised that the money for the maintenance of these schools came from the pockets of the public whether through Government or other channels, that the public indirectly paid for the maintenance of these schools. He therefore said 'I must return to the poor what I have taken from them.' So while still a boy he took the view that he would support free and popular education and devote himself to the service of the people, at whose expense he had

been educated. He was so good in his classes and in his conduct that the professors gave him the title of 'The Promise of India' and he realized that promise, as you can see, abundantly. When his education was over at the age of twenty, the question came what he should do with himself. Some people proposed that he should enter Government service, and Government service was then easy to enter, there being few competitors and plenty of posts. But the highest ambition of those days was for a man to go to England and be called to the Bar. Dadabhai Naoroji himself had that ambition; and as he was very poor, the Chief Justice of Bombay, a very enlightened and philanthropic man, named Sir Erskine Perry, offered to bear half the expenses of Dadabhai's education in England if the elders of the Parsi community would bear the other half. When the elders of the Parsi community were approached, they all said, 'No, we won't.' Some years before, there had been a few cases of conversion of young Parsis to Christianity, and the elders of the community feared that, if Dadabhai should go all by himself to England, he might be converted to the foreign religion by the active missionaries of the place. So they decided not to help, and the idea of his going to England, was abandoned. Soon he was offered a post of teacher in the Elphinstone Institution. He was ~~assistant~~ master in the High School. He became in a few months assistant professor of mathematics, in which he was recognized as a great proficient. And in two years' time he was elevated to the post of professor in the place. Now in this work of education Dadabhai seems to have shown the stuff he

was made of. He not only applied himself to the work of the class with devotion but took a personal interest in his pupils, and by means of his love drew them into intimate personal relations with himself. And not only that, he helped the other mathematics teachers below him to do their subject thoroughly. He constituted himself their supervisor. And generally speaking, in all educational matters, it would appear, he took such a great interest that he became universally popular and universally looked up to as a guide. One of his greatest pupils at the time was a man who achieved fame as an orientalist later on, a man who became famous as Dr. Sir Ramakrishna Bhandarkar. He has given testimony to the way in which Dadabhai was looked upon by himself and his colleagues. He frequently referred to the masterly teaching of Dadabhai and his extraordinary kindness to the students.

Now one or two things still more remarkable. He organised a Students' Literary and Scientific Society and enrolled many members inclined like himself to the study of books and records. The earliest Society that he formed was called the Students' Literary and Scientific Society. I must tell you of a rule that they had. I hope it will benefit you. Every fortnight at their meetings two men named by the Secretary should prepare papers on some literary or scientific subject and come and read them. If the person named failed to read, for the first offence he was fined one rupee, for the second offence two rupees; after that he was expelled. Now fancy your making such a rule in the Union. I have told you of his efforts on behalf of female education. They all belonged to this period. I must

now refer to the Congress activity of Dadabhai I told you he was appointed professor in 1845. It is usually believed that in this country political work for the nation began in the year 1885 when the Indian National Congress first met in Bombay. That, however, is only partially true. The first political activity in India took place in Bengal about the year 1852, the reason being that the next year, 1853 was the year when the Company's Charter was due to be renewed. You know that in those days they renewed the Company's Charter every 20 years. 1853 was the last renewal. The renewal of 1833 was remarkable for the introduction of the famous clause. 'No native of India or any natural-born subject of His Majesty should be disqualified from office by reason only of religion, place of birth, descent or colour.' That declaration is often said to be the foundation of our liberties. This was, however, for a long time a declaration on paper. In those days the Company were remarkable for the sonority of their promise and the tenuity of their performance. There was a great opposition in England to the renewal of the Charter in 1853, for the Company was looked upon as a rapacious body. In the previous year, both in Bengal and in Bombay political societies were started for the purpose of demanding that, if the Charter was renewed at all, it ought to be renewed with a guarantee for the political and other welfare of India. Nothing came, however, of these efforts, nothing for the benefit of India. The 1853 Charter is famous for the clause which abolished the system of nomination to the Civil Services of the country from the Haileybury Institution and substituted for

it the open competition of these days. The Bombay association was then started, and the subject to which Dadabhai devoted the greatest attention in this Association was the appointment of Indians to the Civil Services of India ; a subject to which as the years progressed he was to direct the efforts of political activity in this country with poor results for a very, very long time. Indeed, he did not live to see the fulfilment of this great vision of his.

II

In the year 1855, that is, when Dadabhai was thirty years old, a great change occurred in his life. He gave up his Professorship in the Elphinstone Institution and went to England to help his friends, the Camas, in starting the first Indian mercantile firm there. People at the time derided him for abandoning the honourable profession of education for that of business. But Dadabhai's real object, which appeared from the first day of his setting foot in London, was not so much to push on business and make money as to carry on agitation in England on behalf of India. In business, his methods were clean and honourable and naturally involved his firm in losses. For that is not a line where these qualities pay, but he bore his losses with great fortitude, and though he incurred the displeasure of his partners, he insisted on observing a high standard of righteousness even in business transactions. Besides, he believed and trusted friends rather indiscriminately. Once he was brought to ruin by the failure of some of his friends to return large loans that he had advanced. The firm broke and he had to face insolvency, but so high was his personal

character and so widespread among Englishmen was the appreciation of his proper methods of business that they did not take advantage of his low condition but advanced fresh monies and enabled him to set up again.

About the year 1861 there occurred a domestic rift to which it would be instructive to refer. I told you that he was married when he was eleven to a girl of seven. She was not educated and it would appear, she was not particularly good-looking; nevertheless Dadabhai had great affection for her and to them was born a son; but you know how fond mothers are and what strange forms their love sometimes takes. It is not altogether an unfamiliar phenomenon in our homes. Dadabhai's mother thought that she had wronged her beloved son by yoking him unequally, and so she proposed, according to the practice then prevailing among the Parsi community, that he should marry again, while his wife was still alive. He absolutely refused to entertain any such proposal. Between the mother and son there grew up an estrangement, and this estrangement was the cause of a curious suspicion. When Dadabhai lived in England, he became friends with a family called the Archers. In this family there were three daughters and as there was much intercourse between Dadabhai and this family some busybody wrote home to the mother to say that Dadabhai was about to be converted to Christianity in order that he might marry one of the Archer sisters. This caused a good deal of misery to the poor mother, and she wrote stinging letters to her son. In the year 1865 he returned home in order to allay all this suspicion between mother and son on

the one hand and between husband and wife on the other, and complete reconciliation was effected with the remarkable result that, when he went to England again, he took the lot with him, mother, wife and child and settled down in London.

In the year 1866, in conjunction with a number of retired Anglo-Indian officials, Dadabhai took a memorable step in order to make the cause of India better and better known. That was the starting of the famous East India Association. Dadabhai took the leading part in the proceedings of the Association; in the beginning he wrote no end of learned and exhaustive papers about all subjects concerning India and he got sympathetic Europeans also to do the same, so that the East India Association began to make first-rate propaganda in England on behalf of India; and so great was Dadabhai's love of this Association that in order to find funds for it, he came to India, toured through the country, specially visited the native states and from them obtained considerable contributions, with which he laid the foundations of a prosperous financial system for this Association. Unfortunately, after a few years this Association fell into the hands of certain designing Europeans, who, as it were, snatched it from Dadabhai and made use of its great reputation, its popular platforms and its ample funds, all of which he had provided, not always in the interests of India. Dadabhai was chagrined at this, and all his friends bemoaned with him the loss of the control of this excellent means of popularising India's cause. A curious thing occurred in his last years in India which I might mention at this stage, although it is a good deal by way of anticipation. In the year

1914, just three years before he passed away, a great friend of India named Dr. Pollen and another friend of India Mr. Pennington, well-known in Madras, offered, as the fiftieth year of this Association was coming on, to write a history of it, and it occurred to them that, as Dadabhai was practically the founder of the Association, he ought to be requested to contribute a preface or at least send a message. So Dr. Pollen wrote to him a letter full of flattery and solicitation, but Dadabhai remembered how the control had been plucked from his hands and refused to send a message, thereby showing that he was a *dordi*. It takes some firmness of mind to refuse a request of the kind.

Now I must mention a chapter in Dadabhai's life which is somewhat unknown. In the year 1873, the Indian state of Baroda was in great trouble. The Maharajah was one of those men by whom every now and then these states are scourged. But he had come into contact with Dadabhai and when he got into serious trouble he appealed to Dadabhai to come and help him by assuming the Dewanship. Dadabhai hesitated a little but afterwards agreed, making the condition that the Maharajah should give him a free hand. But it was not in the nature of the Maharajah to keep the word that he had given. The result was that, as soon as he came and assumed charge, difficulties of an extremely serious nature cropped up; as though the Maharajah's antipathy was not enough, Dadabhai had also to contend with a particularly unloveable type of Resident, named Colonel Phayre. He gave no end of annoyance to Dadabhai and between the two they made his Dewanship a bed of thorns. Nevertheless he kept on without

loss of vigour in his campaign of reform, and as he was a man of iron will, he resisted the opposition both of the Maharajah and of the Resident and did a lot of work during the thirteen months that he stayed there. But it became impossible for him to go on, and he resigned and left, but just as he was leaving, he heard that the Maharajah had been apprehended for a conspiracy against the life of the Resident. Then followed a famous trial, with the story of which I need not bother you, but it is worth while to remember that upon this occasion notwithstanding that the Maharajah and the Resident were both against Dadabhai, his reputation and his honesty stood so high that the Bombay Government and Lord Salisbury, who was then Secretary of State for India, upheld him in the dispute.

Dadabhai had a curious notion, which you would be surprised to hear, you who constantly read now of the trouble that we have with the Indian States. Among the old leaders of Indian opinion the Indian States were looked upon with a great deal of tenderness and when they were in trouble they went to rescue them, as Dadabhai did, for instance, in the case of Baroda ; and Dadabhai's opinion was so high of the possibilities of these States that he used to lay down a dictum that, if India could be parcelled out into a great number of Indian States and over each an Indian Maharajah or Rajah installed there would be nothing better to wish for. It is an extraordinary opinion, but in that opinion he was seconded by no less a person than John Bright :

'My idea is that all British India should be divided up into a number of such States

administered by Natives generally. Then the people of British India will prosper like the people of the well-administered Native States. This is not merely my idea, but Lord Salisbury himself has said this as far back as 1867, when Mysore was restored.'

Dadabhai entered the Bombay Corporation as a member and there again he distinguished himself by his advanced ideas, by his indefatigable industry and by the thorough rectitude of behaviour that he brought to the conduct of its affairs. So valuable was the municipal work that he rendered then and a little later to the City of Bombay that, taking almost an unprecedented step, the Corporation recorded their thanks publicly when he resigned from his seat and later on voted an address of welcome when he came back from England.

In the years 1877 to 1882 we had at the head of the Indian administration a very unpopular and reactionary Viceroy named Lord Lytton, inheritor of a famous name in English Literature. Now Lord Lytton did many bad things for India, the worst being the enactment of a measure of repression against the vernacular press of the country. The Vernacular Press Act was called by the name "the Black Act" in his time, and so loud was the outcry all over the country that almost the first thing that his successor Lord Ripon did was to repeal the Vernacular Press Act. During Lord Lytton's administration, our hero was in comparative retirement, being disgusted with the turn that affairs had taken. After Lord Lytton's withdrawal there opened a bright chapter. In the time of Lord Ripon the hopes of India rose again and many were the measures of amelioration and appeasement that his

administration witnessed; and it is worth noting that Dadabhai's heart once more recovered its buoyancy of spirit and he took part in public affairs. When Lord Ripon left he was one of those who organized a big demonstration in his honour. In the year 1885 the first Congress met in Bombay. It is interesting to recall that, when India took this momentous step in her political career for the first time, Dadabhai was 60 years old. Naturally therefore he was one of the old men that attended that first session of the Indian National Congress. He took a great part in the management of the business, especially when he moved a resolution on simultaneous examinations a subject very dear to his heart. In the year 1886 he was made President of the Congress session held in Calcutta, a session which through his efforts reached a high measure of success. Next year there sat in India a Public Services Commission: high hopes were entertained of the labours of this Commission. Nothing, however, came of it; but Dadabhai was one of those who prepared elaborate statements and submitted them for the scrutiny of the Public Services Commission; he also gave evidence before it. His evidence was of high value. You must note this as a peculiarity of Dadabhai. He studied questions with thoroughness and minuteness. As often as he took up a question, there were thrown on the public of India a crop of papers and memoranda of all sorts, full of statistics, facts and figures and closely reasoned representations. Before this Public Services Commission Dadabhai put in a lot of these records in support of his proposition. Curiously enough, though the general movement of opinion in the country had

THUMB-NAIL SKETCHES

gone forward and there was great intensity in the demand for the larger admission of Indians into the public services, curiously enough, it was opposed by a certain group of leaders. It caused Dadabhai the greatest grief and when he found that Kazi Shahabuddin one of his greatest friends, had actually signed the memorandum of protest against throwing open all appointments to the Indians, he vented his displeasure in the following letter to him.

'How your action has paralysed not only our own efforts, but the hands of our English friends! and how keenly I feel this, more so because you have based your action on selfish interests, that because the Mohammedans are backward, therefore you would not allow the Hindus and all India to go forward In the House of Commons I think Mr. Bright has stoutly urged the necessity of an examination in India to put us on an equality with English candidates. To-day when he would and could have urged the same thing with ten times the force, he feels himself staggered, and owing to your opposition he feels puzzled and cannot help us. What a blight you have thrown upon our future and how you have retarded our progress for a long time to come! This disunion will hurt us in a variety of ways. I do not know whether I can hope that before the Commission's work has ended, you will still undo the mischief in some way.'

The disappointment that Mr. Dadabhai has expressed in this letter has been the bitter experience of nearly all his successors. It is a sad story, but it

has been so often repeated that I won't say more here.

The next episode in Dadabhai's life to which we come is his heroic candidature for Parliament. He laboured at this for seven or eight long years. At first he failed in his efforts to get into Holborn; then he tried Central Finsbury. Here after five years of struggle he did succeed in becoming a member of Parliament. Before him a great countryman of ours named Lal Mohan Ghose from Bengal had made an attempt to get in; he failed, so that it was to Dadabhai that the honour fell first of becoming an M.P. Now it would take me long to tell the story of the efforts that he made to achieve this unique honour, but one little incident should be mentioned. In the year 1888 Lord Salisbury, the Prime Minister, spoke at Edinburgh and there he had to explain to his audience, consisting largely of Tories, how the successful Tory candidate, had lost a considerable number of votes as compared with the Conservative triumph upon the previous occasion. Then he made use of a remarkable expression. It was meant to condemn Dadabhai, but in reality it helped him. I will read the passage to you and then you will see what it was. It made a great deal of fuss at the time. This is what Lord Salisbury said:

'It was undoubtedly a smaller majority than Colonel Duncan obtained; but then Colonel Duncan was opposed by a black man; and however great the progress of mankind has been, and however far we have advanced in overcoming prejudices, I doubt if we have yet got to that point of view where a British constituency would elect a black man.'

The audience shouted "shame", and cheered the speaker, little dreaming that the mud flung at the eminent Indian was to bespatter the noble Lord himself, to his consternation.

'I am speaking roughly', continued Lord Salisbury, amidst laughter and cries of "hear, hear"; 'and using language in its colloquial sense, because I imagine the colour is not exactly black, but, at all events, he was a man of another race.'

But the words 'black man' offended the finer part of the British population, and at public meetings thereafter Lord Salisbury was belaboured without mercy for having so grossly abused an equal subject of Her Majesty. It is said that Her Majesty herself was displeased with the petulance which Lord Salisbury had displayed. As he was then Prime Minister the offence was particularly unpardonable. One of the first men who took him to task was Lord Morley. He was then Mr. John Morley. He held a great place in politics at the time. I must read the words that he employed. Morley was always twitting Lord Salisbury for his indiscretion of language, for Lord Salisbury was not known to be restrained in his public speeches. So Morley began by saying that he was sure when Lord Salisbury opened his mouth his speech was sure to contain at least one 'blazing indiscretion'. 'His friends would hardly deny that the speech in which His Lordship had warned them to maintain the Empire and endeavoured to explain the Holborn election contained a very blazing indiscretion. Now that was no vulgar jingo of the street. It was the Prime Minister. It was the man who spoke in the name of the

people of England from his position, and it was the fault of London that Salisbury held the position he did.' Gladstone followed quickly. He also chastised the Prime Minister in public. He said that he had given great offence to millions of people in the country. Now many another man of less note also blamed Lord Salisbury.

Let me here make reference to an honourable feature in English public life. Lord Salisbury, having made this indiscretion, did not publicly admit his fault, but made amends for it in an indirect manner. Two years later, when the first members of the Imperial Institute had to be appointed, he offered a seat to Dadabhai Naoroji, and Dadabhai accepted it gratefully. Now that shows you how in English public life there is a code of honour, that if an offence has been offered, amends should follow, indirectly at least, if not directly. But although this was at that time regarded as an offence, it greatly helped Dadabhai, for the English people chivalrously drew to his side in great numbers, and when his next candidature was announced for Central Finsbury, the support for him grew in intensity and in volume until in the year 1892 he was actually elected. The jubilation in liberal circles was very great, for he appeared as a Gladstonian Liberal, and in India the ovations to Central Finsbury and the great name of Dadabhai were on an unprecedented scale. During this candidature it is said that Dadabhai worked as if he had the energy of five or six men, visiting individual homes, speaking four or five times every day, interviewing people and answering letters and communications and replying to protests in newspapers

and delivering at the same time his customary lectures on the duties of England towards India. How he appeared in those days is very interesting. There is a description in a newspaper from which I quote. I make no apology for it because it is a very vivid portrait.

'If Mr. Naoroji had changed his name to Mr. Brown or Mr. Jones no one would know him to be a Parsee. But Naoroji is a puzzler for the British elector—he has the appearance and the manner of a cultivated English gentleman, his face a shade or two off colour, perhaps, but certainly not darker than many an Australian, tanned from long exposure to tropical suns. If physiognomy be any indication of intellectual merits, Mr. Naoroji is shrewd and penetrating, with a large leaven of benevolence. His ample beard and moustache are plentifully sprinkled with white. He wears a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles, which he frequently adjusts when he makes a point. He sometimes looks over his glasses with a humorous smile and gay twinkle in his bright eyes which speak volumes for his keen sense of fun. The regulation frock coat fits him like a glove, and a better platform figure it would be difficult to find. Mr. Naoroji's personality pleased the large audience before whom he was making his real political debut. . . Mr. Naoroji is an admirable speaker, with a strong voice, capable of many inflections from the deeply earnest to the piping playful, with command over the

indignant and ironical, and his mastery of our language is marvellous in its fitness and its fluency.'

Now in the result Dadabhai got only three votes over his adversary; it was a small majority, but it was still a success and he had become M. P. People in England are generally unable to pronounce our names, Indian names. They are not very good at learning our language; our names simply break their teeth so that instead of saying Naoroji, they began to call him 'Narrow Majority.'

I have no time to linger over the admirable work that he did in Parliament. Suffice it to say that he missed no occasion for bringing forward the grievances of India and advocating its claims in the most emphatic manner. It is impossible to give an account of all his work. Only a few episodes could be mentioned. In 1893 i.e. the year after he became M.P. there occurred a remarkable success over which India lost her head, as it were. 'Simultaneous examinations' was one of Dadabhai's great subjects. He held that in order to fulfil Queen Victoria's proclamation of equality of Indians with the British people, the examinations for the Indian Civil Service, which admitted people to the highest administrative posts, should be held both in India and in England at the same time, that the standard should be the same and that Indians should therefore have full opportunities of entering their own highest services. This proposition, though it sounds so reasonable nowadays, was at that time resisted by the British people, who held the monopoly. In the year 1893 Dadabhai induced a certain friend of his, named Herbert Paul, to bring forward a resolution

declaring that the justice of the case required the examination for the civil services of India to be held at the same time in both the countries. Luckily Herbert Paul won the ballot, but all the work was done by Dadabhai. He himself made an excellent speech in seconding the resolution and Wedderburn followed ably in defence of it. Now at that time Parliament was in one of its careless moods. Members did not attend in great numbers. Nobody cared for Indian topics. In those days an Indian topic was a by-word for clearing the house. When the subject was India, people walked out as if they had nothing to do with it. It was a notorious gibe at the way Great Britain performed her solemn trust in the East. There were only 162 who were present in the House. The vote could be justly described as a snatch vote. The House was taken unawares. There was a small majority on our side: eighty-four votes on our side and seventy-six on the other. Dadabhai and his friends threw up their caps in joy and all India, as I said, lost its head completely. Everywhere in the country meetings were held thanking Herbert Paul, Dadabhai and Wedderburn for their manly fight on behalf of India and hoping that simultaneous examinations would be introduced the next year. But a resolution in the House of Commons is not binding on the executive Government, a fact which was not well understood in India at that time. The House of Commons may well pass a resolution but the executive need not care for it; that is the constitutional position; and when the resolution was communicated to the Government of India with the request that they should see their way if possible to carry out the resolution, the

Government of India put forward a hundred reasons why it could not be done; and it was not done. The disappointment was keenly felt and amongst the people who felt it very keenly was Dadabhai himself. In the same year he came to Lahore to preside a second time over the Indian National Congress. It is said that on this occasion he received all along the way from Bombay to Lahore and from Lahore back to Bombay immense ovations at every station rivalling those that any Viceroy had ever had or that any Maharajah could have in his own territory. That was because not only had he succeeded in becoming an M. P. but he had succeeded in getting this resolution passed.

Soon followed that great event in the history of our finance, the appointment of the Welby Commission to enquire into the financial relations between the two countries. Much discontent had prevailed at the iniquitous way in which England imposed burdens on India and it was felt that serious attempts should be made to redress this injustice. But the matter was by no means so easy to negotiate. Finally the Government of England, goaded to some extent by the frequency and the virulence of Dadabhai's attacks, appointed a Royal Commission presided over by Lord Welby. It is to that Commission that Gokhale went to give evidence, G. Subrahmanya Ayyar from Madras, Surendranath Banerjea from Bengal, Sir Dinshaw Wacha from Bombay. And Dadabhai, although he was appointed a member of the Commission, offered himself for examination as a witness, for there was no one to come within miles of him for mastery of the necessary facts and figures. He went into the

box himself and was subjected to a very severe cross-examination by his European colleagues. I need not say, however, that he stood the trial with exceeding credit. Like some other Royal Commissions, this one on India ended in nothing.

In 1895 there came a great change in British politics. Gladstone failed to carry the House of Commons with him in his Irish policy. Therefore he resigned and the Liberal Ministry went out of power. Dadabhai also lost his seat at the time, but he made heroic efforts again and again. Although he did extremely well, he did not succeed. The news of his failure caused a gloom all over this country. I must say at this point that Dadabhai's candidature was marked by many unpleasant things in the history of political manœuvre and political agitation. He was a Gladstonian liberal and was therefore entitled to the unstinted support of the Liberal Party, but so curious were the affairs in the Liberal Party at the time and so antipathetic were some of the liberals then to an Indian getting into power that the Liberal Party did not unitedly support him. On the other hand they split and they supported a rival liberal candidate, thus repeating the unhappy divisions in our own politics. Dadabhai was often advised also by his Liberal friends to withdraw, especially after his resignation along with Gladstone and not risk a defeat. Now Dadabhai, if he had been another man, would have withdrawn, but he was a *dordi*; having put his foot forward he would not withdraw. He said 'You may all be angry with me, but I have made up my mind and nothing shall stand in the way.' So he went into the fight, struggled very hard indeed, spent money,

energy, lost sleep and health and in the end, poor man, he lost. The unhappiness of India when he lost, strange to say, was greatly aggravated by the success of another Indian. This gentleman was a brother Parsi named Bhownagree. He had an easy victory, for he was well known as a friend of the tory cause and as an unfriend of Indian aspirations even among English folk. His name was a greater puzzle to them than that of Naoroji. Now that Bhownagree succeeded, they were unable to say who he was; so they said "Bow-the-knee" and if somebody said there is some *gree*, they said 'Oh yes, bow the knee and agree'. This was, however, unjust. For we all knew him later in life; he held his seat for a long time and I know personally that he fought like a Greek for the South African Indian community.

[Now just a word about the great causes to which Dadabhai devoted himself. Dadabhai is most known for what is called the drain theory of Indian finance. One of his great agitations was against the annual drain which he calculated at 30 million pounds, taken away by British people in various ways from India without any adequate material return. His contention was that to that extent it was a tribute laid on subject India, on helpless India, on starving India, by the tyrants of Great Britain, and this he argued with great pertinacity.] People would ask him to moderate his language, people would ask him to change the figures, people would question the correctness of his statistics, but he persisted. The more one pricked him the more facts and figures he hurled at one. In fact the amount of literature he has prepared for India would fill a good

room, top to bottom. I have heard Gokhale tell me that this theory received the fullest support from Indian politicians of the time. Only Mahadev Govind Ranade was anything like equal to Dadabhai in mastery of figures and facts and knowledge of economics; only Ranade came near him. Ranade, generally speaking, was of the same opinion. But he had always held that Dadabhai's denunciation of this drain must be qualified by a credit entry on the side of Great Britain, the credit entry being the great benefit that British rule conferred upon this country—peace and order and a consciousness of political rights and the establishment of the reign of law, in fact all the essential qualities of modern administration that Great Britain had, willingly or unwillingly, imported into the conduct of Indian affairs. In those days the registers, returns and statements were not fully available; even those that were available were not always given to Dadabhai when he applied for them, so that the poor man had to compile his own figures, and his industry and his courage in those most depressing circumstances must be awarded the greatest possible credit in the annals of public work. Dadabhai's industry was transparent and his straightforwardness in the compilation of these figures was acknowledged. Sometimes, however, his British rivals questioned his figures and in one remarkable instance they challenged the accuracy of his statement. It was over the individual income that was earned in India. What was the annual income of an Indian, taking the whole country into consideration, upon which the individual had to support himself and his family? Dadabhai calculated that an

Indian on the average in this country earned only Rs. 20/- a year, wherewith he had to maintain his family. The poverty, the destitution of this country, the nearness to hunger, the actual contact with every form of material starvation that the people suffered one could imagine, for if the average was 20, there were no doubt a great many above 20, but millions and millions of people must have fallen below 20. Now Englishmen felt ashamed when they were told that the average income was Rs. 20 per year and that upon such a people were imposed all the paraphernalia of an extraordinarily costly system, and so there grew up a body of economists and statisticians, who wanted to disprove Dadabhai's contention. Sir Evelyn Baring, who later became Lord Cromer, worked out these figures and all he could do was to raise the income by Rs. 7. Then Lord Curzon addressed himself to this complicated problem and wanted to bring out a figure more likely to give complacence to English hearts. All he could do was to raise it by another Rs. 3.

When this endless controversy bore no fruit, when all his sleepless labours to bring India's cause before the conscience of England seemed to end in nothing, Dadabhai grew bitter in his language. His disappointment occasionally overcame his natural moderation, and he indulged in denunciation foreign to his well-established character. I shall read one passage by way of example. It is from a letter written to an American disputant.

'Both you and the Madras gentleman do not seem to have studied and considered the other side. I must say a few words of facts with reference to your statement that 'we should pay the bill.' We

should pay for having been forced to pay every farthing (excepting a very few part payments for very shame,) for all the wars and other circumstances from the very beginning of the English connection, for building up and maintaining the British Indian Empire entirely at our own cost and mainly with our blood with the reward of being reduced to helotry and beggary! We should pay for bleeding us and carrying away clean out of the country hundreds of millions and continue to drain incessantly and unceasingly, or we should pay for what the Viceroy and Famine Commissioners sanction. . . . We should pay for impoverishing us to an extent to which probably no nation has impoverished another! We should pay for all the consequences of such 'other improvements' as famines, plagues. . . . and chronic state of starvation. . . .! We should pay for the security of our property which, in the most ingenious, scientific and unseen way, is taken away from us by the protectors! We should pay for the security of our lives which are not left worth living, by providing us with starvation, famines, pestilence, etc. ! We should pay for official Europeans bleeding us, and non-official Europeans exploiting our land and labour and natural resources. . . .! In short, we should pay for a destructive and dishonourable system of government violating Acts of Parliament and the most solemn pledges that ever a people gave to another."

That surely is strong language.

In another place he writes:

India does not get a moment to breathe or revive. "More Europeans, more Europeans"

is the eternal cry, and this very report itself of the Commission is not free from it
 When any question of reform arises, the only remedy that suggests itself to British officials' minds is, "Apply more European leeches, apply more European leeches."

* * * * *

Millions of money have been spent on increasing the army in India, on armaments, and on fortifications to provide for the security of India, not against domestic enemies or to prevent the invasions of the warlike peoples of adjoining countries, but to maintain the supremacy of British power in the East."

Now, may I ask whether it is just and worthy of the British name, conscience, and wealth, to burden India with this expenditure? India, impoverished, bleeding, and perishing by England's own draining of its wealth of over thirty millions every year, and thereby afflicted with famine and plague!

* * * * *

Now in 1906 Dadabhai was asked to be the Chairman of the Indian National Congress for the third time. I must state in a few words the circumstances that led to his being chosen for a third time. Indian politics were at that time in a strange turmoil. Owing to Lord Curzon's partition of Bengal, the peoples of Bengal had agitated against it, terrorism had reared its ugly head and besides, all politicians had begun to question the value of the British connection. They said 'Britain means to rule us with an iron hand. We cannot any

longer abide it. We must shake off its yoke and so at public meetings propositions were passed calling upon Indians to sever the British connection. Now the moderates, who were then at the helm of the Indian National Congress, found it hard to meet this tremendous opposition. It was headed by no less a person than Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Bombay. In the Punjab Lala Lajpat Rai led the movement. In the Province of Bengal there was Bepin Chandra Pal, who led the new patriots, chiefly students. Against this combination the old guards felt somewhat powerless. It was also demanded that at the head of the Calcutta Congress you should have a man in sympathy with the new movement, a man who could be trusted to voice the demands of India's independence of Great Britain. So they put forward the name of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. If, however, he had been appointed, the Liberals should have been in an awkward situation. So they hit upon this plan. They thought that if they could somehow persuade Dadabhai Naoroji to come from England—he had just then been defeated in an election there, but even after that defeat he had shown much resilience of spirit—they believed that they could stem the tide. So without its being made public Surendranath Banerjea and Bhupendranath Basu telegraphed to Dadabhai 'Will you come if we formally request you to be President for the third time over the Calcutta session?' Dadabhai knew how the wind blew. He agreed and so he came over at the end of 1906. Gokhale was then in England and they voyaged together. Dadabhai was then very old, about eighty-one years. Now at that age, in spite of infirmity and although he had

terrible work in England he agreed to go over, but when he came he was unable to conduct the affairs of the Congress. He was too old and not equal to the task. The young lions roared. There was a very, very large crowd, one of the largest that I had ever seen in those days. Bepin Chandra Pal, helped by Khaparde, was particularly boisterous. The young fellows could not be controlled, and the speech had to be read by Gokhale. I remember that, when at one point the uproar became uncontrollable, nobody could be heard at all. Surendranath Banerjea then mounted the platform and in his stentorian voice called upon his own students—he was still Principal of the Ripon College—to listen. They would not listen. They shouted ‘Sit down; sit down.’ Then unable to control his feeling Sir Surendranath cried out ‘Is it come to this in my own city?’ ‘Yes, yes,’ was the loud reply. Now Sir Pherozeshah Mehta was seated on the platform, and as he was a striking figure, he attracted attention. But the excited students could not tolerate his prominence and cried out ‘Down with Mehta’. Well, that was the Congress that old Dadabhai was called upon to control. Well, he controlled it by the magic of the word ‘Svaraj’, for it then appeared for the first time in the authoritative literature of the National Congress. He took care to add that the Svaraj he thought of was the self-government the self-governing colonies of Great Britain had reached. Here I ought to mention one thing, which I heard from Gokhale. Before he came over to India, an attempt was made by some Bengali politicians of the new school to prevent his coming; so they sent him a cable asking

him not to come and threatening that if he did come they would expose him for a fraudulent merchant. Well, Dadabhai knew that nothing of the kind could be brought up against him; being a *dordi*; he said 'Well, do what you will. I have agreed and nothing can stand in the way.'

Returning from this Congress after his arduous labours Dadabhai fell ill in England, and although he seemed to rally under careful treatment, towards the end of the year his health became a subject of acute anxiety. So his friends said to Dadabhai 'Your days are not many. You are an old man; the climate of England won't suit you. Go back to India.' He was at first unwilling, but when people from this side also wrote to England entreating him to come back and spend his last days in the midst of his family and his admiring countrymen, he finally agreed and came away in 1907. After that he lived until 1917, for ten years. Many things happened; his activity, though it was not the same as formerly, did not cease for a day. He attended to his tremendous correspondence himself and his controversies were by no means at an end. As often as he saw an opening for a statement or for a display of facts and figures he would step on the scene. Well, the ten years therefore, although comparatively quiet, were still for him a period of activity. Now during this time it was that they pressed upon him to accept a knighthood, but so firm was he in his determination to remain a popular leader that he refused to receive any reward at the hands of royalty.

In 1915 there took place a remarkable political movement in the country called the Home Rule

League Movement started by Mrs. Besant, who, you know, had prodigious energy and power of organization. She declared it was to have a branch in India and a branch in England. Of the branch in England she invited Wedderburn to be President. In India she appointed her own colleague and *sishya* Sir S. Subrahmanya Ayyar to be President, and she decided that for England and India together for the whole movement Dadabhai should be the President. She waited on Dadabhai and persuaded the veteran to accept the honour. As soon as the fact became known, Sir Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha and other people were terribly upset. They expected Dadabhai to consult them before taking such an important step, and were displeased with Mrs. Besant for taking them unawares. So they protested and tried to dissuade Dadabhai. Dadabhai said 'You know I am in sympathy with youth and with all new and honest movements. I am not convinced, as you seem to be, that this Home Rule League will work against the Congress, The moment such a thing takes place I will resign, but till then, I have promised to be President and I am going to be President.' Dordi again!

Now we come to the last important event in Dadabhai's life. His countrymen resolved to do him an honour that had not been done before to other people. The Bombay University decided to confer the degree of Doctor of Laws and they chose Dadabhai and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta as the two first recipients of the honour. At that time Pherozeshah Mehta was very ill and before the University Convocation was to take place for this purpose, he passed away. Many people thought

that Dadabhai should not attend the Convocation, but he decided on receiving the honour in person, and once he came to that conclusion, the people resolved to make the best of the opportunity, and the demonstrations that attended the ceremony were on an unprecedented scale. He did not live long to enjoy this doctorate. In 1917 in the month of June Dadabhai passed away.

From the speech of Dr. Mackichan, Vice-Chancellor of the University at the time, famous for his scholarship and zeal for learning, I shall read a passage which will be a fitting close to the brief study we have been making of an illustrious life:

"This only I should like to be permitted to say (said the Vice-Chancellor) regarding a career which has been so largely concerned with the problems of the Government of India that the honour and success of that career were due in large measure to the high qualities of personal life and character which were so conspicuous in every part of it. Men of all shades of political opinion were quick to discern the transparent honesty, the simplicity of purpose, the unselfish patriotism of the man who sought to interpret to Great Britain the needs and aspirations of his countrymen. British political life is peculiarly sensitive to character. India's Grand Old Man owes as much to the influence of a blameless character as did his great prototype in Britain to the conviction which had wrought itself into the British mind regarding the loftiness

of his motives and the purity of his life. While in the University we do not concern ourselves with politics, we are deeply concerned with character, and today we pay the tribute of our admiration to Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's patience under adversities and disappointments, to his unwearied perseverance in the maintenance of his convictions and to the unselfish love of his country and nation which inspired him throughout his many conflicts."

Now a word about this book.* Biographies are rare in India. Of this rare class Mr. Masani's book is an excellent specimen. There is manifest in its pages a clear grasp of the varied affairs dealt with and a ripeness of judgement not often met with in one who is not himself directly concerned with politics. I may be permitted to commend the scrupulous care with which the material for the life has been selected out of a vast store and the just emphasis bestowed on the various parts of a career unusually long and filled with important events. But there is another title to praise which the writer has. It is generally believed by those who are inexperienced that a biographer must be so much in love with the subject of his writing that he ought not to criticise either the conduct or the views of the great man whom he is trying to portray. That, it seems to me, is a poor estimate of the function of a biographer. It is wrong at the very root. There is no harm in appraising a man exactly as he is.

* The Grand Old Man: Dadabhai Naoroji by R. P. Masani, George Allen and Unwin, 1939.

Excellences and foibles, merits and demerits, achievements and failures, all must be shown; but frequently a biography is one unvarying praise of the subject. You turn over the pages and you put it down. You say to yourself "It cannot be true. No man is perfect, this man must have had his share of human defects and foibles. Where are they in this volume?" Nor is it necessary to depict a man as more perfect and blameless than he was. We are all human, we are quite prepared to see in our great man a touch of the weakness that binds us all together. No biographer therefore need shrink from stating facts and drawing necessary inferences. On the contrary, it is his duty, for only thus could he counter the exaggeration, invention and distortion of the unfriendly critic. Mr. Masani has in several places indicated clearly his dissent from Dadabhai's views. Especially is he clear in his disapproval of Dadabhai's extremely hard language when he deals in later years with the treatment of India by England. Such a critic would not supply the ample material that our biographer has carefully supplied and supported by documents to prove that Dadabhai to his dying day never abandoned his original faith in the beneficence of the British connexion, his loyalty to it, or his anxiety that the youth of our land should be kept in the straight path of clean, honourable and lawful agitation.

Now for a final speculation concerning the great life that we have discussed at some length. Our author describes a conversation that he had with Mahatma Gandhi as they were recently returning home from England. Mr. Masani asked the

Mahatma, whose admiration and love of the Grand Old Man were well known, 'Do you think, Sir, in the times in which Dadabhai lived and fought for India it was quite natural for him to employ the language of supplication to Great Britain?' The Mahatma agreed 'Yes, you are quite right; in the circumstances of his time that was the proper idiom to employ.' Before Mr. Masani could put the question that was almost forming itself on his lips, the Mahatma added 'But at the same time I feel that if only Dadabhai had lived a few more years, he would support me in my attitude of civil disobedience and non-co-operation.' Our author discreetly says 'I leave the reader to judge whether such a thing would have happened. I have supplied enough material and each man should judge for himself.' Now it is idle to speculate upon such a contingency, but the human mind is somewhat rebellious. It will ask itself such questions and become miserable unless a satisfactory answer is forthcoming. I often vex myself with this problem, for I cannot forget certain of our critics frequently saying to us 'You are not doing what Gokhale would have done if he had been living.' I do not wish to dogmatise but I believe that such a thing could never have happened. I shall state one reason among several reasons that occur to me. You must all remember that the Mahatma belongs to the school popularly known by the name of philosophical anarchism. He has a rooted antipathy to all government, good or bad, enlightened or barbarous, righteous or unrighteous, because government is based on violence or force and force is fraud; and he looks forward to a stage of evolution when Society

will dissolve into its component individuals, when each man would be able to order his own life so righteously, so scrupulously, with such thorough regard for the welfare of his neighbour that no external government would be necessary. All the government of that time would be inside one's self, Svaraj in the truest sense, rule over one's own self, not the Svaraj of the nation by itself. But if you establish this inner mastery, if you are able to regulate your thoughts and your views in such wise that you are a source of happiness to all, then all government should vanish. The rule of man over man therefore appears to Gandhiji as a necessary but temporary evil, which it must be our conscious endeavour to live down as soon as possible. In this view he is guided more or less by the example of great men like Thoreau and Tolstoy. One would not be wrong in attributing to these idealists a living and potent faith in human perfectibility. Those who lack this faith will naturally entertain in favour of government and the necessity of maintaining its power and prestige feelings far stronger and more deep-rooted than the Mahatma does. It is easy to understand the horror with which they would recoil from movements which destroy or even weaken the normal foundations of civil authority. Now I cannot claim to have known Dadabhai intimately, but I can judge from the facts and documents in this biography. There is in my opinion no shadow of reason for believing that, even if he had lived to learn all about the Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy, he would have forsaken the doctrines of a lifetime and countenanced non-co-operation and mass civil disobedience, for the purpose of ending the British

connection. A similar statement I am prepared to make of Gokhale with greater confidence.

So let us with reverent hearts take leave of Dadabhai, the peerless patriot who dedicated his great gifts to the country, who taught us the lesson of perseverance, who believed firmly in constitutional agitation and who never despaired of final success.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN*

(1838—1918)

An Appreciation

The sound and mature opinion of the late Sir William Wedderburn should have been of the greatest value to the Right Honourable Mr. Montagu and others who have in their various ways and degrees to decide the fate of India. He had been for over a generation the lid-less watcher in England of the interests of India and ever since the question of constitutional reform took shape, he had been giving and receiving suggestions as to the lines on which it should proceed. In the first week of January last, he sent me a cablegram urging that Mr. Hirday Nath Kunzru, the head of our society in Allahabad, should be sent to England at once to prepare the ground for the Congress deputation which should not be long in going. I have heard a Governor in India say that whether the Conservative or Liberal ministry be in office, no big step of any kind affecting India would be taken without Sir William Wedderburn having been privately consulted. There are not wanting cavillers in both countries who say that Sir William commanded more reverence than influence; that he was regarded as a sort of well-intentioned crank, who thought of

* From the *Indian Review* of February 1918

Indian affairs exclusively and could not, therefore, be trusted to see their full bearing on large affairs. In truth, however, nothing has ever been done of value to humanity except by those who concentrated on what they cared for, and concentration necessarily means the exclusion from view of many things of consequence. Sir William's love of India and anxiety to promote the interests of India were a passion—a passion that gives joy to life and redeems humanity from grossness. He gave his pension to the service of India. He gave some of his own money too to her service. He knew her faults and weaknesses; but he dealt with her gently and his reproof scarcely differed from kindly exhortation. Mr. Gokhale was once struck by the extraordinary resemblance of a portrait in Sir William's house to himself and asked who it could be. He was told it was his brother, who, along with a child, had lost their lives in the Indian Mutiny. Sir William had never alluded to the incident before and he seldom alluded to it afterwards. Injuries not half so grievous, others would find it impossible to forget or forgive; nay, they have engendered undying hatred. The goodness that leads instead to love, to service and to sacrifice touches divinity. It is found only in the saintliest natures. In fact, in single-minded devotion, in the clear sight which no difficulty could cloud and no defeat could dim, in the complete surrender of the self, which minded no efforts, however great and never made any allusion to them, it would be difficult to find Sir William's match except amongst the great *rishis* of the land he loved. Spiritually he really was of India.

LORD MORLEY *

(1838-1923)

The career of Lord Morley opens the ancient question whether a man of letters can make a good statesman. It gives a clear answer in the affirmative, for Morley was certainly no failure in parliament, cabinet or office. That he failed of the highest in affairs may be granted. But short of the highest there are degrees of eminence and worth entitled to the world's respect and affording sure standards for human conduct. Morley's achievement in the India Office, if it stood alone, would give him a place among the great administrators of the British Empire. True his own ambition was not fully realised. But that is the fate of all but a few among the sons of men. In the highly evolved and complicated sphere where Morley's lot was cast, exquisite fineness of nature and consideration for the rights and feelings of others are a handicap. Notwithstanding much conscious adjustment on his part to the inexorable demands of public life, he could not compromise his ideals or principles beyond a certain point. As Massingham wrote, "he was an essentially unworldly man." To the society where

* A review of "John Viscount Morley—By J. H. Morgan (John, Murray, London) 1925," which appeared in 'Servant of India' in 1925.

mean advantages are taken, and coarse standards prevail, and the life of the soul is always in peril, John Morley never belonged, and his rejection of it, in his life and in the written and spoken word, makes the best inscription on his tomb. Contemporary opinion recognised this rare quality and called him "honest John". It is not always a blessing to be distinguished by such an appellation in one's life-time. The pride of all one's fellows and compeers is challenged thereby, and meticulous tests are applied to the details of one's conduct which would scarcely be satisfied by divinity. Morley dreaded the title and disowned it, but he was not able to shake it off, any more than Mr. Gandhi is able to shake off the name of Mahatma. If we are to believe General Morgan, Morley was not even a doctrinaire, though the critics of his policy always called him so. We know in India how far his practice deviated from his theory, and what risks of misunderstanding and miscarriage his reforms encountered from the approval which he was compelled to accord to deportations without trial and measures of repressive legislation. I heard from his own lips how he held out long against separate electorates for Mohammedans, but yielded on finding that he could not otherwise carry his reforms. But unlike less highly sensitised natures, he felt as wounds on his soul the compromises that he was forced to make, and the ceaseless questions and relentless taunts to which he was subjected both by political opponents and friends of India aggravated the misery of one who was by no means at peace with himself. Morley seems indeed to have been excessively sensitive. His quickness to fee-

and slowness to forget caused continual anxiety to his colleagues. For weeks together he would sit on the treasury bench next to Sir William Harcourt without once turning towards him or saying a word, and Gladstone had frequent occasion to complain of the inconvenience caused by his 'feminine sensibility.' This personal touchiness, however, was but as a spot in the sun. His most prominent and indeed characteristic quality was compassion. General Morgan records that his favourite motto was: 'The more noble a soul is, the more objects of compassion it hath.' This fellow-feeling was deep and comprehensive, embracing not merely individuals but communities, institutions and beliefs. That is why his friendships extended to all political parties, and his judgements were tempered in every case by sympathy and charity. Scoffing, lofty contempt, angry anathema were no part of his composition. Himself unencumbered by dogma or creed, he could appreciate devotion even in extravagance and ritual, even when it ran riot. With a passion for freedom which informed every one of his public activities, the heroes of history whom he loved to depict included some who trampled ruthlessly on the lives, liberties and fortunes of their fellow-men. His zeal for the cause of Irish emancipation knew no relaxation. He never could bring himself to condemn the excesses of Sinn Fein without at the same time affirming the responsibility of the English nation. His countenance lighted up with hope and joy (I was privileged to see it in 1919), as he hailed the conversion of the *Times* to the Irish cause and likened it to the conversion of Gladstone to Home Rule. In fact his mind loved

to dwell on great men, great deeds, great passages, great movements. General Morgan mentions a favourite catechism of his, "Which, if you had your choice, would you rather have been, Gibbon or Pitt, Macaulay or Palmerston?" At my interview it took the form, "Which would you rather have done, written the *Decline And Fall* or won Waterloo?" He did not seem to care, as he propounded the poser, which way you answered it. The idea itself lifted him, as he would have said, into the upper air. To one who felt this exalted region to be his proper home, is it any wonder that the wrangles and manœuvres of the political game often appeared sordid, and that he caused his colleagues great concern every now and then by proposing to retire?

Of Morley's work in the India Office our author has no great opinion. In fact he endorses the familiar conservative complaint that he was an autocrat, that in his desire of reform he exhibited haste, impatience of criticism, and unwillingness to follow expert guidance, and that he exalted his own office by undue usurpation of initiative and correspondingly depressed the Government of India. He is actually charged with having begun that vicious practice of private and personal correspondence with the Viceroy which, by reducing the latter's Executive Council to nought, became responsible in Lord Hardinge's time for the disasters of Mesopotamia. It is true Morley held in slight regard the authority of his own Council and did not write to Lord Minto of *his* advisers in reverential terms. Was he not once so flippant as to suggest that two of these mighty ones might be deported and that he would defend the operation

with *verve*? It is easy to imagine how he must have summoned the utmost hatred and scorn of which his gentle nature was capable as he contemplated these *avatars* of stubborn and malign imperialism. The biographer of Lord Minto goes so far as to assert that Morley did not understand and professed no natural sympathy for coloured races. In so far as this defect was real, it must have been due to imperfect knowledge. Perhaps his early reading did not include much Indian History, and however industrious a student he was, during his reign in Whitehall, of the records of British rule in India, it was impossible to acquire such knowledge of our ancient and many-sided culture as would satisfy a conscientious inquirer and profound historian. On a great occasion the late Mr. Gokhale spoke of him as one to whom educated Indians looked up as to a teacher. That is the light in which, long after the reforms of 1908-9 have been forgotten, he will still be regarded by reverent generations at school and college. His writings will still be studied with attention as those of one who set greater store by things of spirit than by things of matter, who abhorred tyranny as he loathed meanness, and whose sententious precepts and maxims, of fit application in the ever-changing picture of human affairs, give him a place among the great masters of the world.

WOMESH CHUNDER BONNERJEE*

Of few words, Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee was great in deed. He was made in one of Nature's generous moods. Intellect, luck, wealth, power over men, character,—all were given him in a large measure. He stood a giant among his countrymen. India was too narrow for this colossus. If he had been born in Europe, nations would have hung on his word. When a *Gandharva* of old sinned, he was doomed to pass a life in the contracted sphere of Aryavarta.

Yet Mr. Bonnerjee bore his greatness lightly, as only Nature's great men do. Almost the Dictator of Congress, he seemed scarcely conscious of his power. His soul dwelt apart from all faction, strife, or jealousy. He was too high for personal rivalry or envy. The arbiter of all differences, India hath need of thee at this hour! He carried with him unaffected smiles, oil for troubled waters, and rupees that never jingled. Like the ideal schoolmaster, his presence was always felt, but seldom seen. To young Congressmen he is unknown personally, having removed his activities to England for some years. But his memory pervades the Congress pandal, and his name can hush for a moment even the voice of discord. Here was a Cæsar,¹ when comes such another?

*This sketch is published with the kind permission of Mr. G. A. Natesan.

His success at the bar, which far transcended all ordinary measure, was paralleled only by the result of his advocacy of Congress. He it was that netted Pandit Ajudhia Nath, Mr. George Yule, and Charles Bradlaugh. Who else could have won for India the championship of the bravest soldier of freedom of modern times? Twenty years ago, when the great movement was started, and they wanted for their first President a man of true elevation of soul and unchallenged weight, they could think of none but W. C. Bonnerjee. Since that time he held the first place in the Congress Council, sharing it for some time with Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji till the G. O. M. settled in England and being its sole occupant subsequently till he too followed. Only those who attended the Subjects Committee meetings, at which the work of Congress is really shaped, can know the reverence with which his advice was listened to and the consummate tact and wisdom that he brought to bear on the settlement of differences. Long ago we learned to be independent of Mr. A. O. Hume, and get along with only his bright example and an occasional letter to rouse our flagging zeal. For some years past we have been, so far as Congress work in India is concerned, independent of Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee too. For while life lasted it was not possible for him to withhold from the British Committee the benefits of his unrivalled knowledge or of his unexampled munificence. So it must be with all movements that have to last beyond a lifetime. The first leaders must infuse a self-perpetuating principle into their constitutions so that the succession of leaders may be both continuous and efficient. We live in our descendants. As the Sanskrit proverb

says, the father is born again in the son, and is proud to be eclipsed by him. Nothing betrays the unworthy leader so much as a fear that power is slipping through his fingers or retirement from the helm with offended dignity at the first sight of a junior begging to be taught the secret.

Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee was born at Kidderpore, in his grandfather's estate, in December 1844, the same year in which Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, was born. His grandfather, Babu Pitambor Bonnerjee, was bania of a firm of attorneys in Calcutta named Collier, Bird & Co. His eldest son, Grees Chandra, first entered his father's office as clerk, and, after being articled to two lawyers successively, passed the attorney's examination in 1859 and finally became partner of a firm named Judge and Bonnerjee. His practical knowledge of law and skill in conveyancing were remarkable. The subject of our sketch was Grees Chandra's second son. He thus came of a family of lawyers, and it was from his father's firm that he got his first case at the Calcutta bar. His career at school was not promising, private theatricals proving a stronger attraction than books. First at the Oriental Seminary, then at the Hindu School, he received some education till 1861 when he ought to have appeared for the Matriculation Examination. Instead, however, his father got him articled to an attorney named W. P. Downing. Next year he joined the office of Mr. W. F. Gallanders, and acquired an intimate and thorough knowledge of the art of writing out deeds and pleadings that was to stand him in good stead later on. It was during this part of his career that he established

the *Bengalee* as a weekly newspaper,—the first manifestation of that public spirit which could not be suppressed even by the most absorbing legal practice.

In 1864 he competed for, and being the only competitor obtained, one of the five scholarships which Mr. Rustomji Jamsetji Jeejeebhai had founded for the benefit of Indian students proceeding to England for the study of law. He joined the Middle Temple where his good fortune procured him the tuition of two eminent lawyers, T. H. Dart and Edward Fry. Here one of his fellow-students was Mr. Badruddin Tyabji, who was to share with him for many years the honours and the anxieties of political leadership. While studying law, he took part in the establishment of the London Indian Society, which has since become a powerful factor in Indian politics. In 1867 he was called to the Bar and set up practice in the High Court of Calcutta next year. His first brief has been already referred to. It was but the beginning of what was to become the most extensive and lucrative practice of any barrister in India. His strong memory, prodigious industry, and genial disposition combined with early training in the business of the attorney and the ungrudging professional help of a thriving barrister named Pitt-Kennedy raised him to the very top of the bar. There were only two other Indian barristers before him,—Mr. Michael Madhu Sudan Dúttá and Mr. Mano Mohan Ghose. The former did not take his profession seriously, while the latter cared only for mofussil practice in the criminal line. Though thus almost without an Indian rival, Mr. Bonnerjee seems at first to have suffered for his

colour. He himself told a friend that "at the outset he received but scant courtesy from those members of the legal profession (attorneys, presumably) who were of his own race. Some fought shy of him before he had obtained a certain footing at the bar, others, indeed, were jealous of the young practitioner who, conscious of his superior strength, looked down upon them sometimes with a disdainful smile." His father had died just before he joined the Calcutta bar, but his place in the firm had been taken by his uncle Babu Joykissen Gangooly. Other relations too and friends Mr. Bonnerjee had among members of the legal profession. Among his best patrons and well-wishers at this time was an influential member of the aristocracy named Maharaja Kamal Krishna Bahadur. To this gentleman Mr. Bonnerjee paid to the end the greatest respect and showed the liveliest gratitude. He always stood barelegged in his presence and named his eldest son, after him, Kamal Krishna Shelley Bonnerjee. One of the early ambitions to which he gave playful expression was that he should earn ten thousand rupees a month. This he realised in a very short time, and his income at its highest often exceeded twice that amount. Though latterly he spent half the year in England, he was often engaged by cable in important cases, and his assistants met him in Bombay and instructed him on the way to Calcutta. He gave a helping hand, whenever he could, to deserving juniors, and some Englishmen have been recipients of his generosity. He officiated as Standing Counsel for four years, and declined a Judgeship of the High Court more than once. It would have been a strange thing if he had given up his unique income at the

Bar for a third or a quarter of it on the Bench. He rendered eminent services to the public in espousing the causes of Messrs. Surendra Nath Bannerjee and Robert Knight, two editors whose outspoken and fearless criticism had made them obnoxious to the powers-that-be. His career as a lawyer may be summed up in the semi-official pronouncement of Mr. Sinha, Officiating Advocate-General.

His career at the bar was one of exceptional brilliance. Within a few years he almost reached to the top of his profession. On the original side, I venture to think, there has not been, for at least many, many years a practitioner in whom the Judges, the Attorneys, and the litigating public had the same amount of confidence as they had in Mr. Bonnerjee. After having attained to the highest practice possible on the original side, Mr. Bonnerjee commenced to practise on the Appellate side, and his success on that side was as rapid as on the original side of this Court. A sound lawyer, a perfect draughtsman, and a brilliant cross-examiner, Mr. Bonnerjee was to many of us the ideal of a perfect advocate of this court. His merit was appreciated both by the public and the Government of this country, and in 1883, he was appointed to act as Standing Counsel to the Government of India, which appointment he held for more than four years.

Official honours came to him in due course. He was appointed a Fellow of the Calcutta University in 1880, became President of the Law Faculty in

1886, and represented the University in the Bengal Legislative Council in 1894 and 1895. To this period Mr. Romesh Chunder Dutt refers in these terms:

In 1894 and 1895, Mr. Bonnerjee and I worked together in the Bengal Legislative Council. I had been nominated by the Government, and Mr. Bonnerjee held the higher position of being elected by the people. We seldom differed in our views, and on more than one occasion Mr. Bonnerjee's manly fight for his countrymen was fruitful of good results.

The official recognition, however, that was extended to him is nothing to the honours that the nation paid him. It was in 1885 that Bombay witnessed the first session of the Indian National Congress, destined to become the instrument of untold good to the country as well as "the soundest triumph of British administration and a crown of glory to the British nation." Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee has himself told the story of the origin of the Congress. It deserves to be repeated here, as it has, unscathed, run the gauntlet flung down to it by the indiscreet and injudicious biographer of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava.

It will probably be news to many that the Indian National Congress, as it was originally started and as it has since been carried on, is in reality the work of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava when that nobleman was Governor-General of India. Mr. A. O. Hume, C.B., had, in 1884, conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to the country if leading Indian politicians could be brought together once a

year to discuss social matters and be upon friendly footing with one another. He did not desire that politics should form part of their discussion, for there were recognised political bodies in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of India, and he thought that these bodies might suffer in importance if, when Indian politicians from different parts of the country came together, they discussed politics. His idea further was that, the Governor of the Province where the politicians met should be asked to preside over them and that thereby greater cordiality should be established between the official classes and the non-official Indian politicians. Full of these ideas he saw the noble Marquis when he went to Simla early in 1885 after having in the December previous assumed the Viceroyalty of India. Lord Dufferin took great interest in the matter and after considering over it for some time he sent for Mr. Hume and told him that, in his opinion, Mr. Hume's project would not be of much use. He said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England. The newspapers, even if they really represented the views of the people, were not reliable, and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable in the interests as well of the rulers as of the ruled that Indian politicians

should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved; and he added that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the local Governor, for in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds. Mr. Hume was convinced by Lord Dufferin's arguments and when he placed the two schemes, his own and Lord Dufferin's before leading politicians in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and other parts of the country, the latter unanimously accepted Lord Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it. Lord Dufferin had made it a condition with Mr. Hume that his name in connection with the scheme of the Congress should not be divulged so long as he remained in the country, and this condition was faithfully maintained and none but the men consulted by Mr. Hume knew anything about the matter.

A proud man must Mr. Bonnerjee have been when at the first gathering in Bombay of the hundred best men in all India, Mr. A. O. Hume proposed, the Hon. Mr. S. Subrahmania Aiyar (now Sir Justice) seconded, and the Hon. Mr. K. T. Telang supported, the motion that "Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, Standing Counsel, Bengal, be invited to assume the Office of President of the Congress." His opening speech was characteristically short. It could not be shorter,—or more weighty. He first claimed that the Congress was representative.

Surely never had so important and comprehensive an assemblage occurred within historical times on the soil of India. He claimed for it an entirely representative character. It was true that, judged from the standard of the House of Commons, they were not representatives of the people of India in the sense the members of the House were representatives of the constituencies. But if community of sentiments, community of feelings, and community of wants enabled any one to speak on behalf of others, then assuredly they might justly claim to be the representatives of the people of India. It might be said that they were self-elected, but that was not so. The news that this Congress would be held had been known throughout the year in the different provinces of India, and they all knew that everywhere the news had been received with great satisfaction by the people at large, and though no formal elections had been held, the representatives had been selected by all the different Associations and Bodies, and he only wished that all thus selected had been able to attend, instead of their having now to lament the absence of many valued coadjutors, whose attendance had been unhappily barred by various unfortunate circumstances.

It is somewhat curious to read at this distance of time the tentative, vague, and perhaps too obvious statement that the President made at the time of the objects of the Congress.

- (a) The promotion of personal intimacy and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in the various parts of the Empire.
- (b) The eradication by direct friendly personal intercourse of all possible race, creed, or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country, and the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in their beloved Lord Ripon's ever memorable reign.
- (c) The authoritative record after this has been carefully elicited by the fullest discussion of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.
- (d) The determination of the lines upon and methods by which during the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interests.

The concluding paragraph contains one of those protestations of loyalty that in the early years of Congress every speaker thought it necessary to make in defence of himself and of the movement in general. Though perhaps the young Congressman of the present day considers it galling to be under the necessity of repeating these sentiments of loyalty, the time is not altogether past when suspicion of the basic motives of the movement may break out on a large scale. Indeed, such a suspicion has now gained ground in the mind of our enemies to quite as large an extent as ever.

Surely there was nothing in these objects to which any sensible and unprejudiced man could possibly take exception, and yet on more than one occasion remarks had been made by gentlemen, who should have been wiser, condemning the proposed Congress, as if it were a nest of conspirators and disloyalists. Let him say once for all, and in this he knew well after the long informal discussions that they had had amongst themselves on the previous day, that he was only expressing the sentiments of every gentleman present, that there were no more thoroughly loyal and consistent well-wishers of the British Government than were himself and the friends around him. In meeting to discuss in an orderly and peaceable manner questions of vital importance affecting their well-being, they were following the only course by which the constitution of England enabled them to represent their views to the ruling authority. Much had been done by Great Britain for the benefit of India, and the whole country was truly grateful to her for it. She had given them order, she had given them railways, and, above all, she had given them the inestimable blessing of Western education. But a great deal still remained to be done. The more progress the people made in education and material prosperity, the greater would be the insight into political matters and the keener their desire for political advancement. He thought that

their desire to be governed according to the ideas of Government prevalent in Europe was in no way incompatible with their thorough loyalty to the British Government. All that they desired was that the basis of the Government should be widened and that the people should have their proper and legitimate share in it. The discussions that would take place in this Congress would, he believed, be as advantageous to the ruling authorities as he was sure it would be to the people at large.

For the second Congress in Calcutta in 1886 Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee laboured hard. At the actual Session, his main business was the piloting of a proposition on the Jury System in India. Indeed, this subject he made one of his specialities in Congress. It was intended to secure finality for verdicts of acquittal, the power having been recently given to District Judges of referring cases to the High Court when they happened to differ from such verdicts. There was great opposition to this, for in those early days public opinion had not assumed a definiteness on many matters. In the end Mr. Bonnerjee and Mano Mohan Ghose were together able to clear many misconceptions and get the proposition accepted by a large majority. The only other proposition he moved was to the effect that Standing Congress Committees should be formed in all the provinces of India, for without them "it is quite impossible to keep up a regular correspondence between all the different parts of the country and so to arrive in due time at a general agreement as to the various questions on which action is to be taken at the Congress."

At the Third Congress in Madras in 1887. Mr. Bonnerjee proposed the name of the President, Mr. Budruddin Tyabji, his old friend and fellow-student in England. Mr. Tyabji was doubly welcome for himself and for the race that he represented. Mr. Bonnerjee naturally referred to the significance of the choice, and in these days when designed efforts are being made to set the communities by the ears and a few innocent Mahomedans are gulled into anti-Hindu demonstrations, it is just as well to quote an early statement of the Congress attitude in the matter by such a leader as our hero.

But in this connection, it is necessary for me to remind you that he is also a Mahomedan gentleman. I am very sorry, indeed, to have to say it, but there is no disguising the fact, that in Bengal, in some quarters, amongst our Mahomedan friends, some misapprehension as to the scope and objects of our National Congress still exists, and it is absolutely necessary that that misapprehension should be removed, and that we should be in fact, as we are in thought, one community and one country, owing allegiance to one Sovereign. The misapprehension under which those Mahomedan gentlemen (some of them at least) labour, who do not cordially sympathise with us, is due, I believe, to an apprehension that the question of "Representative Government" which was presented to the Congress of the year 1885, which was again pressed by the Congress of the year 1886, and which, I believe, will be once more urged by us here

will not, if given effect to, practically prove to be conducive to the interests of the Mahomedan population of this country. I am very glad to hear these murmurs of dissent from this assembly of delegates, a large number of whom, I see, are Mahomedans, because, I was just going to say that this apprehension was perfectly unfounded. There is nothing in the objects and scope of this National Congress, which can, directly or indirectly be in any way inimical to the interests of our Mahomedan fellow-countrymen, or of any other section of the community. We want a representative Government in its truest and best sense, and I, for one,—and I am speaking in this matter on behalf of, I believe, the whole of the Hindu delegates—do not desire a hole and corner representation, but a representation of every community in the country, so that the whole of India may be perfectly represented to the governing authorities—so that their grievances may be remedied—so that everything necessary to make the nation contented and happy, may be done by the governing authorities. It is not necessary for me to detain you at any length upon this subject, as I see we are all agreed upon it.

At this Congress, too, the President had great difficulty in conducting the proceedings, for several propositions were either opposed or often amended. The one on Military Colleges evoked a great deal of criticism, and at one stage the expression *native of*

India was introduced. At once up rose a delegate and asked for its meaning. The President appealed to Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, who made it the occasion for advancing one of the principles of Congress:

I thought it was well known, that all Hindus, all Mahomedans, all Parsees, all Eurasians, all East Indians and all domiciled Europeans, and all persons born in India of domiciled parents are, in the eye of the law, "*natives of India.*" and are defined to be so by statute. The words "*as defined by statute*" have to be introduced, because they will prevent misunderstanding on the part of such of our brethren as are Eurasians, East Indians, or domiciled Europeans, or the children of these, all of whom are really included in the legal term "*native of India.*" We are now perfectly agreed that these Colleges should be for the benefit of the whole of India. Let it not be said that this Congress has put anything in such an uncertain way that it might hereafter be said that Eurasians and East Indians and domiciled Europeans were not included in the term "*native of India.*"

Next year Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee proceeded to England for the sake of his health, but did not take his time altogether easily. With the help of Mr. Dadabhai and some English friends, he succeeded in establishing a political agency for India in England. He also addressed several meetings in different parts of that country to make known Indian grievances and rouse the Imperial public to a sense of their duties to India. These speeches exhibit Mr.

Bonnerjee's style of speaking at its best. Plain, brief, direct, entirely free from claptrap and finely-turned sentiments, they yet show perfect mastery of the facts and a business-like method of exposition. They are pervaded by a tone of perfect loyalty to the Government of Britain and by a degree of faith in the love of justice of the British nation which seems to us now-a-days to have savoured of the romantic. A few passages are culled from his English utterances to show his political views.

On the Russian scare, and the best solution thereof, he said :

When Russia was thousands of miles away from India, and was gradually civilising Central Asia, it used to be the cry, that as soon as Russia came to a place called Merv, she would seize India. Russia reached Merv many years ago, and India still remains an English possession ; and I am in a position to say on behalf of my countrymen—I am a Native of India and belong to one of the various castes, which caste is the caste of Brahmin—in a position to tell you that they would no more allow Russia, notwithstanding the neglect with which they have been treated, to take India than they would allow the Hottentots to do so. My countrymen are loyal to England to the backbone. They will, when necessity arises, fight shoulder to shoulder with Englishmen for the purpose of retaining English Rule and sending away any intruder. Your Tories do not understand that : they wish to keep everybody down with a firm hand. Your

Tory does not believe it is possible to rule by affection, and to claim the good-will and the willing service of the people. He only believes in his big army, with its big guns, some of which, as you have heard to-night, cost £200 to fire one shot. I do not believe that Russia has the slightest inimical intention towards India. For the purpose of preventing Russia going to India money is being wanted in the way Dr. Aubrey has referred to, and in order to provide money for this purpose the Government of India has actually raised the tax upon salt which, as I have before said, is one of the necessities of life of the people.

Sir James Fitzjames Stephen, who added a few obnoxious provisions to our Penal Code, came in for a hard knock or two:

In the year 1870, to our very great misfortune, Sir James Fitzjames Stephen was appointed law member of the Viceroy's Council. He went out to India and the first thing he took in hand was called "The Amendment of the Criminal Procedure Code." That amendment consisted in this—that he took away the finality from the verdict of the jury; he gave the power which no judge in India had ever possessed before, of enhancing sentences on appeal; and he made the Criminal Procedure Code almost Draconian in its severity. You have, I have no doubt, heard that the people of India, are as law-abiding as any people on the earth—and yet in a country like that the Criminal Procedure Code has

been made the severest of any in the civilised world. I will tell you what happened under this law. This is an instance, you may call it an extreme instance, but it took place, and there are others which take place every day, to the great oppression of the people of the country, who protest, but nobody listens to their protest. A man was tried in one of the districts in Bengal for murder. The trial took place, not before a jury, but before what are called assessors—two assessors and a judge. The judge concurring with the two assessors, found the man not guilty of murder, but found him guilty of manslaughter, and sentenced him to hard labour for five years. He appealed against his conviction—he had the right of appeal, the trial having been held with the aid of assessors and not with the aid of a jury. The case came before the High Court of Calcutta. He was a poor man and could not be properly represented. The judges upset the conviction as regards manslaughter, found the man guilty of murder, sentenced him to be hanged, and notwithstanding petitions for mercy from nearly the whole country that man was hanged. He had in the meantime undergone nearly two months of that imprisonment, so that he was kept in rigorous imprisonment, for two months, and at the end of that was hanged. Now this created such a shock in the minds of the people that it is impossible to describe the sensation in the country at the time; everybody wept

aloud almost, but there was nobody to take any notice of that. Our district officers thought that the prestige of the High Court would be lost if the Government interfered and allowed that man to live. The High Court had the power, and could have sentenced him to transportation for life: but no—the man was sentenced to be hanged, and hanged he was accordingly. There are many instances where a man has been fined, after Sir James Fitzjames Stephen's law he has appealed, and the result has been that the judges, instead of affirming the fine, have sent him to hard labour for many months. Now I saw the scene created in this country when it was reported, and truly reported, that some Country Court Judges in Ireland had enhanced the sentences on appeal. There was a tremendous outburst, and the result was that even Mr. Balfour was obliged to send instructions to his Country Court Judges not to enhance sentences on appeal. But a thing like this goes on in India almost every day. The people cry aloud against it, but there is nobody to pay heed to their cry.

Here is another:

This very Sir James Fitzjames Stephen passed what is called the Evidence Act for India. It is the substance of Pitt Taylor's book boiled down considerably. Well, one clause he has introduced is that at a criminal trial the previous conviction of any prisoner may be given in evidence at any stage. That is to say, if in the year of grace 1888, a man is

charged with picking another person's pocket, you may give evidence against him, that in 1830 he was guilty of bigamy. And what do you think is the reason given for this? Sir James Fitzjames Stephen says in his report to the Legislative Council: "it is said that evidence of this description may prejudice the prisoner. My answer is that if the prisoner is guilty"—mark the logic—"if the prisoner is guilty I do not see why he should not be prejudiced, the object of giving evidence against a man being to show whether he is guilty or not." And laws of this description have been passed, people have protested, but there is no heed paid to these protests.

Speaking of members of the Legislative Council appointed by Government, Mr. Bonnerjee told a funny anecdote:

One of these gentlemen was a very constant attendant at meetings of the Viceregal Legislative Council, and was one of the supporters upon whom the Government relied. One of his friends asked him how it was that he voted upon every question in a particular way, seeing that he did not understand a single word of what was taking place. His answer was: "It has been the pleasure of the Viceroy to instal me in this place as one of his Councillors, and it is my duty to vote for him on all occasions". He was then asked how he knew the way in which the Viceroy wanted him to vote, and his answer was: "When the Viceroy lifts

up his hand one way, I know he wants me to say 'Yes', and I say 'Yes'; and when he lifts up his hand in a different way, I know he wants me to say 'No', and I say 'No'."

If they ventured to vote against the wishes of the Government, this is what happened :

It is no use telling the civilized world that you have the people of India with you in your Councils. You know that these people of India are dependent for their position in the Councils and for their position in the country upon your good-will. If they do not support you, you never re-appoint them; you have things reported against them, and their life is a burden to them. Anyone now appointed to these Councils by the favour of the Government comes there with his life almost in his hand, because if he is found to be in any way independent he is not only not re-appointed but his position in the country is made intolerable for him.

That Indians have never had representative institutions is one of those fallacies which our leaders have time after time exploded, but which are still repeated by interested Anglo-Indian critics. Only the other day we were surprised to hear that this old libel was uttered by the Governor of Madras. So long ago as 1888, Mr. Bonnerjee had answered the charge :

I will only say that the objection which has been raised by some persons in this country and also in India of a conservative turn of mind that the people of India are not fit for the kind of Government Mr. Bradlaugh has

in view, is of no force whatever. Any one who is acquainted with the village system of India knows that at a time when civilization was unknown in this country representative institutions of a kind obtained in that country. Representation is ingrained in the minds of the people. From the time the East India Company first obtained ascendancy in the country they have not had many opportunities of giving effect to the principle, but it cannot be said that they have forgotten it. The village system, which is based upon representation, is still to be found in the country, and in some parts it is still in full operation.

From this arduous campaign in England he returned to India in time for the Congress Session held at Allahabad under the Presidency of Mr. George Yule whom he himself had persuaded to accept the onerous office. Not only the President of this year, but the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Pandit Ajudhianath, was Mr. Bonnerjee's acquisition for the Congress cause. In a speech of his own as President of a later Congress sitting in that very city, he told the story of their conversion.

With Pandit Ajudhianath has passed away that other great Congress leader, Mr. George Yule. These were the two most prominent figures in the Congress held in this city in 1888: Pandit Ajudhianath as the Chairman of the Reception Committee; Mr. Yule as the President of the Congress. It was my singular good fortune to have been the means of inducing both these gentlemen

to espouse the Congress cause. I was here in April, 1887, and met Pandit Ajudhianath, who had not then expressed his views, one way or another, with regard to Congress matters. I discussed the matter with him. He listened to me with his usual courtesy and urbanity, and he pointed out to me certain defects which he thought existed in our system; and, at last, after a sympathetic hearing of over an hour-and-a-half, he told me he would think of all I had said to him, and that he would consider the matter carefully and thoroughly, and, then, let me know his views. I never heard anything from him from that time until on the eve of my departure for Madras to attend the Congress of 1887. I then received a letter from him in which he said I had made a convert of him to the Congress cause, that he had thoroughly made up his mind to join us, that he was anxious to go to Madras himself, but that illness prevented him from doing so, and he sent a message that if it pleased the Congress to hold its next Sessions at Allahabad in 1888, he would do all he could to make the Congress a success. And you know—certainly, those of you who attended know—what a success he did make of it. Our venerable President of the Reception Committee of this present Congress has told us the difficulties which had to be encountered to make that Congress a success, and I do not belittle his services or those of any other worthy Congressman who worked with

him at the Congress, when I say that it was owing to Pandit Ajudhianath's exertions that that Congress was the success it was.

When it was time to select a President for recommendation to the Congress of 1888, it was suggested to me, I being then in England, that I might ascertain the views of Mr. George Yule, and ask him to preside. I accordingly saw him at his Office in the city, and had the same kind of conversation with him as I had had, the year before, with Pandit Ajudianath. He also listened to me kindly, courteously and sympathetically, and asked me to give him all the Congress literature I had. I had only the three Reports of the Congress Meetings of 1885, 1886 and 1887, and I sent these to him; and to my great joy, and, as it afterwards turned out, to the great benefit of the Congress, Mr. Yule came to see me at my house and told me that he entirely sympathised with the cause, and that, if elected to be the President of the Congress of that year, he would be proud of the position and would do what he could for us. Those who had the good fortune to attend the Congress of 1888, know how manfully and how well he sustained the duties of his position; how he pointed out that the chief plank in the Congress platform—namely, the reform and reconstitution of the Legislative Councils of this country—was by no means an invention on the part of the Congress; that that point had received the attention and had been favourably

considered and spoken of by that marvellous English statesman, Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield. He told us that we were treading on the footsteps of that great man, and that if we perseveringly stuck to our colours, some time or other we should get what we wanted. From that time to the day of his death Mr. Yule worked with us, gave us his valuable advice and helped us considerably as regards our working expenses. Pandit Ajudhianath, as you know, from the time he joined the Congress, worked early, worked late, worked with the old, worked with the young, never spared any personal sacrifices; so that he might do good to his country and to the Congress, and his lamented death came upon him when he was coming back from Nagpore, after having worked there for the success of the Nagpore Congress of last year. Those who ever so slightly knew Pandit Ajudhianath and Mr. Yule will never be able to forget the great services which those gentlemen rendered to the Congress cause.

In the 1888 Congress, however, Mr. Bonnerjee came upon the platform only once,—to move that the resolutions arrived at should be submitted to the Governments of India and England. From his speech on the occasion we will take only one passage counselling patience and moderation :

Now, Brother Delegates, one word more and I have done. Do not be cast down, do not be disheartened, if immediately you put forward a request it is not granted by those

who are responsible for the good government of the country. Be patient, be moderate, be true to your cause and to yourselves. Remember that even now there are many reforms about which large majorities are agreed, which the English people are themselves asking for and which they have not yet got. If you are true to yourselves, if you are moderate, if you are reasonable in your demands, and if you go on agitating, agitating and agitating loyally and constitutionally, believing that the British public—and in that public I include our Anglo-Indian friends in this country—is a truth-loving and a justice-loving public, you will be sure to get what you are asking for in the end. Give a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull all together, and you reach the shores of victory in no time.

We are now brought to the Fifth Indian National Congress, one of the most memorable sittings it has had, memorable for the witty and sparkling address of Mr. Pheroza Shah M. Mehta as Chairman of the Reception Committee, for the presidency of Sir W. Wedderburn, and for the presence and short, but animating, speech of Charles Bradlaugh. For the last blessing the country was indebted to Mr. Bonnerjee and the delegates knew it. He was, therefore, not the least remarkable among the remarkable men that sat round Sir W. Wedderburn. To him fell the honour of proposing the election of the President and he did so in a neat little speech which contained one of the few instances of humour to be discovered in his utterances,—a humour, how-

ever, which had been anticipated by Mr. Mehta on a similar occasion the preceding year.

If you look back to the Presidents that we have had from 1885, you will see that the selection of Sir William Wedderburn has been arrived at by a sort of logical process. The first Congress in 1885 was comparatively an insignificant one, and you were presided over on that occasion by an equally insignificant individual. The Second Congress had the honour of being presided over by one who has devoted the whole of his life to the cause of his country, and who, even in his old age, is at the present moment appealing, to the electors of one of the constituencies of England in order that, if returned to the House of Commons, he may be able still more effectively to serve that country. Can I name Dadabhai Naoroji without calling from you enthusiastic applause? The third Congress was presided over by a gentleman of the Mahomedan persuasion, who, having distinguished himself at the Bar and in public life, was thought to be the fittest man to contradict the rumours that had been sedulously cast abroad that this was a Hindu Congress and that Mahomedan gentlemen had no sympathy with it. The next President ought, according to the process which we followed, to have been a gentleman belonging to the Eurasian community; but at the time when it became necessary to select a President, *the* man amongst the Eurasian community whom the whole of this country would have

hailed with one voice as President of the Congress, Mr. D. S. White, was lying ill in bed; and while he was in that condition it would have been improper for us to ask any other Eurasian gentleman to take his place. Now, unfortunately, he is no more; and India has lost one of her brightest sons and best patriots in Mr. D. S. White. Failing Mr. White, we had to go to that other community in India—the Anglo-Indian community—and there we found our late respected President Mr. George Yule. Of him I need say no more than this, that having retired to England he is still devoting his time and his money to the furtherance of the cause of the Congress. From the non-official European community to the official European community is but a slight descent, but unfortunately it is impossible for us to get a gentleman at the time actually belonging to the official classes to guide our deliberations. However sympathetic they may be, however much they may wish success to the Congress, the rules of the service to which they belong prevent their publicly joining us and taking a prominent part in our proceedings. But ex-officials do not occupy such a restricted position: they are able to exercise their judgment in matters political. And we have in Sir William Wedderburn an ex-official who has throughout his career in this country, extending over 25 years, shown the deepest sympathy with the aspirations of the people of this

country, and who is one of the few men in the service who have had the eye to see and the heart to feel that the Government of India, conducted though it may be upon generous principles, is not all that is required for the best interests of the country, and that its institutions require to be liberalized in order that they may harmonize with the conditions of the present day.

He proposed this year another resolution praying for certain modifications in the rules and practices of the House of Commons and for the Indian Budget being brought before that House at an early date so as to secure an adequate discussion of Indian grievances. He then told the familiar story of the empty House with a personal reminiscence.

If the statement could be brought forward at an earlier date, many of the most influential members who take an interest in Indian affairs, would remain in London and take part in the discussion, but at present it is impossible that it should be so. I remember when I was present in the House last year, to listen to the Budget Statement, there was a time when the only members present were the Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Courteney, and Sir R. Lethbridge, who was addressing the empty benches of the House. There was not another soul present, Mr. Bradlaugh having withdrawn for two or three minutes to the smoking-room.

Though he had himself invited the Congress to assemble in Calcutta in 1890, illness and domestic affliction prevented his presence at its sitting. No

doubt he was sorely missed and the sympathy of all the delegates went out to him. Mr. Mano Mohan Ghose referred feelingly to his absence, and the President, Mr. Mehta, paid a compliment in his own inimitable fashion to his absent friend. At all previous Congresses, Mr. Bonnerjee had moved the re-appointment of Mr. A. O. Hume to the General Secretaryship, and as the time came round this year for a similar motion, it had to be passed on to another Congress veteran—Mr. Surendra Nath Bannerjee.

At the 1891 Congress at Nagpur, Mr. Bonnerjee moved some important propositions. The first embodied the determination of the country to hold a Congress every year in India 'until all necessary reforms have been secured.' This was against the suggestion of the British Congress Committee that the Indian sittings be suspended till the Congress should have assembled once in England. The second resolution he moved was to record the Congress's high estimate and deep appreciation of the great services of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and thank the electors of Central Finsbury and all others that had furthered his candidature. The entire speech is here:

Is there any one amongst you who has not heard the name of Dadabhai Naoroji, or, having heard it, does not revere it, does not love it, does not carry it about with him as a household word? From the time when he was a young man to the present day when he is over three score years old, he has devoted himself, his fortune, his talents, his life, one may say, to the cause of the country.

There is no publicist among us who knows the economical condition of India so well as Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji. He has fought, and, in my opinion, fought successfully, many a tough battle with the adversaries of India. Chief amongst them was that very superior person Sir Mountstuart Elphinstone Grant-Duff, who, when he was in India, only corresponded with such high personages as Prince Bismarck and the Empress Frederick. Now Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, not for any personal advantage to himself, but only for the sake of his country, has been trying for some years to get into the House of Commons, so that there, in the midst of the representatives of Great Britain herself, he may plead the cause of his native country. You know how difficult it is even for Englishmen to get into the House of Commons. He has failed once, but the spirit which led him to devote his life to his country is still in him and stirring him on to do the best he can to get a seat in the House of Commons. All that I ask you to do by this resolution is to say that you have your old confidence in the old man, and that you will be sincerely grateful to any constituency in Great Britain that will do itself the inestimable honour of sending Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji to the House of Commons.

The third resolution that he moved was his own by prescriptive right. Both Messrs. Hume and Pandit Ajudhia Nath had expressed a desire, owing to ill-health, to be relieved of their duties as general

Secretary and Joint-General Secretary respectively. But Mr. Bonnerjee was able to announce that they had both yielded "to the persuasion that had been brought to bear on them." Of course, the persuasion could have come only from one source.

Next year (1892) the Congress Presidentship came round to him a second time,—a signal honour which only Dadabhai and Surendra Nath share with him. We have already quoted from his inaugural address. For a man generally averse 'to speechifying,' this effort was long; but it is packed full of good sense and sound wisdom. The success of Congress he attributed, above all other things, to the influences of British Rule.

The persons to whom I have referred have been troubling their brains, from almost the very commencement of the movement, to find out how it is that this movement, which they are pleased to call only a "native" movement, has been such a success. And they have hit upon one of the causes, which they have iterated and reiterated in season and out of season, as the cause of the success of the Congress; namely, the influence over us of that great man—Allan Octavian Hume. That Mr. Hume possesses, and has exercised, a vast amount of influence over the Congress movement, and over each single Congress which has met, is a fact. We are not only not ashamed to acknowledge it, but we acknowledge it with gratitude to that gentleman, and we are proud of his connection with the Congress. But the movement is only to some extent, and I may say, only to

a limited extent, due to the influence which Mr. Hume has exercised over us. It is not the influence of this man, or of that man, or of any third man that has made the Congress what it is. It is the British professors who have discoursed eloquently to us on the glorious constitution of their country; it is the British merchants who have shown to us how well to deal with the commodities of our country; it is the British engineers who have annihilated distance and enabled us to come together for our deliberations from all parts of the Empire; it is the British planters who have shown us how best to raise the products of our soil; it is all these, in other words, it is all the influences which emanate from British Rule in India that have made the Congress the success it is. The Congress is a mere manifestation of the good work that has been done by all those to whom I have referred (and I ought also to have referred to the British missionaries who have worked amongst us); and all that we wish by this movement to do, is to ask the British public, both in this country and in Great Britain, that, without any strain on the connection which exists between Great Britain and this country, such measures may be adopted by the ruling authorities that the grievances under which we labour may be removed, and that we may hereafter have the same facilities of national life that exist in Great Britain herself. How long it will take us to reach the latter end no one can

tell; but it is our duty to keep the hope of it before us, and keep reminding our British fellow-subjects that this hope shall always be with us.

Mr. Bonnerjee held somewhat peculiar views on Social Reform. He did not believe in public discussion of social questions, and felt that each separate community had its own troubles for which it ought to find its own solution. So he was averse to the Congress, as such, concerning itself with these vital and thorny problems.

I am one of those who have very little faith in the public discussion of social matters; those are things which, I think, ought to be left to the individuals of a community who belong to the same social organisation, to do what they can for its improvement. We know how excited people become when social subjects are discussed in public. Not long ago we had an instance of this when what was called the Age of Consent Bill was introduced into the Viceregal Legislative Council. I do not propose to say one word as to the merits of the controversy that arose over that measure, but I allude to it to illustrate how apt the public mind is to get agitated over these social matters if they are discussed in a hostile and unfriendly spirit in public.

I may point out that we do not all understand in the same sense what is meant by social reform. Some of us are anxious that our daughters should have the same education as our sons, that they should go to Universities, that they should adopt learned profes-

sions; others, who are more timid, would be content with seeing that their children are not given in marriage when very young, and that child-widows should not remain widows all the days of their lives. Others, more timid still, would allow social problems to solve themselves. It is impossible to get any common ground even as regards the members of the same community, be it Hindu, Mahomedan or Parsee with respect to these matters. Thus it was that social questions were left out of the Congress programme: thus it was that the Congress commenced and has since remained, and will, I sincerely trust, always remain as a purely political organisation, devoting its energies to political matters, and political matters only. I am afraid that those, whether belonging to our own country or to any other country, who find fault with us for not making social subjects a part of our work, cherish a secret wish that we might all be set by the ears as we were all set by the ears by the Age of Consent Bill, and that thus we might come to an ignominious end. They mean us no good, and when we find critics of that description talking of the Congress as only fit to discuss social problems, I think the wider the breath we give them the better.

Touching the recently agitated question, whether India ought to be a party question in British politics, Mr. Bonnerjee held decided views.

The Cabinet is so troubled with the affairs of

the vast British Empire that the members really have no time to devote to India as a body, and leave her to their colleague, the Secretary of State for India. When any Indian question comes before the House of Commons, what do we see? The Cabinet of the day has always a majority in the House, and it always finds supporters among its own party, whether they are would-be placemen or whether they are country gentlemen who go to the House of Commons as the best Club in England. And in non-party matters—and they make it a pretence in the House of Commons to regard Indian affairs as matters non-party,—in all non-party matters, the Government of the day can always rely upon a large amount of support from the Opposition. There are a few members of the House of Commons who make it a point to devote a portion of their time and energies to the consideration of Indian questions. But they are only a few; they have hardly any following; and if they press any matters on the attention of the House, with any degree of zeal, they are voted down as bores by the rest of the House of Commons.

He held forth at length on matters of civil and criminal justice with which he had unequalled familiarity. Of the infamous 'Jury Notification of Sir Charles Elliott he had many hard things to say, of which the concluding observation is too good to be omitted.

It is said that trial by jury is foreign to this country. We who have cherished our

Panchayet system for generations, to be told that trial by jury is foreign to us, to be told so at the fag-end of the nineteenth century why, it is strange indeed! No, no, gentlemen—it was on our Panchayet system that Lord Cornwallis proceeded when in 1790 he ruled that we should have trial by jury. It was on that system that Sir Thomas Munro based his regulation which his successor promulgated in 1827. It was on that system that the Bombay regulation on the subject was introduced, and when these regulations were codified in 1861, it was on that system the law was based. We must have the system extended to the whole country and not withdrawn from any part of it, and we must therefore join together and agitate on the subject from one end of India to the other, and say, that this notification, which has given rise to so much discontent, was not required, and that it should be withdrawn, and withdrawn as speedily as possible and the policy of which it is the outcome reversed.

The Congress of 1893 and 1894 Mr. Bonnerjee did not attend. In 1895 at the Poona sitting he moved an important proposition on the system of trial by jury, giving in brief the history of the system in India and condemning in scathing terms the proposal of Sir Alexander Miller to empower District Judges to call upon juries to give special verdicts. The whole passage dealing with this last subject is worth reproducing.

Suddenly early this year Sir Alexander Miller introduced a Bill in the Superme Council, one of the provisions of which is that juries should be called upon to give special verdicts. Juries should be called upon to give a general verdict, and if the Judge is not satisfied with it, he may ask questions and get answers to those questions in the shape of special verdicts. In other words, I cannot help feeling that it is intended to allow a Judge, if he differs from the verdict of juries, the power of cross-examining jurymen and putting them into a corner. Now, we may well say whether a person is telling the truth; we may very well arrive at a conclusion whether a case made against a prisoner is a true case or a false one. Five men, perfectly indifferent to the prisoner and perfectly indifferent to the Crown, may be expected to arrive at a right verdict; but unless they are trained lawyers, unless they have the logical faculty of assigning reasons for their opinions in taking a shape, you cannot expect the jurymen to give such verdicts as would be acceptable to everybody; and if a juryman gives reasons which are not acceptable and which appear on the face of them to be foolish, the Judge would go to the High Court and say, "Look at the verdict, look at the reasons which these men have given for the verdict; they are foolish and their verdict must be upset," though their verdict may be perfectly just under the circumstances.

I was trying, with the help of a friend of mine, whom I am glad to see present here, to find from Cox's Criminal Reports whether in England there is such a thing as special verdicts in criminal cases. We find hundreds of special verdicts in civil cases, but we could not find from the beginning of the existence of the English nation down to the present time a single case of a special verdict in a criminal case. When you consider, gentlemen, that in this country we are almost free from serious crimes, and when you consider that the percentage of crime is as low as it is possible to imagine, and when you consider, on the other hand, that the percentage of crime in England is as great as can be imagined—while you have in England no such special verdicts in criminal cases, we are to have special verdicts in criminal cases in this country! Therefore, I say, we all ought to unite in protesting against those changes in criminal law that are being made, and what is worse, are being threatened almost every day. We, from this Congress, ought to send up a strong protest against a thing of this description. For, after all, as my friend Mr. Ghose has so well put it, the real popularity of British Rule and the real reason of the loyalty of the people are the belief on the part of the people that justice, criminal justice is being administered in a fair and impartial way. If you interfere with these things so often, and interfere needlessly,

and interfere with the view of putting more power into the hands of District Magistrates and District Judges, that confidence in the impartiality of British justice will be destroyed and we shall be brought to a position which I fear to contemplate.

At the 1896 Congress in Calcutta, Mr. Bonnerjee moved a proposition expressing the country's confidence in Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji and wishing his re-election to Parliament. His speech on the occasion must be given to our readers entire.

This resolution was entrusted to me without my consent and in spite of my remonstrances. I believe myself that our Subjects Committee were, at the last moment when they made up their minds to force this upon me, under fatalistic influences. I remember I moved a similar resolution in the Congress of 1891, which was received as enthusiastically as this has been received by you to-day. In 1892 there was a General Election in England, and Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was returned at the head of the poll as member for Central Finsbury. I suppose the Subjects Committee thought that if this resolution was again brought before you, and brought before you by the same individual who presented it to you in 1891, a similar result might follow. At any rate, here is the resolution, and I can only say that it does not require any words from any one to make it acceptable to you. The example that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji has set us all is perfectly unique. Here is an old

man, over 70 years of age, working, you may say day and night, night and day, for the benefit of his countrymen. He has had to banish himself from his own country and live in a foreign land, away from his old friends, only for the sake of this country. Some little time ago our only Member of Parliament, that is to say, the only Indian gentleman who succeeded in finding a seat at the last election—Mr. Bhownagri—came back to this country, and some foolish friends of his wanted to get up a demonstration in his honour to equal the demonstration which Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji received when he came to his country to preside over the Lahore Congress. I have no quarrel whatever with Mr. Bhownagri. I am very proud to know that a native of this country is a Member of the House of Commons. You cannot expect everybody to be of the same opinion as yourself. I should have been very pleased if, instead of being a Conservative, Mr. Bhownagri had been a Radical. But then I am sure that if he had been a Radical he would not have obtained a seat in the House of Commons at the last election. So there is, perhaps, some advantage in his having been a Conservative. But for any friend of Mr. Bhownagri to consider that he is the Member for India, or that he possesses the confidence of the people of India that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji possesses is an absurdity. Very few people have heard of Mr. Bhownagri outside the Bombay Presi-

dency; and although we all rejoice that he is in the House of Commons, and although we all hope that he will be of service there, we cannot but hope and trust that we may find our Dadabhai there before long. Nothing will content us but to have the old man sitting again in the House of Commons doing his duty to his constituents, and doing his work for his country. One reason why he failed to secure his seat in the House of Commons this time was that, while he was discharging his duties night after night, his opponent, who has now been successful, was canvassing the constituency, and trying to take away support from him and obtain it for himself. I hope you will carry the resolution with acclamation, and carry away a hope that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji will soon obtain a seat in the House of Commons.

The Sedition Law of Mr. Chalmers, of which the occasion was Mr. Tilak's conviction, was on the legislative anvil in 1897, and the delicate duty of moving the Congress Resolution on the subject was entrusted to Mr. Bonnerjee.

Mr. Chalmers, to make his proposed amendment of the law palatable to us, says that his only object in proposing the amendment is to assimilate the law of sedition in this country with the law on the same subject as it exists in England. Well, I have no objection at all to the law of sedition in this country being made the same as the law of sedition in England, provided, of course, Mr. Chalmers gives us in this country the same machinery

for the administration of the law here as exists in England. In England, as we all know, trials for sedition are held before a judge, who is a countryman of the prisoner, and by a jury, who are also countrymen of the prisoner, and no trial can take place unless a true bill has been found against the prisoner by a grand jury, who are also countrymen of the prisoner. Let Mr. Chalmers give us this mode of trial, and we shall hail him, however severe he may make the law, as the greatest law-giver that has ever come to this country. But does he intend to do so? No. So far from doing so, he is trying in his amendments of the Criminal Procedure Code to empower district magistrates to try cases of sedition—district magistrates who are officers of Government in the strict sense of the term and whose promotion entirely depends upon the good-will of the Government for the time being. The present machinery for trial of cases of sedition in this country is bad enough in all conscience. In the Presidency towns such trials must be had by jury. But so far as Her Majesty's British Indian subjects are concerned, that jury may consist entirely of Europeans, and not a single one of them need know the language in which the seditious speech is alleged to have been made or the seditious article to have been written. That is appalling enough, but to entrust trials for sedition to district magistrates is still more appalling. I do not think,—I say so with all submission

to Mr. Chalmers,—that his Bill proceeds on the lines of the English law of sedition at all. He is entirely mistaken in thinking it does. But assuming it does, Mr. Chalmers is prepared to give us the poison in the shape of his amendment, and not the antidote to the poison in the shape of the English machinery for its administration.

Then, in his concluding paragraph, he touched a deeper chord of feeling than ever he had done before and assumed a tone that he had never been compelled to assume,—betraying that even his calm head and tranquil heart had been sorely agitated.

I should have thought that seeing that the country has just been passing through the last of a very severe affliction in the shape of famine, that there has been a recrudescence of the plague in various parts of it, and that other circumstances, notably the press prosecutions in the Bombay Presidency, have stirred the mind of the people to its very depths, this is just the time when a wise legislator, even if there was necessity for it, would hesitate long before embarking on a process of action which is sure to give rise, as Mr. Chalmer's Bill has undoubtedly given rise, to great terror on the part of the people. But we, of course, according to our rulers, have no idea of the proper time and occasion for changes in the law. Lord Elgin's Government are all-wise, and I am afraid that, notwithstanding our protest, and I make bold to say, the protest of every right-thinking person in the country which will go to the

Government, this Bill will be forced into law. All the protests will be in vain. We must, however, carry our protest before a higher authority than even Lord Elgin's Government. We must go before the British public. We must explain to them how the agents they have sent to govern the country on their behalf and in their name are dealing with the people; that is, dealing in a manner wholly unworthy of the British name and the British love of freedom. And if we can convince them that we are right, I have no doubt that the British nation will rise in their wrath and free us from the trammels which Lord Elgin and his Councillors are forging for us.

That was the last time his voice was heard in the Councils of the Indian National Congress which he loved so well. From the year 1888 he took a trip every year to England during the *pūja* holidays. He had bought a house of his own at Croydon which soon became a frequent meeting-place of all Indians in England. His children were all educated in England. In fact, he has so completely Anglicized himself that the one regret with which his memory is associated in the minds of a certain section of his countrymen, is that his ideals of life should have been cast in a mould so entirely alien to them. Even they acknowledge, nevertheless, the depth and sincerity of his feelings for all his orthodox relations and the liberality with which he defrayed the expenses of their numerous ceremonial observances. It has even been said, with a great deal of probability, that his spiritual isolation from his own kith and

kin often brought tears to his eyes. To his mother he cherished to the last the tenderest filial affection. Notwithstanding these strong ties, Mr. Bonnerjee resolved in 1902 to quit India altogether and take up his residence permanently in England. In a short time he picked up a considerable Privy Council practice. The British Committee of the National Congress occupied a great part of his energy and time; and, as has been more than once observed, India will never know the exact amount of her pecuniary indebtedness to him. He sought a place in Parliament that he might be of greater use to his country, but, unfortunately, while he was wooing the electors of Walthamstow, an affection of the eye developed and brought his general health low. He recognised the hand of Death in this attack and wrote to Mr. Dutt at Baroda that his illness was incurable and that the end was near. So it proved. On July 21, this year, he passed away in peace.

It is impossible to close this sketch without making a quotation from the patriot's last message to the Congress which met at Benares last December. Patience and hope were the theme of the short letter which each Congressman read and re-read as if it were addressed to himself.

It seems to me that we are passing through critical times in India and that we ought to exert our best to make the events that are happening further the cause of our country and to enable the Congress fully to achieve the ends for which it was established now 21 years ago. Young people are apt to feel disheartened because no immediate result is

visible in any agitation they may undertake. They forget that existing institutions cannot be changed without years of patient struggle in endeavouring to convince those who are guardians of the institutions that their alteration and reform would be of benefit to the country. What we have to keep in mind is that the mere fact that we desire self-governing institutions for our country is not enough of itself to justify the grant of such institutions of our Rulers to us. We have to show that our progress has been such that the grant of such institutions would be an advantage alike to India and to England. We ought to call to mind that in the early days of what are now the self-governing colonies they were mere crown colonies and that they were not invested with the privileges, duties and responsibilities of self-government until long afterwards. The early settlers in these colonies were emigrants from Great Britain and belonged to the same race and had been trained in the same way as those that remained in the mother country, and yet self-governing institutions were not conferred on them immediately they demanded them. They waited and agitated, agitated and waited, and at last got what they wanted. We do not belong to the ruling race and have never been brought up in the same way as they have been. Our case, therefore, is more difficult of achievement than that of self-governing colonies, and we must wait and agitate,

agitate and wait longer than they were destined to do. With patience, perseverance and persistence, I am sure we shall reach the goal of our desires in time and, therefore, we must never lose heart. Your recent visit to this country must have shown you that the people you came across both in your public meetings and privately are disposed to be just—yea, generous—towards our aspirations, all that is required is that we must show to them that we are capable of self-government. The members of the Congress are rightly convinced that we are, and if we keep up our agitation and prefer our demands in season and out of season, thus showing that we are in earnest about the matter, I am sure we shall succeed in convincing the British public that our desire for self-governing institutions is just, and legitimate, that we are capable of understanding and working these institutions and that the grant of them to us would be alike beneficial to our country and to England, and once convinced of these facts, the British public, you may be sure, will not long hesitate to invest us with these institutions. To convince the British public that we are in earnest, a constant agitation of matters Indian ought to be kept up in this country, for it is the British public who are alone capable of giving what we want; and to show to them that our agitation in this country is based upon a solid foundation, strong agitation on the lines laid down by the Congress must be

kept up in India. The agitation in India must be the lever on which the agitation of this country must be worked. Let me, therefore, implore you to impress upon our Congressmen from your Presidential chair the necessity of maintaining the Congress, of keeping up the agitation in India on the lines laid down by it, and of vigorously continuing the agitation in this country.

Adorned with every virtue, public and private placed by fortune in towering eminence, and endowed with the greatest gifts of head and heart, Mr. Bonnerjee acted through life on the conviction that all his virtues, fortune, and gifts found their noblest use only in the furtherance of his country's interests. He will have lived in vain indeed if, reading of him, the generations that are to come do not learn to regard their talents and opportunities as a sacred trust for the honour and glory of their motherland.—*Vande Mataram*.¹

¹Lest the reader should think 'Vandemataram' a misprint here, the anecdote may be told that when the late Sir C. V. Chintamani read it he chaffed Sastri about it. Always a fiery patriot, Sastri was naturally full of the exuberant heat of the patriotic fire at thirty-seven.

LORD MINTO¹

(1845—1914)

Mr. John Buchan has established a name among writers of English prose, and anything from his pen may be expected to be full of interest and attraction. The present biography does not disappoint the reader. Its 300 odd pages bring before us in vivid and fascinating style one of the great men of British race who have striven to maintain British character and British prestige in different parts of the Empire. Lord Minto, called in his earlier years Lord Melgund, was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, went through Eton and saw plenty of fighting in the field before being called upon to do the work of administration. Like many an other dashing youth belonging to the classes who still practically monopolise political and diplomatic offices in Britain, he made better progress on the playground than in class, and he imbibed the fashionable opinions which were current coin among aristocrats of the Tory persuasion. What he thought of Gladstone in his callow youth is interesting. "I would not have thought that any one could have disgraced his country as Gladstone has done. I would not be seen frequenting such an unpatriotic disreputable coffee house as the House of Commons for a fortune. I suppose when one gets out of England one is more prone to remember that one is an Englishman." When on duty as a soldier on the Afghan frontier

¹ Lord Minto: A Memoir: by John Buchan. (Thomas Nelson & Sons, London). 1925. 9 × 5½. pp. 352. From 'The Servant of India' July, 1925.

he formed a high estimate of the value of India to England, "What a splendid fellow Nicholson was: Yet I believe India could produce many such men. It is our school for great administrators and as such alone is worth millions to this country; but many of our home-staying, book-taught, theoretical politicians are incapable of realising this. I do not suppose they would be able to appreciate a good frontier officer." He likewise tells us of a press correspondent who in describing the march of a British force across an Indian river had said that crocodiles peopled the water and palm trees adorned the banks. Some vulgar lover of fact pointed out that neither crocodiles nor palm trees were within many miles of the spot. The correspondent had his reply ready. "What does that matter? The British public must have its crocodiles and it must have its palm trees." But Melgund took serious and just views of public affairs. It is good to know that he called Rhodes a damned blackguard and thought he deserved five years imprisonment. "The worst feature" he added "of the whole thing is the very lukewarm condemnation of Rhodes in high places, the evident wish to palliate what he has done and the onesidedness of the press on his behalf."

His six years as Governor-General of Canada broadened his outlook on affairs, deepened his sense of justice and taught him to respect the excellences of the British constitution. When therefore he was appointed to the Viceroyalty of India after the dramatic exit of Lord Curzon, great hopes were entertained in this country. At one of the farewell dinners on the eve of his departure to the east he said "My racing days have taught me that many a

race has been won by giving the horse a rest in his gallops." What with the Press Act and the Seditious Meetings Act and deportations and political assassinations, he was not able to give the horse a rest in his gallops; but he gave proof of affection for the Indian people, of a large and manly toleration and of an undaunted resolve to initiate long-delayed political reforms. It is also due to him to say that he did not allow his hereditary conservatism to become encrusted, but developed what he himself describes as a cross-bench mind. Though he stood loyally by his Civilian colleagues, he did not allow himself to become their mouthpiece in all matters. He carried his point against great odds in what was known as the Native Councillorship question. After the wicked attempt on his life at Ahmedabad he (and his noble partner) did not allow his attitude towards India to be affected in any way, and at the earliest opportunity he declared his determination to go on with his progressive policy. Though there was much complaint that the regulations of the Government of India nearly frustrated the intentions of the Secretary of State and of the Viceroy the public feeling at Lord Minto's departure was one of personal affection for him and gratitude for the large step that he had taken in popularising the constitution of India.

All this is brought out pretty fully in Book III of the volume before us. But we cannot help feeling that Mr. Buchan might have made greater use of the ample materials placed at his disposal. An important chapter in the modern history of India is covered by Lord Minto's lustrum of office and deserves to be treated at far greater length. The

fact is that this book bears too obviously the mark of having been written with the object of correcting the impression unfavourable to Lord Minto supposed to have been created by Lord Morley's "Recollections." Mr. Buchan has devoted many pages to the task of redressing the balance in favour of his hero. An uncommon dexterity of language and skill in producing an "atmosphere" have been employed on the task. Lord Morley's faults of temper and defective equipment for administrative charge have been emphasised to the full, while excessive laudation is bestowed on Lord Minto's tact and never-failing patience and firmness of purpose. So overdrawn is the picture that the reader cannot resist the feeling that more concern is felt for Lord Minto's reputation by his friends and admirers than he would have felt himself, and the world is invited to believe an actual antagonism to have existed between colleagues who remained to the end of their common lives on a footing of the utmost friendship and trust. No doubt they pulled different ways on many subjects and some of these were very important and touched the roots of policy; still the personal relations of the illustrious pair were never clouded even for a day and the frankness and the intimacy of their correspondence suffered no check. Mr. Buchan's asseverations may or may not be justified in point of fact, but in spite of the great facilities he has enjoyed, he has not placed before his readers sufficient materials for a drastic revision of judgment as to the mutual relations of the two servants of the Crown who were associated in a great endeavour. Take for instance the question of "Native Councillorship." Who first conceived the idea? Without quoting diary, letter

or despatch our author asserts, "The first step was taken by the Viceroy. In March 1906 before leaving Calcutta he raised boldly in private with certain members of his Executive Council the question of the desirability of appointing an Indian to its membership, since to him the path of executive partnership between the races seemed the simplest and the most hopeful. He found the majority of his advisers strongly against the proposal and he did not report the discussions to the Secretary of State since he intended to open the whole question later." One would like to ask where the boldness came in if the question was mooted in private and only with some members of the Executive Council and their opposition silenced the Viceroy for the time. Writing on the subject three years later to His Majesty, who had opposed the innovation strongly, the Viceroy said that "he was inclined when he first came to India to argue with certain of his colleagues on his Executive Council that an Indian member should be added to their number and a seat provided for him by the Statute." The expression "was inclined" suggests neither fixity nor boldness of purpose. Nor does the passage just quoted sustain a claim to having taken the first step. Evidently Mr. Buchan here strays from the safe line of discretion which he himself has laid down: "It would be an idle task to determine whether the first suggestion came from the side of the Viceroy or of the Secretary of State."

Morley and Minto disagreed sharply on the question how far the Secretary of State should interfere in the administration of India. Morley's exposition of the constitution and citation of prece-

dents did not satisfy the Viceroy who seems to have complained of it in a private communication to His Majesty's Secretary. It is in this that he makes use of the famous expression, "Do what he will, the Secretary of State cannot administer India." Our good friend Montagu is dragged by his ill-luck into this controversy. As Under-Secretary of State he said in a Budget speech, "Lord Morley and his Council, working through the agency of Lord Minto, have accomplished much." Slight though the indiscretion was compared with others that stand to his credit, he was severely criticised for it in India. But Lord Morley stood by him though he apologised for his infelicitous manner. The deportation of suspected men in the Punjab and in Bengal called forth a continuous wail from the Liberal Secretary of State in his correspondence with the Viceroy, though he gallantly defended the odious step in Parliament. In fact the extent to which he gave in to the man on the spot on this matter, on the subject of the special Muhammadan electorates and on sundry other subjects shows how far he was from a doctrinaire statesman. Mr. Buchan is obliged to admit this, for he says, "He desired to make concessions for the Indian people and was the more zealous therefore to show that he also stood for law and order." How then does he bring himself to write in a half scoffing tone; "The scholar, especially the scholar of Mr. Morley's type, transferred to the seat of power, is always apt to order things with a high hand, because he has little knowledge of the daily compromises by means of which the business of the world is conducted." Surely Mr. Buchan must have forgotten that it was Morley who called politics 'a game of compromise and one long second best.'

LORD MINTO

The fact is that our author is unacquainted with India and his first interest in her problems was aroused in the writing of this book. No wonder therefore that his treatment lacks perspective utterly. Some great events of the period are dismissed with a brief reference, while others get no mention at all. Of the Indian politicians Mr. Gokhale is the only one who receives serious notice, though of what Lord and Lady Minto said or wrote of him nothing is vouchsafed to the reader. One remembers how on the publication of the diaries of Sir M. E. Grant Duff some years ago the Indian world was startled at there being little or no reference in them to Madras. Though an extreme instance, it is somewhat typical of the life of proconsuls in India and of the incredibly limited intercourse that they have with Indians. It is perhaps natural that Sir Pertab Singh should have enlivened and amused viceregal and gubernatorial parties. We know the type too well. But this story is worth reproducing. It is told by Minto himself. "I will tell you a story of Sir Pertab. Not long ago a British officer of whom he was very fond died of cholera in his house. He was to be buried the same afternoon, and had just been put in his coffin in a room in which were Sir Pertab and an English officer, who, seeing that there would be some difficulty in carrying the officer down to the gun-carriage at the door, asked Sir Pertab to send for a 'sweeper'. 'Sweeper', said Sir Pertab, 'what do you want a sweeper for? I shall carry the boy down myself.' The English Officer, knowing that this meant that he would lose his caste, implored him not to do so, but he insisted, carried the coffin

on his shoulder to the door, walked by the gun-carriage, and again carried the coffin from it to the grave. Next morning a deputation of Brahmins came to Sir Pertab's house and told him that a terrible thing had happened the other day. 'Yes,' he answered 'a young officer died here.' 'More terrible than that' they said, 'You, a Rahtor Rajput have lost your caste.' He flared up like a shot. 'Look here, you pigs. There is one caste higher than all other castes throughout the world, and that is the caste of a soldier! That is my caste!' Turning to one of his staff he angrily asked for his hunting whip, the Brahmins fled and he remained as great as ever. And that is the man that we can't allow inside an English club at Calcutta!"

In spite of the inordinate length which this review has attained we cannot refrain from alluding to the part played by the European community of Calcutta in the years 1909-10. Lord Minto was much perturbed by their attitude towards the unrest in Bengal. He was of opinion that the ordinary law was sufficient, but their clamour overbore him, as it does on all such occasions. The Indian reader at least will not be surprised when he reads the following extract. He knows by sad experience what to expect of his European brethren in time of trouble. "The difficulty is that the European Calcutta population is so unnerved that if things go wrong it may be necessary to restore confidence by immediate deportation. I do not like saying this sort of thing at all, but that is how it is" There was a proposal for martial law, made by the Commander-in-Chief, which made his hair stand on end.

SIR DINSHAW WACHA

In unveiling the statue of the late Sir Dinsha Wacha, on the 9th April 1940 the Rt. Hon'ble V. S. Srinivasa Sastri said:

SIR CHIMANLAL SETALVAD AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

You have done me conspicuous honour in assigning to me the principal part in today's ceremony. I do not deserve it either by intimacy of association with the illustrious man whose statue I am about to unveil or by a high position in the public life of the country. The meaning of your invitation, as I understand it, is that Sir Dinshaw Edulji Wacha did not belong to Bombay alone, but that distant Madras, as indeed every part of India, can claim his memory as a cherished possession. During the last ten years or so of his life Sir Dinshaw was unable to take prominent part in the public affairs of India. And let it be admitted that the liberal party, of which he was one of the leading lights, has for some years lost the influence which should properly belong to it by reason of its past record and by reason also of the personal merits of its members. Nevertheless a review of the main features of the long and honourable career of one of its luminaries will not be without profit, even to the present generation, which repudiates the political doctrines that are the immediate parents of its own school of thought.

Sir Dinshaw was 92 years old when he passed away in 1936. He was born into a period of our history very different from today, so different indeed that it would take a great effort of the historical imagination for a young man to form a just picture of it in his mind. Let us remember that Wacha was well in his teens when the Great Indian Mutiny occurred and led to the famous Proclamation of the Queen of 1858. Political agitation and indeed political aspiration had hardly assumed definite shape. Our hero had entered on his forties when he was called upon to take his share in the proceedings of the gathering of Indian leaders which subsequently took the great name of the Indian National Congress. The social reform and the educational movements were then in a rudimentary state. The city of Bombay had already started on its career of commercial prosperity, but no one could have predicted that its destiny was to become within a generation or so the second city of the British Empire. Nor was the Bombay Corporation anything like the pattern of municipal efficiency and civic enlightenment that it is today. Wacha had the rare distinction of seeing things grow from the humblest beginnings all through the stages of trial and error, of hope and hesitation, of careful planning and haphazard growth, of rising tides of prosperity and struggle against adverse circumstances. In this drama of exciting change and spirited endeavour, Wacha was no mute and unconscious sharer, no mere passive observer, but an active and brilliantly active participant. Of his early education we have a few glimpses from his own vivid pen. In a volume of

reminiscences written over the humorous name of "Sandy Seventy," a few chapters describe the early efforts of Christian missionaries and a few private bodies to give the elements of education to their children before the duty of public instruction was recognised as part of the functions of government. This volume is a rich mine of information regarding Bombay of a hundred years ago, which may be recommended to a student of original records. Wacha went, like many promising students before him, to the famous Elphinstone institution, but was not destined to complete the course that was available. This circumstance he seems to have regretted. To one who marks the vividity and vigour of his style, the copiousness and power of his diction, and the range and depth of his observations, it does not appear that he suffered any real loss by the premature end of his scholastic education. At twelve he recited an English piece so well before Lord and Lady Canning that Her Excellency patted him on the back. He heard the great proclamation of Queen Victoria assuming the direct sovereignty of India read aloud to the assembled citizens by Lord Elphinstone, who stood on the spacious verandah of the Town Hall surrounded by the dignitaries of the day arrayed in robes of state. Who would not envy his good fortune when he saw and heard that prince of African explorers, Dr. Livingstone, led into the Town Hall by Sir Bartle Frere of happy memory? He does not fail to mark the changes that time has wrought in our dress and manners, changes not always observed as they take place with exceeding slowness in society. We learn from the luminous pages of the book called by the

picturesque name of "Shells from the Sands of Bombay" that in his boyhood Indian gentlemen of all classes, Hindus, Mahomedans, Christians, and Parsis appeared on formal occasions in snow-white and flowing *Jama* and *Pichoree* or *Kumerband*. We learn also to our astonishment that there was a time when even Parsi ladies were content to remain within doors and in ignorance. The year 1858 and the occasion of the Queen's Proclamation deserve to be remembered not only for their own intrinsic importance, but as the time of emancipation for Parsi womanhood. For they came out for the first time in open carriages, venetians down, mark you! to view the illuminations, which were on a grand scale. Our chronicler writes boastfully that they were attired in rich silk saris and bejewelled and that the Purdah was literally lifted. Amongst his early inspirations was a study of Sir Joseph Arnauld's classic judgments in the Maharaja Libel case and in the Aga Khan case—judgments which no student either of Indian law or of Indian social history should omit to read. Sir Dinshaw tells us that he acquired his passion for the study of economics and finance from a certain Professor Hughlings, who had fitted up a reading room at his own cost, where he would often sit with Sir Dinshaw and explain learned articles in the 'Economist' of James Wilson, who afterwards became the first Finance Minister of India. Of this original inspiration we have the mature fruits in the writings and speeches which he poured forth in abundance during a long life of conscientious and devoted study. What a lad of fine sensibility and high enthusiasm he must have been to write as he does of the emotion that

warmed his breast when first he visited the hallowed precincts of that great house of thought, that great temple of learning, a valhalla where lay buried the great thoughts of great men of all the centuries—which is his own description of the Literary Society founded by Sir James Mackintosh! Only on two other occasions did our hero feel a similar exaltation of spirit, once when he visited the library of the British Museum and again when he was within the precincts of Westminster Abbey.

Is it any wonder that with such subtle and powerful stimuli Wacha acquired a voracious appetite for knowledge, which made him to the end of his days a great buyer and reader of books? Nor was he a mere acquirer of all kinds of knowledge. He gave freely to the public out of his vast store of information. There is hardly a man within my recollection who has written and spoken so abundantly as Sir Dinshaw Wacha. His output, if we could assemble it all, would easily equal that of any two of his compeers in public life. Anonymously, pseudonymously and over his own proper name, he was an untiring contributor to magazines and newspapers of every degree of influence. And the marvel is that he never took a pie of remuneration for it all. I have it on good authority that he never employed a stenographer, but wrote always in his own hand. His private correspondence was of colossal proportions. He wrote regularly to friends in England and innumerable people in India. As often as a thought occurred to him, I fancy he took pen and paper and wrote it down for somebody's benefit. I fancy also he wrote nearly as fast as he thought. He did not pause for

the most appropriate word or the most inoffensive phrase. I have had occasion to read a good deal of his manuscript, for he wrote often and with complete freedom to Mr. Gokhale. I do not remember a scratch or an erasure. It was the same even, parallel-lined, fine-looking, fluent calligraphy. The attraction, however, was only on the surface. The trouble started as soon as you put on your glasses and began to read. You came up against an illegible scrawl and could make progress only with many a stumble and many a break, to which you said to yourself you would come back when your organ of vision had regained its tone.

In his public work Wacha was associated with several colleagues of similar calibre. And it used to be said that for many years Bombay had the singular good fortune of having a galaxy of brilliant men who placed their talents at the disposal of the community. In civic matters the ascendancy of Sir Pherozechah Mehta, extending over nearly two generations, was an advantage which other cities of metropolitan rank might have envied. His great example of devotion to municipal duties drew to the service of Bombay a wealth of talent and experience, which might else have been dispersed among diverse small interests and yielded little public benefit. Of about the same age, Wacha seconded his friend with his own uncommon ability. It is a just claim made on their behalf that their unsurpassed influence in the Corporation was never perverted to any jobbery or patronage, but exerted to keep policy and principle free from all taint of unworthy ends. In many quarters Pherozechah Mehta's domination excited jealousy and resentment.

But be it said to the honour of Sir Dinshaw and many others that they were not only content but glad to rally round him like soldiers round a brave and gifted general. Wacha in particular regarded his eclipse as a dedication. I was anxious soon after Gokhale's death to call on the notables of Bombay. I was ushered into a room where Pherozeshah Mehta sat beaming among his accustomed companions. Naturally backward in speech I felt hushed in the great presence, but soon a number of kindly queries broke my reserve; and as the talk flowed easily over a wide range, I remarked how every now and then Mehta would turn round and appeal to Wacha for confirmation of what he had said, and Wacha would assent without using too many words. His book on the Municipality of Bombay, especially the chapter dealing with the inauguration in 1888 of the present constitution, gives due meed of praise to Lord Reay, Mr. Telang, Mr. Forbes Adam and other stalwarts of the time, but accords first place ungrudgingly and convincingly to Pherozeshah Mehta, whose vigilance, intrepid advocacy and far-seeing vision transmuted the halting and timid proposals of the authorities into a golden measure of local government, which has nobly stood the test of time and furnished a model of municipal government throughout India. Wacha outlived his great friend by more than 20 years, during which period he was called upon to occupy the vacant place of primacy as far as he could. This was the case not only in the Corporation, but in the Legislature first of Bombay and then of All-India, in the Bombay Presidency Association and in the Indian National Congress. It might be

said of this brilliant pair, in greater measure than of any others in the country, that their eminence in municipal affairs led as a natural and almost inevitable consequence to equal eminence on the broader stage of national affairs. Be it also recorded for the benefit of other patriots that they never allowed their zeal for the civil welfare of Bombay to be dimmed or diminished in any way by larger and maybe more exalted pre-occupations. Wacha was one of the seventy odd leaders of India who laid in 1885 truly and well the foundations of the Indian National Congress. His interest in this organisation grew with its growth. He was its Secretary for many years and President at the 1901 session in Calcutta. He took a prominent part in its debates, and Congressmen of all ranks soon learned to appreciate and love the sterling qualities of the small lively figure who seemed to frisk and jump on the platform as he denounced, in a squeaking voice and apparently through very thick spectacles, the military policy and expenditure of India in vehement accents and with torrential eloquence. His utterance could not be commended for distinctness or melody of tone, but his earnestness and mastery of facts and figures ensured for him patient and respectful attention. Before the Welby Commission on Indian Finance he made a gallant stand for equitable apportionment of charges between England and India, and along with Mr. Gokhale gave invaluable support to Dadabhai Naoroji, who was a member of the Commission as well as the most learned and formidable witness on the Indian side. As an economist Wacha belonged to the school of Cobden and John

Stuart Mill; and though in later years he countenanced the policy of discriminating protection for the industries and manufactures of India, his original homage to the pure water of free trade was a lifelong obsession. He was instrumental, along with Mr. Manmohandas Ramji and others, in founding the Indian Chamber of Commerce on this side of the country, and when other Chambers had sprung up elsewhere, he induced them all to join together and act as a Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. Nothing could be more eloquent testimony to his lofty principles and his unselfish and unworldly character than that throughout his life, though money lay all about him, he never possessed more than a competence and for some time before his death he was without even that competence. It would be a mistake to suppose that, while he specialised in finance and economics, he neglected other aspects of study. His pronouncements on education are entitled to respectful consideration, and he was no mean authority on history in general and international affairs. Writing over the pseudonym of "Rajduari," he surveyed for many years in the "Indian Review" the course of events as they shaped themselves in the world, with a wealth of detail and a sureness of grasp which were the admiration of readers.

Wacha's was a simple nature. There was never any difficulty in understanding him. He was subject to strong emotions and expressed his likes and dislikes with disconcerting candour. As Secretary of the Indian National Congress he had to collect monies, call for reports and require conformity to ordinary canons of public business. In the discharge

of these duties he had to reprove, to dun, to scold, to threaten. People complained bitterly of the severe terms in which he castigated slackness or evasion of duty. To the end he never learned how to suffer fools gladly or temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Especially in recent years few of his colleagues or correspondents altogether escaped his verbal chastisement. I had my share. But we all remembered how like a child he was and how utterly innocent of the arts of polite circumlocution and of pretended friendship. If he was quick to scold, he was equally quick to forgive and to befriend. As he himself said in one place, if he was a lion in the chase, he was a lamb at home. For my part, while I seldom remember the sharpness of phrase with which he expressed his disapproval of my doings, I recall with mingled pride and pleasure his appreciation of the unrelenting vigilance with which, as captain of volunteers at the Congress session of 1908 in Madras, I guarded the proceedings, which were in special danger in consequence of the animosities and bickerings of Surat.

Experience will have taught many of you here, as it has taught me, that, ever since the two schools of moderation and of extremism emerged with more or less defined frontiers, nearly every moderate has been suspected at one time or another by his orthodox compatriots of leanings towards the wrong side. In the servants of India Society that has been the fate of almost all. I sometimes think that the suspicion under which I lay at the beginning still clouds my name, and Gokhale was never wholly sure of me in his inmost mind. Gokhale himself, if the truth be told, would not have been raised to

the Cardinalate in the Vatican of Bombay. Going higher still, was not Pherozechah Mehta accused by the archangels who surrounded the Viceregal throne of introducing a new spirit of question and cavil in those serene regions where seemliness and perpetual obeisance were the attributes of the chosen denizens? It was the esoteric belief of the moderates of Bombay, Madras and U.P. that most of our compatriots in Bengal were tarred with the extremist brush and could not be admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum*. Pride must not blind us to the danger lurking in the nature of us all, a tendency, whenever we have unchecked power, to erect the the stake and light the fire of inquisition. Wacha was particularly subject to this frailty. Markedly when he was young and less markedly when he had attained middle age, he was playfully and not untruthfully called the firebrand of western India. His views were strong, and the words he chose to express them were stronger. No one could listen to his early speeches or read his early writings without being struck by the uncommon range and sweep of his vocabulary of disapprobation and denunciation. His finger could in those bounding days read the pulse of popular feeling unerringly. If his private letters could be recovered and arranged in the order of date, they would furnish a faithful chronicle of the various phases of feeling through which the general mind passed on the questions engaging it. One instance I may be pardoned for mentioning to-day. His letters to Gokhale during the years 1906, 1907 and 1908 are a mirror in which could be seen vividly reflected the initial hope, the scepticism, the bewilderment, the indignation,

the despair and finally the reviving hope and satisfaction with which the eager Indian politician watched the changing moods and fancies and slowly evolving reform proposals of Lord Morley. Mr. Gokhale was by no means unaffected by the vagaries of the political barometer; but because of his proximity to the central orb of the firmament, his faith never wholly disappeared, but shone like a star, now bright, now dim, but always there. He gently reprimanded us for failure to make full allowance for Morley's difficulties and misgivings, and it is pleasing to recall now the happy ending of the episode when he expounded the main features of the coming constitution to the Congress of 1908 and successfully communicated to the audience his own expectations of a happy and prosperous future.

Wacha is a striking and forceful illustration of the sobering effect of time. We could see how he gradually shed his optimism, moderated his demand and saw things through authoritarian glasses and weighed events in the scales provided by Government. This swing-over is noticeable in the careers of other politicians as well. I can recall more than one occasion on which the late Sir B. N. Sarma and I were roundly censured by him in the Council of State for attacking the Government of the day. But we were amused and half consoled when in his own turn he would get up and belabour Government with the verve characteristic of the redoubtable oppositionist we had known and admired of old. At such times he reminded me of a fond but temperamental mother who might beat her child mercilessly when she was angry, but, if anybody else threatened violence to it, would fly at his throat in a fit of fury.

The year 1918 marked a crucial turn in the fortunes of the Congress. When it became apparent that the extreme section of our politicians had made up their minds to denounce and declare unacceptable the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals of reform, the elder statesmen, if one may be pardoned for appropriating that term, decided to secede from the Congress and create an organisation for themselves. After much anxious consultation and frequent searchings of the heart, of which the memory is still poignant, the members of the Servants of India Society threw in their lot with the All-India Liberal Federation. The two mighty pillars of the movement were Wacha and Surendranath Banerjee. At the end of the inaugural session in Bombay I likened them to those unchanging hills in the landscape by which Sri Rama identified the various regions of the Indian continent when, during his return home after fourteen years of exile, he found no other distinguishing marks, for they had all, rivers and plains and forests and the habitations of men, shifted enormously and obliterated all boundaries. That similitude seems to me not inapt after the twenty-two years that have since passed. A few of us, alas, a continually diminishing few, still stand where we stood, pointing the finger of warning, like Wordsworth's "Peele Castle" amidst the wreckage of a fearful storm.

Rather a succession of fearful storms. For many years now our country has not known tranquillity except for brief periods. While we sit here, tens of thousands of people all over the country are preparing for mass civil disobedience, and the campaign may begin any day. However non-violent it may be,

the authorities cannot afford to look on, but must meet it by violent measures. Not improbably communal discord may add itself to the disturbance and convert civil disobedience into something like civil war. The demand for partitioning India into two political entities with separate national interests staggers the imagination and makes it impossible even to guess the next step in our movement. Has the teaching of Sir Dinshaw any guidance for us in this predicament? The answer is not for a moment doubtful. We have all heard of the claim made in Congress circles that, if Dadabhai Naoroji and Gokhale could be brought back to life among us, they would take their stand with the author of non-violent non-co-operation and mass civil disobedience. It is difficult to say how many that actually knew these departed worthies would allow the claim. I do not allow it. In Wacha's case nobody would dream of advancing such a claim. It is well known how Sir Pherozeshah Mehta and he did not countenance in the faintest degree the Home Rule League movement started by Mrs. Besant and how they endeavoured to induce our Grand Old Man to withdraw the consent that he had given to be its President. To Mrs. Besant as a political force in India they had an invincible antipathy. Of Gandhiji's aims and methods Wacha had an instinctive dread. His condemnation would have been clear, complete and caustic. He had no patience with the judicious frame of mind which weighs pros and cons with meticulous precision, and after making full allowance for purity of motive, pronounces a half-hearted verdict against the particular method at the particular time. I confess to a natural aversion from

cocksure, uncompromising, final judgments in any sphere of human conduct. One can never know enough to judge aright. Still, when one is racked by doubt and appalled by the prospect of disaster, one is drawn by the sovereign instinct of safety to the voice of a leader of men who sees clearly into the future and points the way with confidence. In the interests of posterity we cannot afford to let Sir Dinshaw Wacha's fame become dim or his example cease to inspire coming generations. That is why Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and his Committee have in their wisdom erected Wacha's statue on this prominent spot, within hailing distance, in case the shades of great men should wish to commune with one another, of Tata, Mehta, Naoroji, Ranade, Gokhale, and Montagu.

DR. ANNIE BESANT¹

(1847-1933)

I am one of those who knew Mrs. Besant nearly all the forty years that she lived and toiled for us after landing for the first time in this country. I have what may be called from some point of view one advantage in speaking of her, I was not a Theosophist. Nor was I when she laboured in the political field one of her trusted colleagues. I am able therefore to bear testimony to her greatness from a somewhat detached standpoint. After so many years, trying to review her work for us, it is no wonder that I feel occasionally that I missed many opportunities of closer association with her. Nevertheless I have had abundant opportunity of seeing what sort of person she was. It is no exaggeration to say that she was many personalities combined in one, and that every one of those personalities was a great power for good. You would think that when you knew a person it would be easy to know all about him or her. Ladies and gentlemen, in the case of Mrs. Besant there could be no greater mistake. You may have known her for years and have worked with her for years, but it is likely that you saw only one or two sides of her great personality.

I well remember a great meeting in London on the Queen's Hall when to celebrate the Golden

¹ A speech delivered at the Gokhale Hall on 1st October, 1943.

Jubilee of her work a great gathering had assembled. The most remarkable feature of the gathering was that upon the platform with intent to speak there were about twenty people, each representing one activity in which he or she had been associated in the very early days with Dr. Besant. When the meeting was over and you remembered the speeches, strictly bearing upon issues in question, you noticed that they were all so diverse. The tributes made it clear that Dr. Besant had devoted herself and her early life to work of a diversified character in many departments, for many purposes in greatly varying circumstances and conditions, and that wherever she laboured she left a mark which those associated with her could never afterwards forget.

I remember Ramsay Macdonald being on the platform that day. I remember other people associated with her in the early days as members of the Fabian Society. Once in South Africa I had the singular good luck to have as my fellow guest no less a person than George Bernard Shaw. He told me at the luncheon that he had known Dr. Besant in her early youth, and he testified to two qualities of hers which we were afterwards to know at every turn in this country. He said she was a woman of tremendous energy, she was capable of bearing the burden of three men, and she worked day and night without intermission, and all on a very high level of efficiency. It was marvellous to hear such testimony from George Bernard Shaw. He said more to me. He said of her oratory that even in the early days it was nearly as perfect as we knew it to be in this country, when she had practised the art for a great many years. He singled

out the qualities of simplicity and directness and also of the most perfect clarity of expression. There was no idea however difficult or subtle which she could not bring within the intelligent grasp of her most backward listener, and she had great audiences then, for she was known as a popular lecturer upon all kinds of subjects, not yet religious, for that was a later acquisition in her case.

Then of her as I knew her in this country I may be allowed to say a word or two, somewhat of a personal nature, but I think calculated to bring out this enormous greatness of Mrs. Besant. I could say of all the persons I have known—and I have known a great many—there is none of whom it could be said to the extent that it could be said of Dr. Besant that she knew the value of time. She knew the value of previously fixing to every minute an item of good and useful work and of being able to carry it out day after day during many years of a very strenuous life.

I have seen her fulfilling the daily tasks that she had set herself punctually to the very minute. If she said she would be in a place at a certain minute, she would be there without a mistake, and she had a great many engagements during the day, at all of which she and, I am very sorry to say, few others were punctual. When she set to work it was marvellous how closely she attended to what was going on. She did not sit down to chat with people about other affairs. She came there for the purpose of the meeting, of the immediate session as set by the committee and she performed it very thoroughly indeed. Nothing that happened escaped her notice, and as often as necessary she put in a word either of

encouragement or of protest or of valuable information. She was a person who wherever she was could not be ignored.

Wonderful was the way in which she took up great items of work and pursued them with all her titanic energy. It was said of her, as it was said of Napoleon the Great, that when one of her tasks was finished, it would be followed on the very instant by another of equal magnitude or potency. Nothing could depress her for long. She was occasionally dejected, felt disappointed now and then when friends had disappointed her, or work did not come up to expectations, or when there were people who had taken her money for specific work and did not use it all faithfully. But there was a largeness of heart with her which forgave all this. She made no great complaints against anybody in particular, and nothing was more noticeable in her life than this, that while a great many people associated intimately with her fell away time after time and then spoke ill of her and spoke ill of her work and underrated the gigantic benefits that she was conferring upon this country, it is the bare truth, ladies and gentlemen, that I have never once heard her speak any ill of these traducers, not of any of them, even of the worst. In fact it was noticed how she made a point, when she had occasion, to put in a good word about the work they had been doing when she knew them. She never joined in denunciation of any one, least of all with those with whom she was associated. I often wish that we in our lives borrowed that wonder lesson from her of valuing our friendships to this extent that they should leave upon our hearts an impression not

erased by the weaknesses incidental to human nature, but, that when we once bestow affection, it should be constant, it should abide, and should be able to resist all temptations.

I remember listening to one of her lectures expatiating on one necessity in the character of all public workers. Unlike her on other occasions she devoted a whole hour to the expansion of that single idea, and I marvelled at the fertility of her mind, at the immense range from which she drew instances for driving the lesson home, and for the immense appeal that she made to my sympathetic heart. What she said, ladies and gentlemen, was briefly this. That while we had to be very careful in the selection of the objects to which we devoted ourselves, while we had to be lavish in the expenditure of our energy and of all our resources to the promotion of that object, we should also be able at the end of our labours to say to that piece of work, "Now I have done with you. I was deeply engaged in the details of this job. Every one of those details appealed to me. I gave time. I gave energy. I gave money. I gave sleepless thought to the working out of this problem. But now it has reached a stage when I may drop it and allow it to pass into other hands."

Have you not known in your experience of hard workers, sincere labourers, benefactors of our race, it is true, who have stuck to what they had grasped almost with a fierce grasp, were not willing to let anything go that came into their hands, would want still to be heard, to be consulted and to be followed, although there were other people competent to take up those things. We have known such people,

who never know how to withdraw when no longer wanted.

Mrs. Besant said that one of the great qualities of the character of a public worker was that he should be able to discover the time when his work was no longer necessary and then put it out of his mind and devote himself heart and soul to some other object that demanded the whole of his time and energy. It was a beautiful idea, beautifully worked up, and I much wondered whether there would be in her own life a very striking illustration of this message. It was not long in coming. I remember it as if it was today. Having laboured for the Central Hindu College, Benares, with her abundant energy for a great many years, having brought it up to a very high level of efficiency, having made it certain that her great religious ideals would be followed more or less, having secured for that college a great body of very efficient and highly cultured professors and teachers, when the time came for the Benares University to be founded, she quietly surrendered it as a central institution to the new body and then without a moment's hesitation, without any serious compunction of heart, without any wrenching of old ties, she gave it into the hands of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, knowing that the torch that she had lighted would continue to burn in his hands, luminous, fruitful, for generations. And all that she had was an honorary degree of the University. She never asked for money. She did not ask that any of her staff or any of the people she nominated should continue at the University, but she merely with-

drew, leaving, I suppose, a great slice of her heart for the continuance of the great work.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, there is much else that I could relate, but I must hasten on and mention two details connected with myself. I was not her follower; I was one of those who watched her advent into politics in this country with some misgiving. At that time she was known for her gigantic energy, for not allowing a thing to rest for a day. It was known of her that what she took up she would work into a great channel for the flow of all her super-abundant energy, and our old people, the politicians of the day, liked to work quietly. They liked to repose to some extent, and they therefore looked with suspicion on the advent into politics of this lady, who knew no rest herself and would not give any rest to her colleagues and certainly none to the authorities. So when she started the Home Rule League there was a great deal of trepidation amongst those who had the management of politics in their hands. They did not like the starting of the Home Rule League. Not alone that. They tried to put spokes in her wheel. And they tried to see that the Home Rule League did not come at all into existence, or only in such a weak and unattractive form that they could feel secure in their own moiety of power.

A great mistake did they make, but what I want to tell you is something to my own detriment. And as I am not one of those who cease to learn, I wish to confess that I was filled with the misgiving at the apprehension of many elders, and that when she took up the Home Rule League I ventured to raise my voice against its establishment.

The Home Rule League was started. It caught the enthusiasm of the young in all parts of the country, and while it lasted it was a power in the land and did a great deal of useful and very efficient service. The only thing was that some of us who might have shared in the glory and in the labours were left out. But that was not all, When later I learned to know of Mrs. Besant's great love for this country, what did I understand? Well, it is no secret; therefore I mention it boldly. She believed in her heart of hearts, she believed that she belonged in her spirit and by her soul to this country, that its culture, religion, and philosophy belonged to her and that in future lives she would be born in this country to learn that culture, to spread that philosophy, to teach that religion. To her it was the greatest ambition to be known as an Indian, to be recognized in every home as an Indian, to be welcomed as a sharer in the great inheritance that we all hold as ours.

Well, for one whom we occasionally call a foreigner to be endued with that spirit and to be actuated by that longing for a great many years was a wonderful thing, but she did a great deal to add to this culture and philosophy, to make this religion better known than it was. That she lived to be a great teacher in this country and that not hundreds but tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands heard her, read her writings, perused her books with the greatest interest and were glad to learn of their own philosophy from her—that is a tribute to her greatness and her power second to none that I can think of.

Well, to me a singular opportunity was given,

late in life no doubt, but it came, I am glad to say, when I was intimately associated with her in the work of doing political propaganda in England in the year 1924. There were many platforms on which we spoke together and at the same time. I then noticed even after her long absence from England, people remembered how great an orator she was, and all her meetings were fully crowded with enthusiastic and highly appreciative audiences. Then it was that she started a lawsuit. There were some lawsuits in her life. She started a lawsuit against the *Graphic* and one or two other powerful papers in England; which had used the incident to which allusion was made by our chairman of her internment in Madras by Lord Pentland, by Lord Pentland's Government I should say—(laughter)—as proving that she was guilty of anti-Government activities amounting to sedition. She was advised that that was libel and that she must prosecute these papers and get heavy damages from them. She chose Edinburgh as the place where this suit should be launched. To make a long story short: As I was in England at the time I was called as a witness for her. I was very glad to be one. I had never been in a court of law before either as plaintiff or defendant. It was a strange experience for me, but as it was, on that singular occasion that I had to be in a court of law, I did so with much zeal and hearty goodwill, partly because, to be frank with you, I was glad to show up in a public manner those who had been saying things against me unscrupulously that I was responsible in some measure for her internment. Fancy! When you come into public life, in the political field, you may be

invested with a greatness and a potency of which you never dreamed. Well, I gave evidence. I had expected there would be some very severe cross-examination, but apparently I did so well in the chief examination that counsel on the other side felt it was no use trying to tackle me.

Unfortunately Mrs. Besant lost her case, although the Judge summed up clearly in her favour. You would be interested in knowing how she lost her case. She had every hope of winning, and she would have won it had not a mistake been made, as I was afterwards told by Lord Meston. He had noticed that I had borne testimony in Mrs. Besant's favour and met me in the street and said: 'Unfortunately your evidence in favour of Mrs. Besant had no effect.' I said: 'No, it was disappointing. We all hoped for the other verdict.' He said: 'If you had consulted me beforehand Edinburgh would have been the last place I would have chosen, Edinburgh is so near the seat of Lord Pentland. Lady Pentland belongs to this place and she is a daughter of one of the oldest houses here. It is not from Scottish people that you would expect a verdict against Lord Pentland.' That is a sidelight on the way in which men's feelings work."

One other experience I must not omit. When Mrs. Besant was much past the prime of life she still had so much vigour, her mind worked so clearly, that we were all struck one night by the marvellous way in which she was reciting a patriotic poem written by James Russell Lowell. I think it was 700 to 1000 lines that she recited. It was after dinner. She had asked Mr. Gandhi to be her guest that day:

Half Madras was there, and his wife too. We had a wonderful gathering. It was a sight for the gods to see Mrs. Besant, robed as though she was 30 years old, come and take a place as the principal reciter. We did not know of it till then. When she said, "I am going to recite this poem," we were taken by surprise. No note in her hand, no book near her, and we could see nobody acting as prompter. But, mind you; she recited the whole of that poem without a pause, without one moment of hesitation, word coming after word, line following line, and filling your ears and hearts at the same time with the power of true stirring poetry. It was a song of patriotism. She felt somehow with Mr. Gandhi before her and hundreds of other people that if she could recite this poem and if there could be one seed of true patriotism cast in a psychological moment, not directly but with time in her favour, there would be some good result following. It was a wonderful performance. I never can forget it however long I live. Her voice was strong. It was full, and she threw so much energy, so much rendering of the heart into what she was saying that you heard every word, you understood every sentence, and you felt every throb of emotion. This was, mind you, when she was in her sixties.

A great woman. A strong woman. A beneficent-minded woman. A mine of energy and with a wonderful library within herself of all sorts of knowledge. A great fountain of inspiration, for the benefit not only of her environment, but of the whole country she served, nay of the whole of humanity. I have never seen another person either of her magnitude or of her singular devotion of

spirit. To work, and to work of a high and exalted kind, she gave all of her wonderful equipment. God created her, I expect, in one of his most lavish moods. He must have said to himself: "I am now going to make a creature for the admiration of the whole world, for the inspiration of humanity. And let Me see what I make of it." He did make one of his marvels.

It is true, ladies and gentlemen, that in the many departments that she covered in her labours, in each one of those many departments four strong men working night and day could not have performed the work she did.

And yet, ladies and gentlemen, to finish up, I must allude to a certain observation that our Chairman has made—and this is a point in all biography which the young must note—hardly any person in this world born to great work but has felt at some time or other that he or she had not achieved the greatest object of his ambition. Something was left over. "I have become weak before my time. My power has gone before the principal aim of my life has been accomplished. I die a failure."

You must not think that this sense of failure reflects any weakness, any impotence, or any radical defect in the character of these great people. It is only a tribute to the greatness that they have already achieved, that they saw from that eminence higher peaks to which, if they had but aspired, they would have attained. Who can say of the work of Mrs. Besant that it was small, that it was negligible, that it was temporary, or that it was not in the highest sphere of human endeavour? It was all that and more. Nevertheless, as the

Chairman said to you, Mrs. Besant's heart had been set on the attainment by India of her freedom. *How India Wrought for Freedom* is the title of one of her books. She would often see the crown of her freedom settle on Mother India's head, and sometimes in moments of inspiration I have heard her say that she was not going to die, that her last breath would not be drawn, until she had seen India free (Applause). Perhaps Mr. Ranganatham Mudaliar has heard her say so. If not, he is unfortunate. I have heard her say it, and once I believe she actually wrote it. Fancy, what a mighty fount of ambition there must have been in a lady well advanced in years to have said: "Our Indian patriots have laboured so well and so faithfully, the foundations are there, well and truly laid. Why not? In a few years' time things will ripen. India must be free. I am not going to die before I see that consummation."

Whether she achieved it or not, I regard it as a great tribute to her love of this country, to her own belief in the mission of India, that she should have cherished that ambition and almost see it come within her grasp, so that she might fold her fingers and say: "Here is India's freedom. Take it, my children, and be blessed."

Well, she did not live to see India's freedom. Even if she had lived till today she would not have seen it. And to-day perhaps it seems further than it seemed in her day. Such are the vicissitudes of human fortune. It is not a weakness, it is not any defect in our great workers that things do not happen as well as they are wished. I have known Mr. Balfour speak of his life as a failure. Mr. Gladstone,

who laboured for such a long time that he filled three generations, for Home Rule—he did not see Home Rule. These great aims are laboured for in stages. We have to achieve these marvels of human triumph not at one point, not with one wish of our hearts or one waving of a magic wand, but after long years of strenuous labour, after generations of well sown seed and harvest. They do not come quickly. Is it to Mrs. Besant's detriment or disadvantage that she did not realize it?

Let us rather remember the great things that the chairman enumerated. How many great things has she actually done? I did not touch at all on the great mastery she had of her own specific subject, Theosophy—the millions and millions of pupils and sishyas she had all over the world, the innumerable lodges from which year after year, on all occasions of these celebrations, the sincerest homage of the heart, the worshipful homage of the heart would come to her. I did not understand it then. I still do not understand it. I am not competent to speak of it. I leave them alone. Remember how much is left out when I speak so enthusiastically only of the other parts of the work. Let us remember this, that Mrs. Besant lived long, that she worked hard every instant of her life, and that she achieved peaks of greatness in many lines of human work.

And let us also remember that when she came here for the first time in 1893, she did not come here to begin her life's work. She did not come here to understand human problems. She did not come here as a humble beginner in the ABC of public life. She had already won a great reputation amongst

the world's great workers. Among England's great men and women her place had already been made secure by a long record of glorious and systematic work, so that her life in India is a great life superimposed upon her English life which already had achieved an immense measure of worthiness and greatness and fruitfulness.

Such a person, ladies and gentlemen, we should not, we cannot, we ought not to forget easily. They are born not once in a generation, but once in many, many generations. It was left to the singular good fortune of India to have seen her, to have afforded a favourable theatre for the display of her great qualities. We in India gave her, as it were, the final scene of a life lived among great things, for great opinions, and in the company of the great ones of the world, some of whom only are alive. Others are yet to be born. Many have passed over, some of those great ones whose names are inscribed forever in the rolls of human story—amongst those great names Mrs. Besant will occupy always a very high and a very honoured place.

We do well to remember her. I have asked specially that I should be allowed an opportunity of paying my homage to the many-sided greatness of which it was one of my blessings in life to have seen small glimpse, for a small day, in a small sphere.

SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA¹

*Reminiscences of Half a Century

(1848—1925)

In a species of composition notorious for its pitfalls Sir Surendranath Banerjea has produced a volume of absorbing interest. Considering that it covers nearly half a century of the formative period of Indian Public life, full of important events and exciting episodes, it is a marvel of discretion and will not cause offence in any quarter or provoke angry recrimination. Sir Surendranath has had a chequered life, having known both poverty and competence, having been a bitter foe and a trusted servant of the Government, and having been at one time imprisoned and at another knighted by the Crown. Nevertheless, he has not indulged in any harsh judgement or undue self-praise. His record is good-humoured and governed by a taste in personal matters which, if not fastidious in every parti-

¹ From 'The Hindu' May 4, 1925.

* A Nation in Making. Being the Reminiscences of Fifty Years in Public Life in Bengal, by Sir Surendranath Banerjea. Oxford University Press, 1925. Pages 420, Price Rs. 10-8-0.

cular, never deviates from the line of correctitude. From start to finish the narrative holds the attention. Like Ulysses, Surendranath Banerjea can say 'I am a part of all that I have met. I am become a name; much have I seen and known.' In reading these pages, therefore, one reads the successive chapters of the history of India in its political aspect, from the days when the national spirit had not yet been born, through the crude beginnings of Local Self-Government and the fierce quarrels of the Ilbert Bill agitation,¹ through all the vicissitudes of the Indian National Congress, its persecution, triumphs and ultimate split, through the ever-changing phases of a struggle between the people and the foreign bureaucracy, through alternations of reform and repression, to the present stage when the inception of responsible government is still engaged in a deadly grapple with non-co-operation. If the author had not himself christened the book 'A Nation in Making,' his readers would not hesitate to confer some such title on it.

The most striking phenomenon in the great life that we contemplate is the sharp contrast which its concluding phase represents to that which goes before. It is so marked that Sir Surendranath offers his own explanation of it. By a strange contradiction in our nature we look for consistency in our heroes, at the same time we wish to see them grow and learn and adapt themselves to a shifting envi-

¹ In 1883, during Lord Ripon's time the Hon. Mr. C. P. Ilbert, as Law Member introduced a bill which afterwards went by his name, to remove the disqualification attaching to the Indian Magistrates in the trial of European and American offenders. The entire Anglo-Indian community rose against the bill and there was counter-agitation by Indians.

ronment. Constancy in human relationships is a quality highly prized because of the effacement of self and the concern for others which it implies. But it is not always the highest virtue, as it may conflict with the moral law or the course of justice. Some simple people believe that the political evolution of a country is a long epic in which the forces of righteousness are fighting against the forces of sin, and that every single person engaged at any time on the popular side is a hero, while every person engaged at any time on the Government side is a villain. Life, however, is complicated. In the confused play of motive and interest good men are to be found on either side of the strife, while the same good man may be found now on one side and now on the other side. The law of patriotism is not that you should be against the Government, but that you should serve the nation. If at any juncture you are convinced that you can best serve the nation by joining the Government, you must not hesitate to do so. Sir Surendranath opposed Government vigorously for many years and then defended Government vigorously during the last eight years. Throughout he was serving the nation according to his lights. This, in substance, is his own defence. I am on the whole satisfied and I expect every impartial reader will be.

A leader has certain concrete ends in view and in their pursuit finds himself sometimes ranged against Government. Opposition to Government is not in itself a principle of conduct. It may well be that as those ends are attained or come into view, the leader has to change his attitude towards Government. Dr. Besant has done so; and before a

Judge and Jury in Edinburgh¹ three years ago, I contended on her behalf that it was not she, but Government, that had changed, anticipating the language of Sir Surendranath in his book. Mr. B. C. Pal has done so too. It was generally believed in London, when Mr. Tilak was there, that he had done so. Already rumour makes us expectant of negotiations between Mr. C. R. Das and Lord Birkenhead. His youthful followers are reported to be displeased with him for that reason, but surely a general at some time or other has to conduct a parley and arrange a truce. It seems to be a universal fate, this rise and fall of popularity. It is sad and distressing to those that experience it, but if there is no escape philosophy should teach us to endure it with as good grace as may be.

Of popular acclaim, in all its subtle and flattering forms, Sir Surendranath has had enough to satisfy any man's ambition. To him must be assigned the glory of initiating propagandist lectures on Indian nationality and how to foster it. He spread the fame of Mazzini among the youth of India and made the story of Italian liberation familiar to the public. I still remember the transport of delight and wonderment with which I listened in the Matriculation Class while my teacher read stirring passages from his orations. His triumphs in the sway of audiences were absolutely unprecedented and have scarcely been equalled. His appearance on the Congress platform was the signal for

¹. In July, 1922, Mr. Sastri gave evidence in Edinburgh on behalf of Mrs. Besant, who brought a libel suit against the *Daily Graphic* for charging her, in an article written by Mr. Harold Cox in 1917, with sedition and intention to subvert British Government in India.

tumultuous applause followed by hushed attention. He once carried a proposition against the desire of the Lt. Governor of Bengal who presided, and the offended potentate broke up the meeting prematurely. His part in the anti-partition agitation and the fearless stand he took at Barisal and in fact at every stage of it, would, even if it stood alone, constitute a title to the gratitude and homage of India. Crowds pressed round him to take the dust off his feet. For some time we read and heard nothing but shouts of 'Bande Mataram', baths in the Hooghly and marches with bare feet, 16th October demonstrations, Federation Hall speeches and 'Rakhi Bandhan.'¹ He was suddenly inspired by the enthusiasm of an audience to bind them to Swadeshi by means of a vow, and he improvised one on the spot. Early in his journalistic career he had suffered imprisonment for fearless criticism and thus acquired the qualifications for public service which Non-Co-operators and Swarajists now consider indispensable. Why, he may even claim, with some show of justice, to have been the father of Non-Co-operation! It is worth while to state this claim in his own words;

'I returned from Barisal full of indignation, with my unshakable optimism sensibly impaired; and one of the first things that I did was to sever what remained of my connection with the Government. For the moment I became a non-co-operator, one of the earliest apostles of that cult, and resigned my

¹ On the 16th of October, the people in every town and village marched barefooted to the nearest river and after ablutions tied the *Rakhi* or the silken band of unity round one another's wrists.

office as Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta and Honorary Magistrate of Barrackpore. The resignations were a protest against the action of the Barisal authorities and did not represent my acceptance of a definite policy or principle. I did the same thing when in 1899 I resigned my office as a Municipal Commissioner of Calcutta along with twenty-seven members of the Corporation. There are occasions when we must 'non-co-operate' and follow it up as a protest. But I altogether repudiate a persistent policy of non-co-operation, especially at a time when the Government is prepared to move along progressive lines, though the pace may not be as rapid as we should like it to be.'

From one who went so far those who went farther fancied they could expect countenance of non-co-operation, if not non-co-operation. But they actually got at first disapproval and then opposition. The difference, according to him, was no longer one of mere degree; it went down to the fundamentals of public work. Extremism proper thought of taking India out of the British Empire; its methods were revolutionary; its exponents openly ridiculed constitutional methods, and would not stop short, if compelled, of violent methods. He was old-fashioned enough to believe in the peaceful methods by which in the main the Englishman had achieved his freedom. His aim being Dominion Status for India, he was content to agitate and bring pressure to bear on the constituted authorities, so that in their own interests as well as those of India, they must advance her status. In his own province

Mr. Arabinda Ghose and Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal had begun as early as 1906 to differentiate themselves from the school headed by Mr. Surendranath; outside his province, Mr. Tilak was the most prominent champion of the new school. The session at Surat¹ marked the parting of the ways. Mrs. Besant then came on the scene with her immense driving power and wonderful organisation. She threw herself into the work of reuniting the parties and succeeded in doing so towards the end of 1925. From her Home Rule League and its activities Mr. Banerjea's party held aloof, though there was no pronounced hostility. Nor would he lend his support to the proposals for passive resistance which were made to secure her release from internment in 1917. He and his fellow Moderates, however, gave hearty support to the constitutional agitation for reversing the action taken against her by the Madras Government. The separation between the schools came to a head when the proposals of Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford for taking the first step in fulfilment of the policy of 1917 were published. Then was taken the fateful step of secession from the Congress until the split was rendered permanent by the latter body adopting the policy of Non-Co-operation proclaimed by Mr. Gandhi. Sir Surendranath, who became Minister in the new regime and further received a knighthood, holds Non-Co-operation responsible for many of the evils from which India suffers to-day. It has paralysed public activities and cast the public mind into a state of utter despair. It has ruined the morale of

¹ In December 1907. Owing to the opposition of the extremists to the moderates, the session ended in disorder.

our students and fomented communal disturbances on a scale never known before. While it has not succeeded in wrecking the constitution, it has had the effect of preventing the maximum benefits of the Reform scheme from being attained. Like Burke, whom he admires,¹ he enlarges in his old age on the virtues of prudence and moderation and says repeatedly that there is no such thing as inflexible principle in politics, but that every principle must be limited in application by the circumstances. Non-Co-operation marred his work as Minister. In his tours, instead of there being triumphal arches and enthusiastic demonstrations, there were 'hartals' and other ugly manifestations of disapproval. At Barisal, to which he went in 1921 with a great scheme of sanitation the reception he met with was cold. Here is his pathetic reflection at the time :

'It was at Barisal only fifteen years previously that we had the historic Barisal Conference. It was here on that occasion that one of the most notable demonstrations against the Partition of Bengal had been held. I was the central figure and the hero of the demonstration. I was acclaimed by the populace who rent the air with their cries and whose overflowing gratitude would have softened the hearts of the sternest. Fifteen years have come and gone and in the meantime non-co-operation had done its work, creating a bitter feeling against the Government and all associated with it. The

¹ Sir Surendranath has said : 'To none do I owe a greater debt than to Edmund Burke, whose political philosophy has so largely moulded my own views about government and society'.

Reforms and the spirit of the Reforms were not able to allay this. I had come to Barisal on a work of beneficence in which politics had no part or share. I had come to promote sanitation, equipped with all the resources and the organisation of Government. But even such a boon, so vital to the people, was unacceptable when offered by the Government, even in the person of one who not long before was hailed as a public benefactor.'

The difficulties experienced by Ministers have been stated more or less fully in the evidence recorded by the Reforms Enquiry Committee.¹ Sir Surendranath's experience is of the same kind and his recital has peculiar point and pathos:

'In countries where Parliamentary institutions have long been established all this is understood, and where there are party organisations and party organs the encouraging approval of a section of the public is readily obtained; and the Minister has not to continue from week's end to week's end his wearisome work through the chill and suffocating atmosphere of hostile criticism, unrelieved by any sort of approbation, except that of his own conscience. That indeed is a cold comfort, the only form of solace, that we have had in the dreary journey, which for me is now at an end and which I am not prepared to renew, except in circumstances very different from those that now prevail.'

¹ In 1924 a committee under Sir Alexander Muddiman was set up to examine the working of the Reforms.

Our deepest sympathies are stirred as we read these lines wrung from the anguished heart of the man who, having served the country out of office with the most enthusiastic approbation of his fellow-patriots, is now reviled, hissed, and held up to scorn by them, because he served her in office. But Sir Surendranath is brave and cheerful. He takes the vicissitudes of popularity without excessive grief, criticises the new school of politics with dignity, and takes leave of the public with a message of such sobriety and elevation of thought that it deserves to be given in full. But I must content myself with the last three sentences:

'Thus co-operation and not non-co-operation, association and not isolation, must be a living and a growing factor in the evolution of our people. Any other policy would be suicidal and fraught with peril to our best interests. That is my message to my countrymen, delivered not in haste or in impatience, but as a mature result of my deliberations, and of my life-long labours in the service of the motherland.'

In a life touching more than two generations there are many aspects second only to the above in importance to contemporaries and instruction to succeeding generations on which it would be necessary to dwell. His influence over students, for instance, is a matter of which he is naturally proud, but which is the subject of serious controversy by no means without interest to-day. Again, who would not like to treat of his magnificent oratory? Its sonorous periods, its exuberance of ornaments and

its pompous diction produced many imitators all over the country, but as in the case of Macaulay, the original is still without equal. Some space must be given, if it were possible, to his methods of work and the character of his contribution to the proceedings of the legislature and its committees. But I must hasten to make an observation on a quality which forces itself on the reader's attention. I would call it an easy, forbearant, engaging good-nature. At the threshold of his career Sir Surendranath had to go to law in England for his position in the I.C.S. A little later he was dismissed from the service for a comparatively minor offence and as if to complete his ruin, he was refused admission to the English Bar. At the height of the anti-Partition agitation he incurred the intense hatred of Government and Anglo-Indian Society and was often in danger of prosecution or deportation. Yet his narration of these events is without a trace of bitterness or ill-will either towards individuals or towards the British nation. On the other hand, the serious-minded reader will be surprised at the note of complacency that characterises these protracted and varied reminiscences. Is it not strange that there should be no poignant regret, no tinge of conscience, no taking of blame on one's self? Equally worthy of note is the entire absence of allusion to the religious life of the author. We have a statement to the effect that he disapproved of the thoroughgoing nature of the later Brahmo Samaj doctrine and that he was a mild, if sincere, advocate of widow re-marriage. Beyond this the reader has no clue to the author's relation to the orthodox tenets of Hinduism or the extent of his conformity

with its ceremonial code. It is only the outer man we are permitted to see; the inner remains a mystery. Few autobiographies, on the scale of the book before us, would give room for such a complaint.

The reference to his wife and to her unbounded faith in him, even when his fortunes were at an ebb, are full of tender love and profound respect. No one would have thought that in a Kulin Brahmin family girls would marry late, and yet, it seems to have been the fact in Sir Surendranath's family and he ascribes his great energy and bodily vigour to this circumstance. He informs us that he was regular in taking exercise. Those who worked with him on committees would have noticed how fidgety he would be as the luncheon hour approached. What he eats we are not told. He once carefully avoided a centipede which had got mixed with his dinner, thus depriving the poor thing of a high destiny. If he eats forbidden food, as one suspects, he certainly never threw the remains into the house of his orthodox neighbour. He abjures drink and smoke, though drink seems to have been the unfailing mark of the educated young men of his time. Some one made him a present of a cigarette holder in middle age, but his guardian angel in the guise of a thievish menial stole it in a few days' time. Else the tell-tale instrument of his sole transgression in life would be a valuable heirloom. With much pride he chronicles his love of sleep. He retires early—one of the secrets of domestic happiness. This amiable weakness he carries to such an extent that, once, when he was in a French lock-up, and had to pass a whole night on a narrow bench,

with two other Bengalees, (I.C.S. men too), he slept soundly unmindful of the insects which kept his companions sitting up the whole time. Such personal touches gratify a natural curiosity which the admiring reader feels about a great man and whatever appertains to him. It is a pity that Sir Surendranath's reserve has stood in the way of more revelations.

It is impossible to lay down this fascinating volume without being impressed by the enormous distance which our country has traversed between the time when Sir Surendranath's career opened and the present time. One sometimes hears pessimists saying that politically or economically India has made no progress in British times or has only gone backward. There can be no better antidote to such a morbid vision than the perusal of memoirs of people who have lived the full span of human life. There are not many such in India. What would not one give for the reminiscences of Sir Dinshaw Wacha for instance or the late Dr, Subramania Iyer or Sir Ramakrishna Bhandarker? To those who have not the time to read the whole book I would recommend the last half a dozen pages. They are sure to teach us reverence, humility and deep thankfulness for the spirit of progress which moves the world.

SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA—II

Once again we are in mourning. This time it is for one of the greatest sons of India. The late Sir Surendranath was a giant among men and held his ground for fifty years. The mere length of his public record is sufficient to inspire the pigmies with awe. In an age of sensations and unbalanced hero-worship his passing away has not stirred the nation as it should have. Political values have changed; our notions are topsy-turvy today. Real distinction and mere notoriety, lasting service and cheap vaporous flash, greatness and littleness mounted on stilts—modern India does not know the one from the other.

Even if the political distemper were not so acute, the popularity of Sir Surendranath would have suffered partial eclipse. He survived his early friendships, the struggles of his maturity and many of the causes to which he dedicated his uncommon powers. To read his first pleas for the liberties of India and then the noisy fustian and rhodomontade of the typical Swarajist of to-day is to pass from the period of sound thought and noble speech to that of unreason and mad screams. Then men studied hard,

¹ From 'The Servant of India,' August 13, 1925.

laboured for tangible aims, always appealed to the teachings of history and experience and never disdained concessions because they were small, or powers because they were subject to safeguards. Not losing sight of the ultimate, they were content to build slow so they built solid, and rejoiced to see the temple of freedom rising on secure foundations. Of these early builders Sir Surendranath was among the most industrious and skilful.

In the long roll of Indian patriots there is hardly a name so large and conspicuous as his. A few shone more brilliantly and with purer lustre, but none excelled him in magnitude or spread of illumination. In steady periods and glittering phrases he formulated the ideal of Indian nationality and taught the full meaning and scope of Indian patriotism. Thousands and tens of thousands of young men all over the country had their first enthusiasm kindled to fervour by the matchless eloquence with which he popularized in this country the story of the liberation of Italy and the great parts played therein by Mazzini, Garibaldi and Cavour. Surendranath was the morning star that heralded the dawn of our public life.

It is remarkable how the hope which he so surely imparted to others in the seventies of the last century remained undimmed in his breast to his dying day. The buoyancy of his spirits was indeed a divine gift. However dark the cloud overhead might be, his voice was as loud and resonant and his message as rousing as ever. Other Congress leaders might yield to despair and point with shaking finger to dangers ahead; but as soon as the well-known

hero of Bengal made his appearance on the platform, the audience forgot its fear and was borne aloft on the wing of faith and courage. In the darkest hour of the partition agitation, when his own liberty was in peril, he still bade his followers be of good cheer and never talk of their province except as United Bengal. His speeches too in the conferences of moderates of 1918 and after, when non-co-operation swept over the country like a hurricane, uprooting and desolating, were always marked by a firm faith that Providence would somehow or other crown this holy land with the blessings of freedom and prosperity. He had no misgivings whether as to our policy in the main or as to our pursuance of it in detail. We were perpetually in the right. For our difficulties he had no ingenious devices. His mind worked quickly, but not long or strenuously. His solutions were simple and more or less obvious. Deep-laid plans, elaborate schemes, shrewd anticipations were beyond him. He knew no anxious vigils, no protracted consultations. He sacrificed neither meal nor sleep. Disappointment and defeat could neither daunt his spirits nor alter his course. He took whatever came in the spirit of trustfulness and marched on.

For one who dealt continuously with big affairs and met men of different types, he was almost without guile or suspicion. People could get round him easily. He was susceptible to personal attentions, and it used always to be said that he yielded to flattery. In committees he was often betrayed by his responsive and unsuspecting disposition into accepting compromises, in which he gave much more than he got. He had not the penetration which

saw through the adversary. So long as business was done, he did not discriminate nicely between one way of doing it and another. In fact he took suggestions from old and young alike and was never so determined but you could try and shake him. Whenever he was too far committed, you were not annoyed with him, but with the fellow who had been before you and managed him. It was this openness, this accessibility, as it were, which made the young love and adore him. By this quality he easily outshone his compeers from other provinces. In fact at the annual sessions of the Congress he mixed with the common herd of delegates from his province and never stipulated for separate lodgings with a good cuisine and first class upholstery. It was a common saying that Bengal was the province in which democracy reigned supreme.

Among his contemporaries, that is to say, till some ten or fifteen years ago, his reputation was that of a man able but not skilled, learned but not profound, keen but not subtle. His most thoughtful utterances, forcible though they were in form, dwelt on the well-known and obvious features of questions. He never laid bare what was hidden, never unravell-ed the knotty parts of a case. His ideas though copious and varied, seldom touched the abstruse. He seemed to lack sophistication. Praise he swallowed greedily. He loved to say that he was exceeding his time in order that the audience might shout "go on, go on." When there was tumult and uproar, he was glad to be appealed to by the President as the one man who could restore order. Who but a natural and simple-hearted man, would give his autobiography the title of "A Nation in Making"? He had

no prudish reserve and, what is more remarkable, no moods of self-accusation or undue diffidence. A reader of his book would doubt whether he had any regrets such as come to the old when they remember what they had done which might have been omitted and what they had omitted which ought to have been done. There are few so lucky but must recall opportunities wasted and energies misspent. Supposing Sir Surendranath commenced his life's journey again, would his course have been just the same? Yet that is the implication of his book.

Of his inner life, that which one calls one's own, we do not know anything. Whether philosophy solved the riddle of life for him, what consolations religion afforded him, how he prayed and sought communion with the Eternal Spirit must remain a mystery to those who were not privileged to enjoy his intimacy at home. Some men are like deep-sea creatures, live within their own mysterious selves, and come out only to take the air. Surendra lay careless on the beach the whole time, in full view of sky, water and land, living by the law of his being for all men to see. There were no "immutable fixities" about him, if we forget the inviolate routine of his secular life, no devouring attachments, no lasting resentments. He could bandy gay compliments with the official who had once insulted him. He could take office cheerfully under a Governor whom he had condemned and repudiated in advance. He could accept a knighthood after having been for forty years acclaimed as the king of Peng I, the tribune of the people, and one whose very name excluded the idea of surrender. Though baulked of his early ambitions by the action of British authorities, he

preserved to the end what he used to call the traditional and instinctive loyalty of the Indian people, and even while his immediate friends and followers forswore their first faith, kept on avowing and preaching an unquenchable belief in the essential justice and generosity of the heart of England. He lived long and died quickly—commanding excellent health and spirits, never letting his faculties rust, taking with both hands what the day brought him, and neither brooding uneasily on the past nor dreaming vaguely and wistfully of the future. His Calcutta Municipal Act, of which he was excessively proud as of the child of his dotage, will ere long be superseded. His paper and his college may soon join the undistinguished rank, each of its kind. Even his marvellous oratory, with its grand roll and ornate diction, may become a literary curiosity. But the patriotism, comprehensive, noble and fervid, which he taught will live in the breasts of coming generations, and his example of fearless and unrelenting work in great public causes will shine as a bright star for ever. And no matter how superior persons may scoff, the great heart of humanity will always love the man who ate well and slept soundly, who laughed heartily and forgave readily, who boasted without pride and quarrelled without malice, who was devoted to his wife and honoured her memory, who laboured hard and did not think too much of the result, and who, till death claimed him, thought of his country and planned for her welfare.

(From "*The Servant of India*," August 13, 1925)

SIR SURENDRANATH BANERJEA-III*

IT is a sumptuous and varied banquet that Sir Surendranath provides in his book of reminiscences. The richest dish of all is the able and convincing defence he makes of his accepting office as Minister in the new regime. It is a seeming contradiction of his former life of many years during which he had built up a great reputation as an implacable critic of Government and earned the honourable sobriquet of 'Surrender-Not.' A higher synthesis binds the two parts together, the law of nation-building by the means best open for the time being. If you have laboured hard to produce a change of spirit in the Government, it would be betrayal of trust, when that change has been brought about, not to utilise it to the full by taking hold of the machinery. Surely judgments may differ on the reality of the change of spirit, and the common man would be wise to be guided by him who has conducted the fight all along and braved all its dangers as well as enjoyed its honours. How true Sir Surendranath's judgment is in practical matters is abundantly proved by the shrewd and wise reflections on men and affairs which are scattered through the volume. Those who in their hearts cherish a partiality for methods of revolution might read with advantage what our author says of the damage done to his anti-Partition work in London by the assassination of Curzon-Wyllie by a misguided Indian youth. It

* From 'The Servant of India' May 7, 1925.

is a temptation to quote the testimony of one who stands in sharp antagonism in Bengal politics to Sir Surendranath. We should ordinarily not cumber an editorial article by long citations; but for another reason, namely, the inculcation of a precept suited to the occasion, we will yield to the temptation. In his address to the Faridpur Conference, apparently meant for all the world, Mr. C. R. Das says:

“In the next place, the application of violence cuts at the root of that consolidation without which, as I have said, the attainment of Swaraj is impossible. Violence is sure to be followed by more violence on the part of the Government and repression may be so violent that its only effect on the Indian people would be to check their enthusiasm for Swaraj. I ask those young men who are addicted to revolutionary methods, do they think that the people will side with them? When life and property is threatened the inevitable result is that the people who suffer or who think that they may suffer recoil from such activities. This method, therefore, is impractical.”

The same sentiment, but in a setting quite different, has been expressed by our author.

“Collisions with the Government I am, and have never been, afraid of, provided that the cause is just, that it has behind it a strong body of public opinion, and that it may not lead to a measure of repression beyond our strength to endure and which may retard our growing public spirit. The repressive measures following the anarchical movement in Bengal had a blighting effect upon the growth of our public life, because the hand of repression was too heavy for us to bear. The all-pervading influence of the police, to which our public men were subjected, the long terms of imprisonment inflicted

on some of our young men, and the suppression of the *Samitis*, all had a disastrous effect upon the growth of our nascent public life."

The responsibility incurred by those who employ students in political movements is terrible. Sir Surendranath, however, never had any qualms on the subject. He is, perhaps without exception, the one political worker in India whose empire in the hearts of the young lasted the longest, and while it lasted, was the most undisputed. Why, even the sinister proverb does not deter him from quoting scripture—"Suffer little children to come unto me." Once, however, he was taught a very severe lesson. Some young men awoke him at dead of night and admitted they were out to kill Sir Bampfylde Fuller, Motherwit and a certain rumour enabled him to get out of the scrape, but he must have felt that he had been playing with fire all along. In admonishing the founder of non-co-operation, Mr. Banerjea points out the unprepared and inflammable nature of the material and the perilously easy descent from the theory of non-violence to every form of rowdyism. It is open to doubt how far he would act on this cautious principle were he to begin his life over again. This is his confession of faith:

"That the boycott sometimes led to excesses no one will dispute; but all constitutional movements suffer from this inherent weakness, which springs from the defects of our common human nature. All causes—the purest and the noblest—will have their moderates and extremists. But the excesses, more or less incidental to all constitutional movements, have never been held as an argument against the adoption of constitutional methods for the redress of public grievances. If such a view were held, some of the noblest chapters of human history would have been left unwritten, and we should have been without the inspiration of self-sacrifice and

patriotic devotion, which have so often been associated with the struggle for constitutional freedom. Who will say that because there is unhappily a revolutionary propaganda in Bengal, undoubtedly limited and insignificant in the circle of its influence, all constitutional efforts should be given up? The enemies of Indian advancement would wish for nothing better. The friends of Indian progress would view it as a calamity."

Our hero has played many parts, but the orator easily overshadows the professor, the journalist or the Minister. His style of speaking is no longer the mode, but it had a majesty and a sweep that produced tremendous effects on large audiences. In the council room it is slightly out of place, while it positively handicapped Sir Surendranath at the game of thrust and parry round a committee table. It must have been so. What else could we expect of one who, when in jail, was asked by an admiring missionary the secret of his great influence over the student community and replied in the following grand little speech. "I love the students. I rejoice with them in their joys, I grieve with them in their sorrows, and they reciprocate the sentiment with the generous enthusiasm of youth." Young aspirants to literary fame will learn how difficult and laborious the path is to it. Even such a master had to burn the midnight oil for his great performances. His memory is prodigious. If by some chance all traces of his book could be obliterated, we have little doubt he could reproduce it in a few weeks with a fair degree of accuracy.

With his intellectual eminence and leadership in India for nearly forty years, Sir Surendranath has come into contact with many famous men and formed many valuable friendships. Early in life he seems to have met Charles Dickens, who championed him in his journal "Good words," when the Civil Service Commissioners removed his name from

the list of successful candidates. Then how many Viceroys and Governors and other potentates come on the stage in these wonderful pages! Lord Rosebery and he once figured on the same platform. Provoked at an Imperial Press Conference by an ill considered attack on the Indian press by Lord Cromer, he replied in an address so spirited and eloquent that a listener declared that he swept the floor with the noble lord. He gives us a charming picture of Sir Edward Baker, whose kindly and generous heart made him a lifelong friend and unflinching champion. There is a belief, which this book does not dispel, that but for Sir Edward, our hero would have been deported under the odious Regulation of 1818 during the anti-Partition agitation. He could have ascertained the fact, he says, when he was Minister, but forbore. It is a human weakness that we would rather not know a disillusioning truth and a professional ventilator of grievances is not likely to put himself to the trouble of unearthing a secret by which he might be deprived of the credit of martyrdom. Sir Surendra quickly forgets political enmities. It does one good to read of the way in which Mr. Emerson and he were at first prosecutor and victim in Barisal, then friendly colleagues in the Imperial Legislative Council, and finally, loyal Secretary and trusting Minister. Who again, will not be amused at the freak of chance which compelled Sir Surendra to send frantic cables to the authorities in England against Lord Ronaldshay's appointment as Governor of Bengal and then ordained that he should be readily and willingly chosen by that same Governor as his first Minister? The brief sketches that dot the book here and there of important personalities are full of interest and a kindly humour. Friends receive generous appreciation while foes are gently censured and often forgiven. One wonders why the name of Aurobindo Ghose is not mentioned even once? Indiscreet youths at college may take heart from the story of Sir

Asutosh Mookerjee, who figured prominently in a noisy demonstration when Sir Surendra was sentenced to imprisonment by the High Court of Calcutta. Madras patriots might blush for their ancestors, who were unable to get up a public meeting when in 1873 our hero visited the Southern capital for an agitation regarding the maximum age for the Civil Service and simultaneous examinations.

Before we take leave of this volume we would express our pleasure at the fine portrait of the author which shows him in the Act of writing for the "Bengalee." How readers would have enjoyed another which had caught him in the act of haranguing his thousands and tens of thousands on College Square or thundering forth his denunciation of the Arms Act on the Congress platform! We are glad to note that the book was printed in Madras for the Oxford University Press. The execution is neat and attains the English level of typographical accuracy. But we must have a few grumbles. The father of the Indian National Congress was Allan O. Hume, not Allen O. Hume. It was Sir James and not Sir Louis Peile who sat on the Welby Commission. In the first line of page 399 one reads 'council' where perhaps 'counsel' is meant. But it is a cruel joke on him who spent so great a part of his life at public meetings for the printer, by change of a single letter, to make him speak of "a vindication of our indefensible right to hold meetings."

PRESIDENT WILSON'S MESSAGE*

When I met Dr. Woodrow Wilson towards the end of 1921 he was full of hope that his country would soon join the League of Nations and help it assume the tone and authority befitting it. The hope was unfortunately premature. Even at its birth it was not so strong as the ex-President wished it to be. Since then the great Powers controlling it have not allowed full scope for its proper political activity. Quite recently, however, its aid has been invoked in the settlement of certain weighty issues which seemed to defy other ways of settlement. With its prestige heightened in this way, it might in no long time become the ultimate referee of great international disputes. Grim portents forebode the advent of war in the more or less distant future. Heaven forbid that it should be a war between colours, cultures, and continents! In view of this dread possibility it is a blessing that the League should have from the first found room for Asiatic peoples. Of course we owe this circumstance primarily to the inclusion of Japan among the allied and associated Powers. If only she had not been persuaded to withdraw the demand for the recognition of racial equality at Versailles! It was indeed the missing of a great opportunity for the peace of this planet. China, Persia, India, Turkey—each has so many potential causes of dispute with Western Powers that sooner or later the interposition of the League may be called for. The representation of India is

* Foreword contributed to "Woodrow Wilson's Message for the Eastern Nations" published by the Association Press, Calcutta, 1925.

for all practical purposes only the representation of the Government of India. Wilson's dictum that the peoples of the world, not merely their governments, were to come together to settle the affairs of the world is ignored in her case. In the strict legal sense it could not indeed be otherwise; but a mitigation is practicable through informal consultation with the Indian Legislature, though for some reason or other the idea has not occurred to the authorities. The educated classes in this country and, we may take it, in the other Asiatic countries as well are very far from understanding the value of membership in the League. Much education with this special object in view has still to be undertaken, but the opportunity does not seem to have arrived yet. In a quickly changing world it is difficult to foretell what dramatic events will bring the League and its beneficent intervention to the centre of the consciousness of the East, but careful observers of the undercurrents of affairs can conceive more than one such possibility. The education of the East then in knowledge of the League can no longer be postponed. This little book will start it under the very best auspices. The words of the Message were not indeed expressly intended for us, but they have an appeal to the Eastern as well as the Western hemisphere. That the selection was made by the author himself adds immensely to their efficacy as well as to their pathetic interest. His appearance in London was hailed with unparalleled demonstration. Imagination fails to picture the wild delirium of joy with which he would have been welcomed in Asiatic capitals. It would have been as though one of the great teachers of humanity, Christ or Buddha, had come back to his home, crowned with the glory that the centuries had brought him since he last walked the earth. Now Wilson can only speak through the printed word, through translation and the mouths of more or less competent interpreters. It is good work though humble, and sure though slow. Let us take heart and go ahead.

BAL GANGADHAR TILAK¹

(1856—1920)

The death of Mr. Gangadhar Tilak removes a great figure from Indian politics. For a quarter of century and more, he had been the ideal of his followers and the dread of his opponents. Of Government he had been an unrelenting and consistent foe except during his stay in England, during which he scandalised young Indians by his studied moderation of tone. It is no wonder, seeing how he had to undergo state prosecutions more than once which left his fortune more than once in utter ruin. The wonder is, he rebuilt his fortune with celerity and was ready to sacrifice them again. Clear-sighted and tenacious, he kept an eye on India's freedom and would not rest or let Government rest till it should be won. Concessions and reforms he would take, for they only added to the strength of the people, but he would not have them be too thankful or contented while the end was still far off. Audacious in the beginning alike in aim and plan, he showed the true caution of the Mahratta in late life when he discountenanced the suicidal policy of rejecting the reforms or abandoning the constitutional position gained. By training, if not also by

¹ From "The Servant of India", August 5, 1920.

nature, he seemed more fitted to be in opposition than to hold the reins of Government. But the political manifesto which he drew up a few weeks ago proves that many measures for amelioration of the condition of the people lay near his heart, and there is no need to doubt what he would have advised his followers to do if they should come into power. Bold he was and willing to take risks, but he was wary withal and liked to test the ground of battle before he ventured on it. Left to himself, he would never break the law openly and invite its rigours like Mr. Gandhi. Neither is it possible to conceive that he would, like Mr. Gandhi, throw the gage to Government and, all unarmed, take the vow of victory or death. His foremost intellectual quality was an alertness which bordered on restlessness. He must be wrestling with some difficulty or other. Even in confinement, his mind was occupied with problems of philosophy or antiquarian interest. Whether his speculations will stand the test of the scholar's scrutiny remains to be seen, but no one questions their quality of daring. There are those who lament his choice of life as a grievous error, for politics in the present conditions of India could not gain all that research lost. One has heard of English politicians of mark who, after an interview or two with Mr. Tilak, have given him a place among the greatest minds they have known. Disputants have testified that he was a master of all the arts of controversy. Towards these he seldom showed tenderness, as he certainly expected none from them. He was trained in a hardy school. If he was not the founder he was the most powerful exponent of virile journalism in the vernacular. As

he made Marathi an apt vehicle of his shrewdness and subtlety, so he gave polemics in the Deccan its strength as well as its weakness, its bold sweep, its undying aspiration, its elusiveness, its unrefined directness. Affable and kindly in private life and trusted in an amazing degree by his followers, he could move with perfect ease only in an orbit of his own and could not enter into any but temporary alliances with other leaders of political thought. He seemed to thrive on disputation. The hostilities he had with Ranade, Agarkar, Mehta and Gokhale ended with their death. Each of these had the stuff in him of which greatness is made and proved his mettle against Mr. Tilak's relentless polemic. There is good reason to believe that Mr. Tilak knew the good points of his rivals and could appreciate them fully when he cared. Some one someday will draw comparison and contrast between Mr. Gokhale and Mr. Tilak. If it is done properly, it will be a valuable key to the politics of the Deccan during the last twenty years or twenty-five years. Mr. Gokhale, who had a rare gift of seeing the true quality of his rivals, used to say that Mr. Tilak was born out of his time and that his genius would have found congenial scope a century or so ago. Like most generalisations, this would require qualifications before it could be made to fit in exactly with the facts. But there is no doubt that Mr. Tilak's forceful and combative personality had but small room for these qualities of sagacious counsel, cosmopolitan sympathy and persuasive eloquence that are the indispensable marks of a leader of men, suited to the eve of a democratic regime. It was the example of Mr. Tilak that first drew Mr. Gokhale to the service

of the Deccan Education Society. But the spell did not last long. Differences of character and temperament first made, and then widened, a gulf between them. Towards the end of Mr. Ranade's life and more markedly after that event, they stood in the Deccan at the head of opposite schools of thought whom events often threw into active rivalry. Not in politics alone, but in the ethics of public life, in social reform, in educational ideals, in attitude towards Government and the British race generally, they were as wide apart as the poles. Each recognized, however, the burning patriotism of the other. Both loved the people and made sacrifices in their services. But how diverse their paths! The one passed through suspicion from Government and from people to the pinnacle of fame when he died, honoured and lamented by both. The other ended as he began, the enemy of Government and the victim of its wrath, but the idol of his countrymen. This is not the occasion to examine Mr. Tilak's principles, review his particular deeds or appraise his services as a whole. A critical study of these must disclose errors as well as merits, failure as well as achievement, occasion for censure as well as for praise. But none can deny that he had great qualities or that he played a great part. To found vernacular journalism, to lose and recover his fortune more than once, to dare the wrath of a Government and go to jail with the crown of the martyr, to write original books, to dominate political activity for a generation in a large part of the country and leave a numerous and well-knit party behind—these constitute an indefeasible title to the honour and loving recollection of his countrymen.

PROFESSOR KARVE¹

(1858)

The life of Dhondo Keshav Karve will teach young India by what sort of persons and in what conditions the real uplift of the people is being wrought. Away from the familiar haunts of popularity and the flashes of the limelight, in inaccessible corners and amid poverty and hardships, the true nation-builders are at work,—dreaming great dreams, but content with humble beginnings, thinking out the hard problem of making small means compass large ends, and keeping the fire of unselfish zeal aglow in the midst of persecution, sneer, and every form of chilling discouragement. Prof. Karve's career will dispel the illusion that a gift of personality and charming address is sufficient or even necessary to secure admission into the portal of Fame. The story of his success will likewise teach the eternal truth that poverty does not always degrade the soul or hard living steel the heart to fine sensibility and human ideals. Abiding benefit to society fell to the lot of the poor Brahman student of Murud whom no flashy intellectual gifts, no striking personal attractions, no high family connection distinguished in early life from the thousands of hungry lads who throng our schools

¹ From "The Servant of India", April 18, 1918.

and colleges. That out of his scanty means he helped the education of poor dependents, that he thought, amid the cares of his life in Bombay and Poona, of the improvement of the village of his nativity, that rather than shock his orthodox mother, he would have preferred to sacrifice his own personal happiness,—are pleasing features which may be matched in the lives of many persons of his kind in Bombay, Bengal or Madras. The characteristics that marked him out from the ruck were the clearness with which he saw his mission, the persistence with which he made his plans and stuck to them in spite of adversity, and the quietness and modesty with which he left his individuality disappear in his work and devoted such success and public recognition as came to the enlargement and improvement of that work.

Woman everywhere in india is adorable: she must be peculiarly so in Maharashtra to inspire and draw to the service of her sex a succession of chivalrous and high-hearted workers among whom Karve and my colleague Mr. Devdhar are the most distinguished. Many superficial differences seem to divide them and Mr. Devdhar is at present the victim of much misunderstanding and undeserved criticism in certain political circles in Bombay. But their souls are of genuine kin, equally sensitive to the age-long wrongs of woman in India and equally seeking their happiness in the betterment of her lot and the furtherance of her cause. Equally blest are they in this, that the women with whom they are associated give them their fullest trust and confidence, and the voice of scandal, to which nothing is sacred, has let them altogether alone.

This immunity of Messrs. Karve and Devdhar has been to me a never-ending wonder and a fountain of hope.

It is a noble saying that those live who labour for great ideals, the rest merely vegetate. The faith must be immense which sustained Mr. Karve in the early years of this Ashram. I have heard him say in a matter-of-fact tone that for several years he walked daily from Hingne Budruk to Bhamburda and from Bhamburda to the Hingne Budruk, from work in Widow's Home to work in the Fergusson College and back again, from a scene of self-sacrifice which was complete to a scene of self-sacrifice which was all but complete. Few passages of autobiography show more grandeur of spirit or simplicity of self-revelation than this from one of Mr. Karve's lectures :

I could not leave the girls unprotected in this lonely spot and therefore would go there every evening and come back the next morning to Poona to do my College work. These were trying days indeed for all of us. The hut we built was not quite rain proof and we had sometimes actually to cover ourselves with mats to keep our beds dry inside. During the rains the path was full of mud. But mud or no mud, day after day, and month after month I went to the place for nearly two years with very few interruptions. I went there not only to give the residents there a sense of protection, but I had also to teach there the more advanced students. It was a labour of love and I never felt the fatigue of it. The real hard-

ship that I sometimes felt was when my wife or child was sick at home and I had to leave them to take care of themselves and go away to my adopted child which has always been dearer to me than myself and my kith and kin. Whenever a conflict of duty presented itself to me there has always been a decision in favour of the institution, whichever it was. It has often pained me to the utmost to see my wife and children unduly suffer for my neglect of them. But I could not help it. There were occasions when with tears in my eyes I would wend my steps towards the Widows' Home.

From this height of self-sacrifice a quaint touch of romance has led him to a greater height. Principal Paranjpye, grateful student and cousin and loving biographer, has recorded how he was dissuaded with difficulty from giving away his pension of thirty rupees a month to a fund in a connection with the Deccan Education Society, to which he had already been contributing ten rupees out of his monthly salary, as a sort of penance for his having, during many years, given the first place in his heart to the Widows' Home, though he drew his maintenance from the coffers of that Society. But no one could dissuade him from starting in 1913 a society based on a severer form of self-sacrifice, called the *Nishkama-karma-Matha*. It is worthwhile transcribing its vows, both because they show the austerity of Karve's personal ideals and because they carry further the standard set up by Mr. Gokhale in the vows of the Servants of India Society.

- (a) From this day forward I shall devote my life to the work of the *Matha*.
- (b) I shall use my capabilities to their fullest extent and while engaged in the work connected with the institution, I shall never wish for private gains.
- (c) I shall ungrudgingly submit to the decision consistent with the rules of the institution.
- (d) I shall cheerfully remain satisfied with the arrangements made by the majority of votes regarding my maintenance and of those dependent upon me.
- (e) I shall keep my private life pure.
- (f) My living and dress will be plain and simple.
- (g) I shall be generous in the matter of the religious belief of others and I shall do nothing to shock their susceptibilities.
- (h) I shall hate no one.

I was in Poona when this *Matha* was started and remember how it caused a commotion among those who had been Mr. Karve's co-workers threatening dismemberment of a great institution that had become the pride of the Maharashtra and a place of pilgrimage of public workers all over India. Mr. Gokhale, to whom all parties referred the matters in dispute, arbitrated, and it was then he told me of the great personal esteem in which he held his old class-fellow and colleague, and added that he never would abandon hope of his country so long as it could discern the character and reward the work of men like Karve. To those who can see the soul within the ascetic's garb, the appeal of his

personality is irresistible. When he honoured me by being my guest in his visit to Madras for propaganda work on behalf of his Women's University scheme, I was at first sceptical; but his faith in the movement and his simple and artless zeal conquered me, and though my judgment would have held out, my reverence capitulated. So it was with others in this city. Starting as critics, they could not but open heart and purse to the simple-looking man who could say, "While there is life in this body of mine this movement shall not perish."

PANDIT MALAVIYA

(1862)

This book¹ is as it were, the body taken by the marvellous admiration and love which the name of Malaviya evokes all over India. Nothing can be more appropriate. The editorial board under Principal Dhruva deserve the congratulations as well as the thanks of the public. The eleven hundred pages of reading matter contain excellent articles on topics of varied interest and comprehend nearly all the learning that comes within the scope of a university. A considerable part is in Hindi, as is only proper where it is the language of culture. But why is there no translation provided? Perhaps the editorial board ruled it out as amounting to complicity in the crime of ignorance of the language of Indian nationalism. Of special interest are the four portraits of the great patriot. The figure changes so much; but the identity persists wonderfully. Who does not know, and who cannot recall without visible aids, that form which blends the twin qualities of beauty and purity? Standing on the platform it adds a third charm—a voice calculated to

¹ The Commemoration volume published on the 71st birth-day of Panditji. Mr. Sastri reviewed it for the Hindu.

attract and persuade. At the risk of being accused of a quip, one might dwell on the happy chance which gave him the name of Cupid's charmer. His spare, lithe frame, suggestive of austere regimen, looks taller than it is, and derives a striking effect from the close white drapery which he always affects. Distinctive too is his small turban. The story is authentic that he once discarded two head-dresses before he could get the characteristic sharp line and cape in the fold straight above the sandal-mark on the forehead. Of recent years there has been an accentuation of the modest fawn-like expression of his countenance; and during the sittings of Round Table Conference last year, he wore a pre-occupied and scared look. His departure to England for that Conference is proof that devotion to the motherland can at times overpower social and religious scruples which ordinarily seem invincible. An old gibe had it that for two decades, he regularly engaged, and as regularly cancelled, passages by the P. & O. Company's mail boats. On the other hand, some intimate associates of the champion of orthodoxy were always prepared to lay a high wager that he would never actually leave the Punyabhumi. But they did not reckon with his amazing power to learn, to feel, to grow. Mark how he denounced untouchability a few years ago and officiated at the ceremony of reclaiming converts. Towards the woman question, he has broadened remarkably, and I do not despair, should he be spared us for another decade, of his blessing the Sarda Act. An admirer, writing in the volume before us, claims that the Pandit is more friendly to the Mussalman community than is generally known. I

fully believe it, though I well remember a Mussalman telling me in Aligarh: 'There would be no Hindu-Mussalman question in this province if some one should shoot Malaviya'. From my talks to him on this subject, I am willing to hazard the proposition—that in his love of peace and freedom of India, he will today concede nearly every Moslem claim if only he can be convinced beyond doubt that no further claim will be advanced from that side and no further impediment placed in the way of our nationalism.

The personal appreciations at the end of the volume all point to the Benares Hindu University as his crowning achievement. It is a stupendous monument to his peculiar genius,—his piety, his faith in the truth of Hinduism, his audacity in conception, his persistence in execution, his magic influence in the world of Pandits and in that of Princes. Supreme in this sphere, he is all but supreme in Indian politics. Utterly devoid of personal ambition, he never bothered to gather a party round himself, or found a school of thought. Surendranath, Mehta, Gokhale and now Gandhi—to these he has always yielded first place with reverence and wholehearted admiration. For he is without a particle of envy or malice. When the world of politics is in convulsion, the unwavering loyalty of the Pandit to the Indian National Congress is in the nature of a romantic attachment. It led him the other day to seek imprisonment for the second time. It is the Government that are entitled to congratulation for perceiving that he is better out of jail than inside. Great work awaits him still in abundance. We wish him success in his latest begging

campaign on behalf of his University. It has been pointed out that in the matter of begging his only peer is the Mahatma. It would be a profitable study to compare and contrast this pair. This however must be reserved for another occasion. But when we remember how rarely geniuses agree, we must thank the Gods who have willed that the Mahatma and the Pandit should come together in mutual love and true comradeship.

V. KRISHNASWAMI AIYAR*

(1863—1911)

Ladies and Gentlemen, after all the details have faded out of one's memory, what endures in the case of Mr. V. Krishnaswami Aiyar is a feeling of power. He was a man pre-eminently endowed with the power of personality. You could not imagine his being in any company without everybody being aware of him. All eyes were drawn in his direction, and everybody expected that if there was a discussion or the consideration of any subject, he would be able to illuminate it from one side or another. When one was with him, one felt that he was one of nature's human forces. Other people felt somehow a sense of being diminished in his presence. The extraordinary thing about it was that somehow he seemed in later years to be quite conscious of it himself. He used often to say that he was unable to repress himself if there was anything to say or do. Once, Ladies and Gentlemen, it was nearly 40 years ago, and there is no harm in my mentioning it now—he sits safe beyond the reach of cavil or malice, and I shall do

* A speech made on the occasion of his unveiling the portrait of V. Krishnaswami Aiyar in the premises of the Young Men's Indian Association, Luz, Mylapore Branch, on the 30th September 1944.

him no harm by recalling this incident—he and I were driving along this road. We had just passed the place where I think now Mr. K. Bashyam's house is—just making a turn. I was saying how he had made his mark so that it could never be effaced upon all things in Madras and a great many things in India, and how the impressions that he left on his contemporaries would all be communicated from uncle to nephew or father to son for some generations. He was in one of his self-revelatory moods. He turned full face on me: "Sastri, I feel sometimes that Bhishma is in me". I was at that time somewhat taken aback; but as he proceeded to make an explanation, I could see that he was true, that anyhow the spirit of Bhishma animated him;—not the Bhishma of old age, ripe with wisdom and awaiting the final call, but the Bhishma of youth: he who made a terrible vow to himself and kept it in the face of all odds through a long life.

Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar had what you may call a 'personality' that always manifested itself. When he joined any meeting or a discussion of a subject, it would not be long before he made his voice heard; and what he had to say certainly was something worth saying. And the manner in which he said it was always striking. There was emphasis, there was the vigour of conviction, and there was the desire to see that his view prevailed,—qualities which nobody can miss when one sees them, but which it is not often that it is one's good fortune to see among one's friends. He was not a timid man by any means; he was not shy; he was not the shrinking sort. He was not one of those people whom they call in the

House of Commons "back-benchers" whom occasionally people have to push forward into prominence. Mr. Krishnaswami Ayyar took his place in the front rank anywhere by right of his qualities; and although small people always murmured or had something petty to say, I must say that I seldom noticed any man of mark resenting the way in which he came forward. In fact, his prominence in any society was so marked that Europeans who seldom are jealous in a small personal way once discovered that he was making his way rapidly in Government House, and one of the men high up said or wrote privately: "This is a man whose wings must be clipped." (Laughter) "or we shall all have to rue it one day". Well, they tried hard. They could not clip his wings. His way to eminence was clear. I do not know exactly how he got the notice of Sir Arthur Lawley; but I believe it was on the occasion when the great Estates Land Bill was debated. It was a very contentious and intricate piece of legislation and few people could take any useful part in it who were not well-versed in Law and knew all about Land Revenue and so forth. Mr. Krishnaswami soon made his mark as one of those who were going to shape the Bill. I remember his saying to me: "One day I heard a Member of the Executive Council quote from a confidential record which he held in his hands: when his speech was over and my turn came, I asked him for it. He declined. When I asked why, he said it was confidential. That was an occasion" he said "which somehow or other called me out." I said: "Sir, in this Council I recognise no one superior to me unless he be occupying

the Chair; no Member of the Executive Council has a right to say that he can have exclusive possession of a document. If he wants to read it to us here, he must be willing to put it on the table." Whether it was right or wrong on the merits, the keenness with which he stated his case and the emphasis that he put into his utterance, pleased Sir Arthur Lawley so much that it would appear he sent for him at the end of the meeting and then began a friendship which, as you all know, resulted in his being offered the post of an Executive Councillor. To that, however, I will come a little later, as there is a point in it worth discussing. But the important point I am now concerned to point out is that there is a certain human quality which we call, for want of a better word, "power" which imposes itself upon others, which challenges recognition and which, even at the age of 75 now, I cannot say I have often seen as I have seen it in Krishnaswami.

Let me at once go to what in those days made him somewhat unpopular. He was a man of quick temper and somewhat rough speech. He would show temper in places where you would not expect it. I think it was the result, as it was in the case of his friend Mr. Gokhale, of that fell disease diabetes, from which both suffered. It often affected the nerves and enfeebled nerves make one fly into temper. He took it from his father and his brother too had it. I pointed out once, speaking of this family before, that Gokhale's family and this family resembled each other in some strong characteristics, but in none more than in this. A father and two brothers, all had diabetes, all had violent bursts of temper. Yes, it was a somewhat remarkable coin-

cidence. And it was noticeable how his temper made him almost a terror to the small people who had to go to him. I had sometimes heard even prominent men say that they avoided occasions of meeting him. They were almost always certain that even when the sky was very fair, there would be electricity in his speech anyhow. It was, it seemed to me, an unfortunate thing, though I cannot say even at this distance of time that I could have wished him otherwise. For, I loved him and admired him for his strong qualities, even for his outbursts of temper, though I was seldom myself a victim!

And here let me permit myself to a somewhat trite observation about human nature; especially as I have a number of young faces that I look at and that look at me now, it may not be wholly useless. When you meet with an angry person, a person liable to fits of temper, don't you at once make up your mind to avoid him or to say "this is not a person to associate with." My experience points the other way. I think mostly these strong-tempered people are also strong-minded and strong generally. They have qualities worth studying and it would be an advantage if you got over this first feeling of repulsion and cultivated the friendship of people in whom strength and power of some kind are manifested. Anyhow, it is wrong to think that the man of sweet temper who can always force on his lips sweet words, who has unguentary vocabulary at his command, who says sweet things in which he does not believe—it is very wrong to go through life thinking that such men are the cream of society or that they confer the greatest advantage on their

friends. Very often it is the other way ; and if you school yourself into a little patience while still you are to know and learn to respect a man's character, where it is strong and forceful, notwithstanding it may be disagreeable on occasions, you will find that you are cultivating a quality that stood you in good stead, that brought you into contact with real loving natures around you, and that in the long run reacted favourably upon your own development. Do not be too hasty to keep away from a man merely because he is sometimes disagreeable. On the other hand, I have known people who could stand Krishnaswami's temper and knew him intimately, say that they would have given a lot in their lives not to have missed his friendship. He was a man altogether of rare qualities and even now I pity those of his contemporaries who were repelled by his outbursts and did not know what great qualities were in him. Notwithstanding his exterior roughness, there was in the man a readiness to admit merit where it really was to be found, a readiness to do service where really it was deserved ; and a readiness, if I may put it in that extreme form, to appreciate character like his own and as often as was possible, to reward it either by praise or in some more material way. I never knew a man so generous when he acknowledged merit, so ungrudging in his praise of really high qualities. It was a pleasure to hear him, for instance, speak about Justice Mani Ayyar or about Gokhale or about the strong qualities of Sir V. Bashyam Ayyangar. I have heard him speak about these people with a zeal, with an admiration, with an appreciation that you would have thought was natural only to young

men ; but even when he was comparatively ripe, he was capable of these magnificent displays of high personal attachment. Among the characters that one reads of in fiction or in our sacred literature, it is very common certainly to find the so-called perfect characters in whom strength co-existed with tenderness, compassion and softness in dealing with others. In life, however, these qualities seldom co-exist. It is true I have often wished that we could say of Krishnaswami Ayyar, as we read of Sri Rama, that he was a Mrithu Bashi or that he was a Smithapurva Bashi ; if only he had taken pains to cultivate one of these graces that would smooth the wheels of life, what a great man he would have been ! He was great, but he would have been a great man whose greatness was gladly acknowledged by all people. As it was, there were a good many who stood out critically far from him and would not acknowledge even the good that exhibited itself so prominently in his nature and in his achievements. In literature, you often hear of this combination of rare qualities—strength in deed and softness or gentleness in speech—*Suaviter in modo : fortiter in re*. I am afraid Mr. Krishnaswami Ayyar had a good deal of *Fortiter in re* and very little of the other quality—*Suaviter in modo*. But the very fact that we often quote this outlandish expression to signify a combination of qualities, shows that it is somewhat rare and it is not only ungenerous but silly on our part and almost suicidal to go about life judging people by the severest standards and refusing to recognise merit and to appreciate it wherever it may be found, provided

that the merit is of proper standard, as it always was in the case of Mr. Krishnaswami Ayyar.

His strength and his strong fighting qualities, all came out in great prominence in the year 1908, when, almost single-handed, he had to run a session of the Indian National Congress under exceptional difficulties. It was my good fortune to be associated with him as a small lieutenant in that army of combatants on the political field. Mr. Krishnaswami was like a practised general in the field, seldom going to bed till late, watching every part of the field, saying a word of encouragement where the privates were apt to sink into difficulties, calling out, by his very experience of them, the best there was in his assistants, foreseeing difficulties and always ready to fight, and not merely to fight with words, but, gentlemen, believe me, to put down money without consideration. If money was required for any purpose, and if it was not there or if the treasurer was not available, Mr. Krishnaswami would advance it without any thought. In his case, money was no doubt acquired in abundance, but it was also spent liberally. It was used for the purpose of serving the causes he espoused. Money he valued no doubt very highly; but he valued it as a means to getting things done. He did not think money must be locked up and worshipped as a god.

Well, about the 1908 Congress, a good deal has been written and said, and I would like, if possible, to recall the vivid instance of that story. It was a story of heroic effort on his part; but I remember most prominently that in the early days of 1908, he had to struggle hard against the direct and indirect

opposition of the very people who were supposed to be his colleagues and who either by indifference or by back-biting or by over-hostility, made his work extremely difficult. Well, if he had done nothing else in his life, but pulled that Congress through and enabled the convention of 1907 to fulfil itself, he would be entitled to our loving and grateful remembrance.

With regard to money, I have heard him say one thing, which I always remember, although I knew it before; but coming from him as it did on a particular occasion when no wise man would have said anything else, it appeared to me remarkable, and it got itself imprinted in my memory. Once, he made a big donation. I was there. He drew out his drawer and wrote out the cheque immediately. It was a bit surprising; I was amazed. I knew people who would hesitate at the mere mention of the amount. I know how even when the amount was announced they would consider it five times over and discover causes or excuses for delaying payment, or saying they had made a mistake, or something like that; but he wrote out the cheque in his vigorous jerky manner. I asked him why he was in such a hurry to make the payment. Not having seen a similar thing, I asked him. You know what he told me, it stuck in my memory, as I said. Well, if you make a promise to a good cause, you must pay it at once. It is, in the nature of it, a debt, and that debt must be paid immediately". "It is wrong to have it hanging on the head". And the wonder of it all was, he would not think about it afterwards. Having paid the money, he would not say anything about it to any

person, such as for instance, when another payment has to be made, "No, I have made a big payment just now, I won't think of another for some time". Now, a man who dealt with money in that most enlightened of ways was a person whom it was worth knowing on those occasions.

When he was almost dying, he told me a thing about himself. "If there is anything that my life can teach, it is this: that to come to the top, knee-crooking is not necessary". He came to the top as you all know, but never performed this ignominious operation. Perfectly true—what he said. It is not necessary; but how many of us can act on that belief? Some of us would crook our knees with great delight. Some of us would perform the degrading ceremony even knowing that it was not necessary. But in your experience, whatever it is, most of you would have seen that in this unfortunate world, knee-crooking has become necessary in the case of some people. Office is a thing which has its attractions for all. In those days when Mr. Krishnaswami Aiyar was prominent in public life, it could be said, ladies and gentlemen, that high office sought its occupant. Men who had the patronage were very anxious to choose the best available persons, and if the best available persons were slow to offer themselves, the appointing authority would go out of his way to invite that person to accept that office and serve the Crown. That used at one time to be the case. How one wishes that it was always the case! I see before me one gentleman who, with that particular idea of choosing the occupant of an office, was approached in very recent times. I will not offend his modesty by mentioning his name;

but if you omit him, there has not been, in the last fifteen years, a case of a man who was sent for by the Governor and requested to serve the Crown in such and such a capacity. The moment a high office is vacant, twenty men are about the place—Government House, (Laughter) with certificates old and new, written by all kinds of people. It is a disgraceful thing, this job-hunting; and I think it is one of the marks of the degradation into which public life has fallen, that even for the highest offices the reverse process is established as a general rule. If you went and told the Governor in these days: "why don't you ask so and so to take office?" he would simply turn round and say: "I say, why should I go and ask him to take up office, when I see twenty people in for it, most of them qualified too, qualified in the sense in which a graduate is qualified for any office under the Crown?" But you want in these highest offices, courage; you want independence; you want ability of a high order; you want, above all, the reputation that you will not sell your office or degrade it or bring it into any sort of disrepute. Not everybody has that quality. One or two people have it no doubt, and they, in my judgment, ought always to be asked to take office. I do not think it is possible for us to expect that that good state of things will ever revive. When communities struggle hard for a certain proportion of appointment, when the Muhammadan occupant of a certain post must be succeeded by a Muhammadan—if he is a History Professor, it does not matter if the newcomer is a Professor of Mathematics (Laughter)—it is not possible. When Mr. Krishnaswami Ayyar took office as a Judge, we were all

taken by surprise, people did not know that there was any negotiation going on. I think the bargain was struck quickly; we did not know. Some of us felt a little disappointed. I remember even Mr. Gokhale wrote wishing that Mr. Krishnaswami had not accepted office but had remained in public life as a worker of efficiency and character. I remember the conversation I had with him in that place where he used to sit in the evenings, in an easy chair. And one other chair was there for a casual visitor who might drop in. I went, and the conversation naturally turned on why he had accepted office. I said even Gokhale had objected to it. But he said: "You do not know; the truth of the matter is, Mr. Sastri, this: I do not feel that I am fitted for non-official public work. In non-official public life, there is so much ignoble competition, there is so much rivalry of a petty kind. There is so much back-biting, there is so much desire to bypass or sneer and to become famous without qualification." Besides, it was then that he acknowledged in fullness: "I lack the necessary qualities; I am a man of temper; I may be nice to friends, but I can't say sweet things to chance visitors. I can't sit an hour listening to mummeries. I have not cultivated these graces necessary for a public worker. I must therefore choose a line of work where my qualities can have the greatest scope, and I believe it is in office. Outside office where other qualities are so much required, I think I am not fitted;" that, I believe, was the reason why when really public life in Madras was comparatively denuded of men, he left it. There were of course other reasons which he mentioned to me, but this was the most prominent.

And, Ladies and gentlemen, the way he put it, the sincerity with which he uttered the words and the open acknowledgment he made of his own defects of temper—all that convinced me that perhaps he had acted in the best manner. But he soon ceased to be Judge; he became a Member of the Executive Council, and as before, he could not be unknown as an Executive Council Member. His portfolios sprang suddenly into unusual prominence; what he said and did was watched with minute eyes by the Press and the public. Of course they were critical and they were abundant too. Once he got into hot water and he was not long out of it. There was what was called the Palghat muddle. Well, it was a long story, though full of interest to me even at this day. But I may tell you this: that he came in for very severe criticism even at the hands of those who appreciated his high qualities. His action, generally speaking, was condemned as being too arbitrary and regardless of the dignity of a municipal council. Well, to make the long matter short, the papers were merciless to him, public meetings were held at which his conduct was severely censured, and some wise people said that Mr. Krishnaswami was digging the grave of his own reputation. I was one of those who were full of distress at the turn things were taking. I certainly did not approve of Mr. Krishnaswami's order; and when I mentioned it to him, he defended it warmly and I also criticised him warmly. We both raised our voice to such an extent that the younger people in the family came out to see what the matter was and whether really I was falling out with Mr. Krishnaswami. His defence was this:—

and I was absolutely convinced that he was in the right; and as it contains a moral or truth for those who hold high offices and may have to discharge very unpleasant duties in that capacity, I venture to spend a few minutes over this matter. What he told me was: "Mr. Sastri, you do not know. The proposal at first was a very drastic one; I brought it down by two or three stages to where it now is. I had a stiff fight with my colleagues before I could give the present shape to the order. I could not do more, and having done the very best that I could, I realised that I was a Government servant, that the honour of Government was in my hands, that at the Legislative Council and elsewhere when the conduct of Government was impugned, as the portfolio was mine, it was my job to get up and defend the action of the Government. Whether I believed fully in my case or not, it was my job." That indeed, gentlemen, is the honest truth of the matter. Having got his colleagues to agree to a certain proposal in the direction of leniency or moderation, he was bound subsequently to accept it in all respects as his own order and to defend it as strongly and sincerely as he could. It was his nature to put vehemence in his speech. As I told you, he would use strong words. So, when he defended himself, he used somewhat unguarded expressions of which his critics took advantage—but in my judgment wholly improper advantage. When he explained to me fully the stages through which the order had to pass and then said "Was it not my duty to defend it warmly and with the full strength of conviction?" I could not but say 'yes', and I could not but say to myself "I am a non-official, I

am accustomed to play the role of a critic. I seldom put myself in the position of an official and look at things from the unfortunate official's point of view. There is Mr. Krishnaswami who has, instead of being on my side, gone over to the other side. He has a new part to play, and I cannot judge him by the old standard that I should apply to myself." Well, gentlemen, I wish you all learn this principle, that when you accept office under Government and become responsible as a Member of the Government, responsible for the actions of Government—not otherwise in small offices—when you stand forward as the spokesman of Government and as the official defender of the Government's attitude, you cannot have any reserve or qualifications. You cannot get up and say "Well, gentlemen, I did not like this order (Laughter). Left to myself, I would not have passed it, but you see I am a member of an unfortunately clogged machinery; I have got to do this; and I did it very unwillingly and I hope you will treat me with leniency". Well, a man who spoke like that or a man who believed that his line of defence lay along that line, would at once show that he was not worthy of the confidence of Government, that he was not worthy of being entrusted with the portfolio and that the honour and credit and prestige of Government were not safe in his hands. Mr. Krishnaswami realised it in the Palghat muddle affair. I learned this truth for the first time from his eloquent lips.

He was a very good judge of men. Often, I have seen when a man rises to a certain level of prominence, his relations, his dependents and the people about him fancy they are so much wiser than

he; they say: "that fellow comes and tells him like that, he deceives him, and he believes all that". So, they fancy that because he knows nothing about a little thing which is hidden from him, they are better judges of men than he. Well, ladies and gentlemen, to be a good judge of men, you must have a high soul; you must have charity; you must have abundant sympathy with human nature; you must have good knowledge of human nature, in all its ramifications, and then if you judge, you judge wisely and you judge tolerantly. Krishnaswami was perhaps not a good judge where he was out of sympathy with a person; but where a person commanded his confidence or drew out his respect, his judgment was invariably sound. I have not known cases where he was wide of the mark. Ladies and gentlemen, I cannot give a better illustration, a more convincing illustration than my own. He judged me very well, I must say. I say that to you because it is a kind of confession that I make, and there is no harm in making it, because I am saying what is very well-known about Krishnaswami. Mr. Krishnaswami was under no delusions as to my capacity and my ability. Gokhale knew about me and gave the best judgment of me; and I bowed to that judgment most loyally. As a matter of fact, it was perfectly true. Krishnaswami discovered me in no time. He said: "Sastri lacks strength of will and purpose. He lacks the quality of leadership". "You cannot put him at the head of a movement where he must continually change his plans or entrust tasks to worthy hands or be able to take them away and entrust them to other hands". Krishnaswami used to say that of me. I know it

was perfectly true. Why should I take offence? Other people might have done, when told the limitations to their qualities. There are others who, when asked why they said so, would say "I never said anything" or if you refer to particular things, they would simply disown them. I must say, gentlemen, Krishnaswami was very fond of me. He respected my sentiment, he respected my feelings; and I never hesitated to approach him. He was a good friend. Fortunately, I never felt for a single moment that he had judged unfairly or narrowly or without giving me opportunities of showing what a splendid fellow I was (Laughter). I say this just to show that when he came into contact with a man, he could size him up exactly, and I think he did so in the case of all the friends whom I remember to have found frequently in his house. He made no mistakes, at all events of a serious character, and it is wrong now, at the end of 33 years after his death—it is wrong now or at any time to say—that either in what he said or what he did, he was guided blindly by any person about him. Some of us bear the opprobrium of having misled him or having compelled him to do wrong; but it was never the case. He would listen to you, he would quarrel with you, he would fight it out with you, but in the end, the judgment was his and not taken on from another.

Well, ladies and gentlemen, I wish I could detain you. You will have a few words about the friends he made; how he kept them and how he treated them and how they treated him in turn; what impression he made on those friends. It is a very inviting subject which will keep me too long;

and even at this distance of time, speaking so near where he lived, I will make no invidious distinctions which I had best avoid, but I would say this, ladies and gentlemen, that he was one of those people who were very selective in their friendships. He cared for character; sham men, men that pretended what they were not—he had no use for them. A man had to be very good and should have some solid qualities before he could call himself Krishnaswami's friend. I could name several, but as I have said, it is unfair even at this distance of time, to be particular. But I remember very well after he died, Bishop Whitehead, speaking of him as a man, one of whose most prominent qualities was his capacity to make and keep friendships. Well, I will not say he has made friends all over the place: as I said, he was very careful. Few people could dare to approach him sufficiently to be rewarded with his intimacy. But when you got into that select circle, when you were one in his circle of personal friends, you felt that you had got into a place of rich associations. It was worth while to become his friend; I have known Mr. Gokhale speaking of Mr. Krishnaswami as one of his friends who had the combination of high qualities that made human nature attractive and loveable. Well, it was not only Gokhale but there were others too that had made similar remarks; but one thing above all I should mention is that Mr. Krishnaswami kept these friends to the end. He had this rare quality, that when he really esteemed a man highly, he thought of him or said to himself "how shall I push this man up?; how shall I bring him forward?; he has suffered injustice in such and such a case, I

must rectify it". That was his quality. He felt that if he was anybody's friend, it must be to the advantage of that friend; and he would constantly say "I must do this for him". He has given me once the instance of Mani Ayyar himself. Mani Ayyar was a man of rare qualities. He would say: "I must do something to that fellow, Krishnaswami. He is a good fellow". I got into trouble once with the Mysore Government—a political trouble, undeservedly; but the man who exerted himself most to get me out of it with honour was Mr. Krishnaswami. I myself did not take so much pains over it as he did. He planned the whole thing for me. He went and saw the Mysore Dewan, the Mysore Maharajah, called me up to Ootacamund, sent me to this man and that man and did all that. He used to say: "You shall not go in a rickshaw or a jatka, you must go in my car; those fellows must know you are staying with me". That is how he would plan and do things for the sake of his friends. One of the rarest qualities that you found in him was this. Often when a man gets into trouble, you will find his friends sleeping over it, or making the most remote allusion to it; one would criticise and another would say "why, it might be compromised". Krishnaswami was one who would rush completely into the thick of the matter and see that his friend was brought out—of course, he must be deserving—with honour and respect.

Now, one last word on a subject which I have not touched. Having said so much about Krishnaswami, I ought to say something about his attitude towards religion. What kind of person was he in that department of life by which most persons are

judged? What was he? Well, I am not qualified to speak on that subject; for that side of Krishnaswami was not most clear to me. Still, I would say this, generally speaking, he was, at the core of his being, a very good religious man. He had a fear of God and he walked in perpetual remembrance that he was under the eye of a superior person who saw everything, judged everything and would hold him to account for everything. I cannot say that his religion was obtrusive or that he cared to exhibit it for other people to notice. I do not think he fasted very much; I do not think he kept vigil; I do not think he performed very many severe austerities. I do not remember that he ran about to places of pilgrimage or to places held in holy regard. But he thought of God. He felt God all about him, and when he did anything of any consequence, he was, I am sure, actuated by the desire that it would be acceptable to God. I have seen him too, ladies and gentlemen, performing his daily japams with regularity. He would sit in his shed, all by himself, and it would be amusing to see him take his fingers from the nose to the ear—with a very jerky movement. Sometimes, he would talk to you; if I went to him at that time, he would say: "Sastri, please sit here," (சாஸ்திரி உட்காரு) or he would just nod his head. But he was very careful about it; I have often noticed him do that. It means that he was one of those people who believed that regular and constant prayer at stated hours was part of the religious exercise, which was binding on all. Anyhow in life, in all the great transactions with which he was connected, he was weighed down by a sense of what was right and proper conduct. I

cannot remember a single instance when, notwithstanding his supposed ill-temper and haste, he acted rashly or without due consideration. At all times, the question of right or wrong, proper or improper, was prominently before him, and inevitably he would choose the former and rule the latter out without any compunction. His was one of those natures which knew how to judge and take the decision and stand by it. It has been said of him—I know more than one person has told it to me—that he never felt anything like regret at a thing done, never had a feeling that he had done wrong, that he intended to do something else. That was one of the rare things about him. Most people generally would go about life hesitantly and most often would say, when it was too late: “I wish I did this and did not do that”; but Mr. Krishnaswami seldom stopped to express regret of that character. It was not because he did not occasionally feel that he had made errors. He would; and he was speaking of them too now and again; but the habit of sitting down and saying “what a fool I was to have done this?” or “why did you not come and tell me this at the right time?”—that habit was not in him. Having done a thing, he left it, to go to other things.

Well, gentlemen, I think I have done my best to bring before your minds a strong forceful nature which grounded itself, in all that it did, on the basis of right. He was a man who had a clear judgment of things, and having come to a judgment, stood by it throughout. Such a person is comparatively rare to see, a person who comes up to the highest to which his nature can reach. A man who never fell below

a certain level; Krishnaswami was a character whom to have known, is to be unable ever to forget. I cannot say that I have at any time incurred his displeasure to a serious extent. I love to recall the warm friend—a friend who wished you well always and thought of you, even when you were not there, and who when you were in trouble, without your asking him, was willing to put forth his might in all potency in order to save you. Gentlemen, I have, in my judgment, tried to picture to you a strong man, a powerful man, a man who was great and at the same time a man who had the essence of goodness in him; for, to the poor, to the deserving, to the really needy, he always extended his hand of help. Those that have the honour of belonging to his family—I see them here to-day—are indeed to be envied for having inherited a great name, and with that great name a great tradition. It is very pleasing, to me it is almost a joy, to be able to say that in them these good qualities seem to be visible even to the naked eye. I must say that Mylapore ought to be proud of his memory and of those who, in humbler stations, are trying to sustain that memory for all time to come (Loud applause).

LORD SINHA¹

(1863—1927)

Baron S. P. Sinha, who passed away the other day at the age of 64, is the most conspicuous example of the distinctions open on the official side to an Indian who unites public and private virtues. As the vivifying rays of the sun first strike the highest object on our planet so did the most striking forms of official recognition come to Lord Sinha who stood head and shoulders above his compeers. He was chosen for the honour, then unprecedented, of a seat in the Cabinet of the Viceroy of India. During the late war, it was through his commanding personality that India was for the first time admitted to the intimate discussions of the Empire Cabinets of 1917 and 1918. It was during these years that he was made Freeman of the City of London, His Majesty's Privy Councillor and King's Counsel—distinctions which no Indian had achieved before.

Next year, that is in 1919, he rose still higher, being appointed Under-Secretary of State for India, and after being created Baron of Raipur, taking his seat in the House of Lords. The climax of his career was his elevation at the end of 1921 to the

¹This appreciation taken from the '*Natal Witness*' was written in 1927.

Governorship of Bihar and Orissa ; these marks of official approbation, some of which still remain unique, were crowded together into a little more than a decade and made him incomparably the brightest star in the Indian firmament. Neither personal jealousy nor political hatred has spared his reputation. They have dogged human excellence since the days of Rama and Krishna and are in fact inseparable from the advancement of our kind. The truth is that he was singularly free from the arts and dubious graces by which a man generally pleases the powers that be. If success and glory came, they came because of his sterling qualities. With the modesty which formed a part of his loveable nature, he once told me that the honours which rained so thick on him were far beyond his deserts and that they would have been a more fitting reward for a really great son of India like Mr. Gokhale.

With Mr. Gokhale he had one remarkable quality in common. They both revered elders in the true Hindu style, and it was good to hear the language of worshipful respect in which they habitually belauded the work and worth of the great leaders before them. It would purify public life a good deal if the aspiring politicians of to-day cultivate a little of their spirit of reverence. Once, as he was unbosoming himself to me, I had a glimpse of the feelings of weariness which seemed to settle like a cloud on his last days. In substance he said : " I have been an exceptionally lucky man ; I certainly have no right to grumble. But I have never been quite happy under these favours of fortune. They came along with so much unpopularity and

bitterness of criticism that I never could enjoy them fully." Of a sensitive and shrinking temperament, he found himself driven by circumstance and a high sense of duty to occupy a position of prominence in the public eye in which he became the target of envy. He felt the sting, and although he was too noble to resent, he could not shake off a sense of injustice. When fortune picks her favourites she might show a decided preference for those endowed with a thick skin and fitted to draw full satisfaction from her boons.

It is an instructive chapter in the story of Indian political advance which deals with the effort of Lord Morley to get Mr. Sinha admitted to the Viceroy's Cabinet. The patience, tact and skilful negotiation with which he overcame the serried opposition from Royalty to the Press seem almost to rob him of all title to be called visionary. Pushing aside all other arguments against his proposal, he flung himself with passionate rhetoric on the objection based on race and colour. The theme was exalted and calculated to draw forth the best in victorian Liberalism which seems lamentably to have gone out of fashion. One passage from his speeches of the day may not be without its lessons to my readers here: "Suppose there were in Calcutta an Indian lawyer of large practice and great experience in his profession, a man of unstained professional and personal repute in close touch with European society, and much respected, and the actual holder of an important legal office. Am I to say to this man: "In spite of all these excellent circumstances to your credit, in spite of your undisputed fitness, in spite of the emphatic declaration

of 1882 that fitness is to be the criterion of eligibility, in spite of the noble promise of Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858—a promise of which every Englishman ought to be for ever proud if he tries to betray or to mock it—in spite of all this usage and prejudice are so strong, that I dare not appoint you, but must instead fish up a stranger to India from Lincoln's Inn or the Temple. Is there one of your Lordships who would envy the Secretary of State who had to hold language of that kind to a meritorious candidate, one of the King's equal subjects?"

His brief period of office, for he resigned in a little more than a year, was marked by one of those episodes which bring out the difficulties of men in delicate positions. A Bill was proposed for the control of the Press containing such drastic provisions as to rouse the fiercest criticism. On him and on Mr. Gokhale fell the onerous task of securing modifications of these provisions to allay the public alarm. At one stage the negotiations threatened to fail, and Mr. Sinha had no alternative but to offer to resign. In the end the Bill was altered and became law. Nevertheless, Mr. Gokhale and he had to encounter a severe blast of public censure for their failure to secure greater concessions from the Executive Government. This is a common fate of all who conduct negotiations at a disadvantage. For the man in the street, on whose behalf they act, forgets the dangers that he has escaped and only thinks of those to which he is still liable. In spite of the prejudice entertained against him in ill-informed circles, he was elected President of the Indian National Congress at its session of December

1915. His address on the occasion was remarkable for two things. The first was the most cogent and persuasive plea that has yet been made for military reform in India with the object of preparing the Indian for ultimate Home Rule by preparing to take over the defence of his own country. The result of this, as of other able pleas, are not still apparent. But another recommendation he made bore good fruit. Political agitation had assumed a degree of rancour which was recognised on all sides to be dangerous. To allay it the first and most essential step seemed to Sir Satyendra to be the enunciation by the authorities in London of a definite goal and a definite policy. In making this suggestion to the Government of the day he employed all the skill and authority which he had acquired by his inside knowledge of the official machinery. The appeal went home to many British hearts, among whom was Lord Chelmsford destined later, in conjunction with Mr. Montagu, to be responsible for the present Indian constitution. It was in August 1917, that the famous declaration was made on the authority of Parliament to the effect that the goal of political advance in India was the establishment of Responsible Government by her own people. Lord Chelmsford has recently made the interesting revelation that his own first inspiration towards this avowal of policy was derived from Sir Satyendra's able advocacy.

In this country* interest will be felt in the part played by Sir Satyendra in bringing about the famous Reciprocity Resolution of 1918. In the

* South Africa. Mr. Sastri was Agent-general for India in S. A., when he wrote this article.

War Cabinet of the time he presented a Memorandum detailing the grievances and disabilities of Indians resident in the Dominions and the Colonies of the Empire. The Memorandum was thrashed out in Committee and resulted in the Imperial Conference recording a resolution to the effect that the Dominions and India alike had the power of determining the composition of their populations and of passing migration laws designed to secure that composition. In consenting to the resolution the representatives of each Dominion testified in ungrudging terms to the ability, moderation and spirit of compromise with which Sir Satyendra had conducted his part in the negotiations. The statesmen representing South Africa were not behind the rest in bearing this testimony. I may say, however, in passing, that he more than once confided to me his feeling of utter despair in regard to the position of Indians in this country—a feeling which he shared with many another student of Imperial affairs, both British and others. I dare say when the Ministry of General Hertzog announced their adoption of the Capetown Agreement he felt, like the rest of us, that the miracle had been performed.

His training at the Calcutta Bar equipped him thoroughly for the task of advising Mr. Montagu in fashioning the new constitution of India. I have no knowledge of their mutual confidences. But I saw the marvellous respect and confidence which he commanded among his colleagues on the Joint Select Committee of Parliament when they took evidence in 1919 on the provisions of the Bill then under discussion. The Indian witnesses felt equal

pride and admiration to behold the skill with which he cross-examined the opponents of the Bill, dispelled their fears and exposed their arguments. One poor European witness, himself a High Court Judge, confessed to a feeling of utter nervousness before the lion of the Calcutta Bar. The House of Lords has a well-deserved reputation for the high level it reaches during Indian debates of expert knowledge and experience and educative value to students of Hansard. It is high praise to say that Lord Sinha sustained the reputation of the House by his contributions to the debate on the Bill and received warm encomiums from those competent to judge.

Of the many qualities which went to the making of his sweet and attractive character, a high place must be given to the tender regard which he always displayed for the feelings of others and the intense attachment with which he clung to friends. In particular I treasure one affection which we had in common. Montagu's love of India and his unparalleled services to her we knew and appreciated, perhaps more than most other Indians with whom he came in contact. It was a poignant grief to him, as to me, that large sections of our countrymen decried the reforms bearing his great name and deliberately set about wrecking them. This grief preyed on his heart so much that at our last interview in Calcutta, he confessed in a voice, nearly choked with emotion, that he could not find peace in a country which had failed to recognise its greatest benefactor. I feel certain, however, that, with the large wisdom which nature and training had given him, he often consoled himself with the thought that good deeds are never wholly thrown away, certainly not on the people of India.

MAHATMA GANDHI¹

(1869—)

Politics is not separable from life. Mr. Gandhi would not countenance the separation, for his great aim is to strip life of its sophistication and reduce it to its own nature—simple, rounded, pure. It merely happens that for the moment his activity is in the field of politics. It merely happens that for the moment he is confronting Government and daring its wrath. It merely happens that for the moment his cry of *Swaraj* for India has caught the ear of the world and the world is anxious to know what his *Swaraj* is. His real and final objective is a radical reform of human kind. His gospel is "Back to Nature." He avows himself an implacable enemy of Western civilization. In his mighty war against Western civilization *Swaraj* for India is but a campaign. The rules of the campaign are the rules of the mighty war; the weapons to be used in the campaign are the weapons to be used in the campaign of the mighty war; the virtues to be evoked by the campaign are the virtues which will win the mighty war in the end. The cardinal rule of both, the war and the campaign, is non-violence.

¹ An article contributed to the 'Survey Graphic,' an American magazine in 1922.

Non-violence is of the heart as well as of the body. By thought, word and act you may not injure your adversary. Enemy in a personal sense is too strong a word for his dictionary. But as the adversary does not follow the rule you will be subjected to great suffering and loss. Rejoice in the suffering and loss, and court them. If you cannot rejoice in them, do not avoid or complain against them. Love your enemies; if you love them, pardon them and never retaliate against them. Force is wrong and must go under. The soul is invincible; learn to exercise its full power. Hold to the truth at all costs; *Satya* triumphs in the end. Out of this cardinal rule, almost logically, proceed a number of principles which keep us straight in the war and this campaign for Swaraj. Since Western civilization and the existing system of British Government have to be got rid of, we must have nothing to do with either offering of Satan; we must cut off our connection with those large and powerful institutions by which they enslave us. These are schools, courts, legislatures. Withdraw children from schools, sue not for justice in courts, and avoid the polling-booth. Machinery being another invention of Satan and mills being the mainstay of British domination in India, boycott both, cease to import foreign cloth, and erect a spindle in each home. The motion of the Charka has mystic properties, its music chastens the soul, and its products most adorn the human form, especially the female form. These principles and courses of action have more or less permanent validity because the war against modern civilization must be expected to be of indefinite

duration. It is a picked body, however, namely, the members of the *Satyagrahasrama* in Ahmedabad—who are engaged in this exalted enterprise and owe lifelong allegiance to those principles and courses of action. The numerous levies now fighting in India under the flag of Non-Co-operation are enrolled only for a single campaign and may lapse into the common grooves of life as soon as the British Government has been brought to its knees and consented to change its basis. In the intensive operations of this campaign it may become necessary to resort to civil disobedience of selected laws and non-payment of taxes. But whatever the severity of the measures which such action may provoke the authorities to adopt, Non-Co-operators are precluded from the slightest infraction of the commandment as to non-violence.

To understand Mr. Gandhi's view of life, attention must be fixed on the rules he has laid down for the regulation of his Ahmedabad institution. Its name *Satyagrahasrama* means the hermitage of the determined practice of truth or the abode of soul-force. The *Asrama* is still small. It has had no real chance of proving its vitality, for ever since its establishment other things have claimed the energies of its founder. But the attainment of its objects is conditioned by the increase of its numbers and the acceptance by the community at large of these austere ideals as at present exemplified in the lives of a few apostles. No estimate can be formed of the prospective influence of the new gospel without an examination of its real nature.

Truth in the highest sense is possible only where the individual enjoys complete freedom. All forms

of force or coercions are thus at once barred. Compulsion, authority, government, these are the anathema maranatha to one who at bottom is a philosophical anarchist. In fact, he describes the essence of his doctrine sometimes as love, sometimes as truth, sometimes as non-violence (*ahimsa*), these forms are in his opinion interchangeable. For organised government in the ideal world is justifiable. The merit of the British Government is that it governs the least. Even a family and a school must trust entirely to the power of love and moral reasoning. Flagrant misconduct he deals with by himself fasting for a certain number of days, the guilty party being invariably brought to a state of contrition within that period. Some time ago he applied this remedy to end a serious strike in a mill, the employers coming to reason for fear of incurring sin. Within the last few weeks the violence practised by some persons in Bombay in the name of Non-Cooperation on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' visit entailed this form of self-chastisement on his part, and by all accounts it had the desired result.

Nobody is entitled to possess more than is absolutely necessary for the moment. To hold in excess of the need is to be guilty of theft. He and his wife have given away all their property—he practised law for many years with success—and now own nothing beyond the clothes they wear and a change or two and may be a bag or box to contain these. The Asrama in Ahmedabad contains the barest necessities.

Each person must supply his wants by his own exertion. The ideal is to grow the corn that one eats
ve the cloth that one wears. Even the brain

worker is not exempt from this bodily labour. In fact, the spindle has grown to be a fetish with Mr. Gandhi. Its music has a charm for him. He prescribes it for all men and women. Boys must prefer it to books. Lawyers must cast away their briefs for it. Doctors must abandon the stethoscope and take to it.

So far its products have been coarse; but he asks, can a man or woman look more beautiful than in the Khadder made by himself or herself? When a lady pupil of his wore the first sari of her own making, he surveyed her and pronounced her divinely attractive. Without a doubt his eyes so saw her and his mind so judged her.

Control of the senses is a requisite of the first importance. It is very hard and can be only very slow. But it must be incessantly and ruthlessly practised. Luxuries are, of course, taboo. Even comforts must be steadily reduced. The palate is a particularly venal sense and has to be rigidly curbed. Simple hard fare is a condition of spiritual advancement. Celibacy is also enjoined on the inmates of the Asrama. Married couples may not be admitted unless they agree to surrender their marital relation and adopt that of brother and sister. If Mr. Gandhi had his way he would recommend this course to mankind. The resulting extinction of the species has no terrors for him. He merely asks, why should we not all go to a better planet and live on a higher plane? The question would not appear so fantastic after all to one who believed in the rebirth of souls according to the law of Karma and remembered that no person would be a celibate except of his or her own free choice and when the sex passion had been transcended.

Machinery, being one of the most inseparable adjuncts of modern civilization, must be abandoned. It is of the kingdom of Satan. Mills and factories where the labourer is done out of humanity, have no place in his scheme. The wealth they create, it needs no saying, is an abomination. Posts and telegraphs and railways are likewise condemned and with them goes the printing press. He says that every time he himself uses these instruments of civilisation he does so with a pang. It would be nearly as hard for him to carry on his work without resort to them as it would be to escape from the atmosphere of the earth, but perhaps the use of evil might be defensible in its own destruction. Rapid and easy means of communication have but multiplied crime and disease. Could not man infer from the fact of God having given him legs that he was not intended to go further than they could carry him? What are ordinarily called the benefits of railway and similar things are in reality the opposite, being added enjoyments or means of gratifying the senses.

Medicine does not escape his judgment; he calls it black magic and actually says it is better to die than be saved by a drug prescribed by the doctor. The fear of immorality and unhealthy modes of life has been materially weakened if not totally removed by the hope of being saved from the evil consequences by the help of the doctor. A return to the cure of nature and her simple ways would redeem mankind.

These and similar doctrines, which appear harsh to the ordinary person, form the substance of Mr. Gandhi's ethics. Let it not be supposed that they

are logical abstractions formulated for the purposes of a moral treatise or sermon, and with no intended application to life. Their propounder practises them in the spirit and in the letter, and the limitations on their practice do not proceed from any tenderness for himself or his relatives. His renunciation of worldly goods has already been mentioned. He does not seek the medical man in sickness. He eats hard fare. He wears khadder woven by his own hands and in that dress and barefooted appears before the Viceroy of India. He knows no fear and shrinks from nothing which he advises others to do. In fact his love of suffering and hardship as a means of spiritual progress is almost morbid. His composition and tenderness are infinite like the ocean, to use an eastern simile. The present writer stood by as he wiped the sores of a leper with the ends of his own garment. In fact it is his complete mastery of the passions, his realization of the ideal of a "sanyasin" in all the rigor of its eastern conception, which accounts for the great hold he has over the masses of India and has crowned him with the title of Mahatma or the Great Soul.

Now a few other doctrines of a subordinate grade. Curiously enough, he is a believer in the system of caste though the pride of caste and its exclusiveness will receive no quarter from him. Apparently he is convinced of its beneficence, if maintained in its original purity, and holds it to be of the essence of Hinduism. In his belief, however, he is not likely to be followed by a great section of his countrymen, who are anxious to restore their religion to its ancient purity. But he is at one with them and in fact with the awakened conscience of

India in desiring to exercise the demon of untouchability. Millions of people are held by caste Hindus to be beneath their physical touch and live in conditions which are scarcely fit for human beings. These he would uplift, asserting that Hinduism gives no kind of justification for the abuse. But his work for the depressed classes, as they are called, would take the form which has quite recently been given to social work of that kind in the West. He would have the worker cast aside his own status and live the life of the class to be helped, do their work and earn their wage, exactly as they do. So only can real understanding and sympathy come, so only can that confidence be engendered which is an essential pre-requisite of all work of amelioration.

His Non-Co-operationist followers seem in places to have mixed up his humanitarian work with politics and so suffered a check. In the Mahatma's eyes no political rights will be of the slightest use to a community which is the prey of great social failings, and work for *Swaraj* can never reach any success without simultaneous work for great social reforms. But violent political excitement is not a favourable condition, for much antagonism of Government and its officials is only to be expected to the activities of hosts of young picketers who are pledged at the same time to embarrass and even destroy the ordinary administration.

The educational ideals of the Mahatma have not yet received a clear expression.¹ To compulsion even of rudimentary education he must be averse. The highest sciences, and arts, the specialised forms,

¹ They are now clear from the 'Wardha Scheme', propounded in recent years.

historical research or economic enquiry with their glorification of machinery and wealth in its varied forms, will find no room in his simple scheme. Of the necessity of introducing one language for common use in India he has been for long a persistent advocate. He has chosen Hindi for the place of *lingua franca*. With characteristic earnestness he has collected funds for the purpose of spreading a knowledge of this language and has sent out enthusiastic teachers to all parts of India. The Non-Co-operation turmoil may have for the time overshadowed this activity. Perhaps, too, the bulk of educational workers in India have not yet accepted the Mahatma's conclusions in this regard, and for this reason his efforts on behalf of Hindi have not been co-ordinated with the educational work of the country generally.

The writer of these lines is not of Mr. Gandhi's political followers or a disciple of his in religion. But he claims to have known him for some years and to have been a sympathetic student of his teachings. He has felt near him the chastening effects of a great personality. He has derived much strength from observing the workings of an iron will. He has learned from a living example something of the nature of duty and worship due to her. He has occasionally caught some dim perception of the great things, that lie hidden below the surface and of the struggles and tribulations which invest life with its awe and grandeur. An ancient Sanskrit verse says:—"Do not tell me of holy waters or stone images; they may cleanse us if they do, after a long period. A saintly man purifies us at sight."

C. R. DAS¹

(1870—1925)

During the last week the country has been convulsed with profound sorrow, which has found vent in demonstrations almost unparalleled in extent and intensity. Our European brethren have been affected in an unusual degree. To a condolence meeting in England the Secretary of State and the Viceroy sent messages of sympathy. Considering that Mr Das had been a determined opponent of the present government, these facts constitute a significant tribute to his personality. Coming rather late into politics, he simply stormed the citadel of leadership. While paying homage to Mr Gandhi, he acquired in his own sphere authority scarcely inferior. He achieved the distinction, rare among Indian politicians, of accomplishing a set purpose, the end of diarchy in Bengal. His Faridpur speech gave proof of flexibility of mind and resourcefulness, regarded by one section as full of promise and by another as full of portent. Perhaps he will be remembered for a long time as having revealed the possibilities of obstruction, though not in the strict Parnellite sense, within the Indian legislature. A study of his life and character should be of

¹ From 'Servant of India' 1925.

profound interest as well as instruction. Let us hope that some one with the requisite knowledge and understanding will in time present us with a true and faithful picture of the man.

When the shock of grief is over and something like a proper perspective becomes possible, we shall have various and contradictory interpretations of the politician whom we are united in mourning to-day. It is easy to see that in his case, more than in others of its class, motives and methods will long remain involved in obscurity and dispute. In trying to weigh his character the student, who brings his own political bias, may feel attracted or repelled. But it would be impossible to deny his power or the bigness of his personality. Greatness may be denied him by those who associate with the word a high order of beneficence, originality or splendour. Cast by nature in a large mould, he still lacked the stature of a giant. His political teaching, though occasionally garbed in the robes of rhetoric, was uninformed by reading, and never reached the dignity of an evangel. Cut off by an unkind fate in the nick of time, he could not carry out his half-formed ideas for the welfare of the rural population of Bengal. Gifted with more than ordinary insight into the nature of men, he was nevertheless apt, in dealing with large affairs, to act on a rash impulse. His famous Hindu-Muslim Pact, for instance, was a great error of judgment, which was, however, half redeemed in the eyes of his fellow-Bengalies by the amiable appeal to provincial pride which he made in defending himself—that what Bengal did one day, the rest of India would do the next. To the very end he never brought down Swaraj from the

cloudland of abstraction into the intelligible parlance of everyday politics. In some ways he appeared to stand midway between his colleagues, Messrs. Gandhi and Nehru. If he never soared into the serene spiritual height of the one, he always remained above the frank temporality of the other. The idealism of Bengal had a firm hold on him, the charms of her scenery thrilled him, and he often poured out the longings of his soul in moving and eloquent verse. Though skilled in modern law and in all the tricks of its practice, his conceptions of a happy and prosperous India were of the old-world type, exalting simplicity above modern civilisation, and poverty above the refinements of life. The Indian mind is peculiarly susceptible to certain primary loyalties. One of these lies in the region of filial duty. Our paragon of men, Sri Ramachandra owes his unshakable empire over our hearts to his desire at all costs to maintain the sanctity of his father's word. To the son who pays his father's debts even when the law would permit him to evade them, we yield our inmost homage and respect. To this virtue Mr Das added renunciation and charity, giving evidence in this way of the complete superiority of his soul to the bondage of mere silver. When he abandoned his magnificent practice at the bar, he put it behind him like a thing of evil and never sighed for it again. In a land where through the ages learning and poverty have dwelt together in honourable and honoured companionship, the needy scholar is the object of ready compassion and the recipient of ungrudging hospitality. Many a student at school and college owed the means of his education to the tender heart of Mr C. R. Das, from

whose house, in the language of the poet, 'no hungry man returned without food, no poor man without money and no sick man without medicine.' His last act of renunciation, by which he left himself the bare means of subsistence, giving the rest of his acquisitions to purposes of public charity, only falls short of the sternest asceticism. There was not a man in India but heard the news of it with enhanced pride and admiration. "Kings, that have given away their wealth to the poor, shine with the greater splendour for their decline."

No character, however, is complete now-a-days if it is made up wholly of private virtues and loyalties, however resplendent. The present day Indian youth looks for the quality of patriotism. Nay, he has recently become more exacting and has no use for a patriot who is not prepared to sacrifice himself; and a rough and ready test, which he invariably applies, is whether a man has gone to jail for his political convictions. The title deeds of Mr. Das to the worshipful reverence of his countrymen are complete in every particular: when we contemplate these, the defects that we were constrained to mention before fade out of view, and Mr. Das stands before us transfigured into the *beau idéal* of the citizen and the patriot.

GOPALA KRISHNA DEVADHAR*

(1871—1935)

Mr. Devadhar's unexpected and premature death is a shattering blow to the Servants of India society. Never since Gokhale died in February 1915 has it had such a dire occasion for mourning. He became President when I resigned in 1927; but long before then he had established his reputation as the most considerable and best loved representative of Gokhale's school of public service. It would be hard to say how many institutions and how many individuals have been left without their main prop by the passing away of this worker of indomitable energy and cosmopolitan sympathies. Co-operation, relief of distress and woman's uplift—are the comprehensive heads under which his varied and unceasing activities might be grouped. In political agitation he did not take much active part. From movements that tended to disturb peace and order he turned away in something like horror. And so far as one could see, he did not feel, at any rate, that for that reason his usefulness was greatly restricted, for he early learned the significance of division of labour and the necessity of narrowing the sphere of one's activities if one was to make the most of one's capacity and opportunities.

* From "The Servant of India", Nov 21, 1935.

Few of those that knew him well would believe that his hardy constitution had been undermined for some years by disease. Like many strong men he was slow to realise his limitations. Oblivious of the relentless and exacting ways of nature he added recklessly to his undertakings and moved about from Simla to Cape Comorin as if incessant change of climate, food and environment would leave him unscathed. He was notoriously a giant for work and often tried the patience and strength of his secretaries who had, like him, to turn nights into days, fortifying themselves with tea of strong Deccani brew as they grappled with his enormous correspondence and innumerable reports in various stages of preparation.

Withal his sociability and capacity for friendship were remarkable. All over India you could hear stories of his good humour and lovable companionship which made him welcome at all convivial gatherings, where he would laugh and jest, and sing and make a speech when called upon without extra pressure. His heart melted at the sight of sorrow and suffering: people, young and old, would seek him in their trials and he never wearied of giving them advice, help and recommendation.

The only fault which his colleagues found with him was that in doing these noble and unselfish deeds, he often forgot the needs and hardships of his own large family. Of these he seemed all through his life as heedless as of his health. I have sometimes thought that this unconcern of personal matters was in his blood. For his father was for many years a Sanyasin and lived in saintly seclu-

sion. Though by no means austere, Devadhar had essential kindness of heart, never remembered wrong, bore resentment or spoke of anyone as an enemy. Work was his religion, the doing of good was his very nature. In every part of India his name will be long cherished with affection and gratitude,

EDWIN SAMUEL MONTAGU¹

(1879—1924)

Opinions have always differed as to the mutual influence and relative importance of individuals and impersonal forces in the actual shaping of human affairs. It would in any case be a shallow and partial view to leave out the contribution made by great personalities. There can be no doubt that the recent political history of India would have been very different if Mr. Montagu had not been in power in Whitehall during the later years of the war. It has been stated that not only Mr. Austen Chamberlain, but even Lord Curzon, had a share in the authorship of the declaration of policy made in August 1917. Only when cabinet secrets are revealed can we know the exact truth of the statement. It is known, however, that before Montagu assumed office the first reform proposals of Lord Chelmsford's Government had been turned down by Mr. Chamberlain on the ground that they contained no suggestions for a real transfer of power to the people of India. One has only to read again the speech made by Mr. Montagu in the debate on the Mesopotamian scandal, to see that three of the most

¹ An address delivered by Mr. Sastri at Bombay on May 14, 1925 on the occasion of his unveiling a statue of the late Mr. Montagu.

important points in the declaration are already adumbrated there. First, a liberal policy had to be clearly laid down; secondly, the first instalment must be given at once; then thirdly, the people of India should be given a measure of responsible Government. Critics, if they please, may even read into the language employed by Mr. Montagu a clear germ of the idea of dyarchy. The declaration itself was only the beginning. His subsequent mission to India, the negotiations with officials and non-officials of all sorts, the formulation of the reform proposals and then the drudgery of the Bill and the Committees and in conclusion its piloting through Parliament afforded at every stage an example of a rare type of patience, ability and parliamentary strategy. So consummate a master of these attributes as Mr. Lloyd George has himself borne eloquent testimony to the marvellous skill and resourcefulness with which Mr. Montagu managed this extraordinarily difficult business through a period of two years and a quarter and accomplished what indeed should be regarded from every point of view as the greatest and most momentous step that has been taken by Britain towards the constitutional position of India in the Empire. No doubt the conditions of a world war and the fact that Great Britain was ruled by a coalition under the unquestioned sway of Mr. Lloyd George were powerful favouring circumstances. Still, which of us does not feel that these powerful forces could not have been wielded to such good purpose on behalf of India by one who loved her less than Montagu or who had not his ability and driving power?

Take next our dominion status. Mr. Montagu

was sleepless over this question. He has told me how he would lie on the watch for every opportunity of getting India in wherever in diplomatic or political matters the dominions were mentioned. When he took the chair at the Financial Commission in connection with the Treaty of Versailles, it was as a member of the Indian delegation and not as a member of the British Cabinet. Our admission to the League of Nations was not secured without a struggle, in which again it fell to him to carry our point. Unfortunately a certain influential section of our press took to deriding and decrying such things, and even to-day India as a whole is very far indeed from understanding the importance of this status of a dominion which we have acquired in international affairs and how it helps us materially in our struggle for the same status in internal affairs.

Another thing, not, it is true, of the same order of consequence, was the appointment of a public commission to conduct a thorough enquiry into the Punjab atrocities. It will be remembered that the Government of India had suggested 'a restricted inquiry of a private and departmental nature into the conduct of certain officials concerned in the administration of martial law. Mr. Montagu himself was inclined at first to take this view, but when the demand for a full and public enquiry was pressed on him by a majority of the liberal deputation of 1919, he saw the propriety of the course and ordered accordingly. Nobody now disputes the great advantage that not only the Punjab, but the whole of India, obtained through the inquiry. But I now venture the proposition, and trust it will be generally admitted, that we might not have won

the point but for the fact that Montagu happened to preside over the India Office.

Why, the weight of his personality and enormous impetus that it gave to the growth of the reforms day by day in India were so marked that his resignation was felt as a mighty relief by those sections who chafed under the new regime; and many non-officials stated in their evidence before the recent Reforms Enquiry Committee that the moment when the reins fell from his hands marked the dividing line between the success and the failure of dyarchy.

Long before he became Secretary of State Mr. Montagu had acquired a great mastery of the Indian problems and taken more than once a bold and unconventional line in advocating India's progress. One such occasion deserves to be recalled. About the end of 1911 was published the famous despatch of Lord Hardinge, with the apparent concurrence of the Secretary of State, promising provincial autonomy in a federated India as the immediate goal of advance. The paragraph instantly became famous and gave rise in one quarter to great hopes and in another to great fears. The Marquess Crewe, then Secretary of State, being assailed by Lord Curzon and other reactionaries, thought it prudent to explain away the paragraph and to declare that no departure in the nature of a new constitutional move was intended, but that it was only Lord Curzon's own policy which would be faithfully fulfilled. The disappointment in India was acute and became vocal. Though Under-Secretary at the time, Montagu went to his constituency in Cambridge, interpreted the provincial

autonomy paragraph as intended to satisfy the growing aspirations of India, and thus restored our drooping spirits. For this act of seeming indiscipline he was subsequently blamed in Parliament, but he did not budge an inch. What I said publicly at that time will bear repetition now :

“Mr. Montagu starts his official connection with India with a vivid perception of the ideas and tendencies of the present time. It is a rare joy to find emerging now and then from the liberal ranks a young politician of his stamp, endowed with imagination to understand, and courage to welcome openly, the struggles for constitutional freedom of a people held in political dependence.”

After the inauguration of the reforms he had a clear vision of his next task. He put it compendiously to me, “I must hereafter abolish myself.” He was in earnest about transferring as rapidly as possible his ultimate power and responsibility to the authorities in India by conventions and rules framed under various sections of the Act. In the changed atmosphere after his resignation there seems to be a consensus of opinion that devolution by this process would be attended with difficulty. But I cannot resist the feeling that if the author of the scheme had had the time to apply himself to the task before the original momentum was exhausted, the technical objections would somehow or other have been swept aside.

The growth of India was many-sided in his time, and he was constantly engaged in tussles of one kind or another. Kenya and Churchill were

not the least of these. Whenever he received a check in these encounters he would proclaim, "I will resign on this issue and appeal to India." The idea generally tickled me to laughter. But he would seriously admonish me that India was his constituency, and by constitutional usage he must seek the support of Indians when he was baulked in championing their interests. That is how, stripped of forms and technicalities, the situation appeared to him, in essentials. His usefulness was to be measured by the moral support that we gave him. How bitterly he was disappointed in this expectation I need not say. Except a certain section-weighty, it is true, considering quality, but comparatively small in number and without influence—the country as a whole pronounced the reforms worthless, boycotted the Prince of Wales, and decreed non-co-operation with the unrighteous Government. In our consuming anger we rejected the advice of such friends as Col. Wedgwood, destroyed our auxiliary organisation in London, and resolved that we should rely so exclusively on ourselves as not to care for the aid of any individual or party in England. And we wonder, after all this, that we should have no genuine well-wishers or champions among Britishers. It was Montagu's deliberate judgment that, if we had not decided on these suicidal plans, he might have continued in office and taken India another stage or two along the road of advance by this time in anticipation of the ten-year period. Truly, misfortune has befogged our wits and wrought confusion in our counsels. Consider also for one moment why he published the Viceroy's

cable about the Turkish negotiations at the risk of his own appointment. Controversy has distracted our attention to some extent from the central feature of the case. It was the right of a dominion and therefore of India as well, to state publicly her point of view in a matter where she was vitally concerned. There was no danger which he was not prepared to face, no opposition which he was not ready to brave, in pushing India's claims forward. Some of his personal friends and admirers have written to me expressing their profound grief that Indians have not realised the full extent of their indebtedness to Montagu. Alas!! this is only too true. He neglected his position in British public life and devoted himself entirely to the service of India. It is sad that such a wholehearted and selfless worker should have been insufficiently appreciated. Some clever people among us hold that in political bargaining you must never seem pleased and that you must repudiate your negotiators; and there are tacticians who believe that you can best strike terror into the hearts of your enemies by scowling at your friends and occasionally chastising them.

Not that I am a blind partisan of Montagu. I condemned his policy of reverse councils and strongly disapproved of his consenting to the Rowlatt Act and other measures of repression. But let us recognise, on a calm survey of the facts, that our affairs are so disorganised and tangled that friends find it impossible to do us good without at the same time doing some harm. It seems to be the price exacted of all reformers. Lord Morley could not get his reforms through, without deporting a number of

our leaders. Look at Lord Oliver, our Labour Secretary of State. He has burdened us with the Lee proposals to the tune of a crore and a quarter, and he has sanctioned the Bengal Ordinance, what have we got in return? The price has been paid, but the goods are not in sight yet.

I speak from personal knowledge of Montagu's character and work. I remember the days of hard thinking and anxious deliberations in the cold months of 1917 in Delhi, when he had to win over the members of Lord Chelmsford's Government and the heads of Provincial Governments. Just imagine what it must have meant for him, Do you wonder that he now and then threw up his hands in despair? The plans changed from day to day, and ground patiently gained would be lost in a moment. Mr. Bhupendranath Basu¹, who was intimately associated with him in that strenuous period, has told me how again and again they wiped the slate clean and started afresh. Nor did the troubles come from officials only. One day Montagu paced across his tent excitedly and said, naming a certain leader of Indian thought, "What am I to do with this gentleman? He is my despair. I tell him the position reached as a certain moment. He says it won't do and asks for more. I make an effort with my official colleagues and meet his wishes. Hardly has he thanked me before he puts up his demand. I find it very hard this time, but somehow manage to bring my colleagues to agree. I tell him of my success expecting to be congratulated, but all I get is a higher demand and a settled

¹ Great Bengal patriot, presided over the Indian National Congress of 1914.

look of dissatisfaction." Our interviews in London were frequent. As soon as I appeared in his office he would draw a big chair near the fireplace, and with his large long legs sprawling about, and crossing and recrossing each other frequently, would motion me to the sofa near and start talking on all subjects under the sun with such freedom and cordiality that I assure you I never felt that there was a barrier between us of either race, status or official reserve. He had some abrupt ways too, and I can imagine one who did not know him intimately feeling that his conduct was strange. Once something in our talk brought a very urgent matter to his recollection, and he suddenly got up and resumed his seat at the table, hiding his face from me with his right hand in his characteristic way, and though I stood for a minute or two trying to say goodnight, he simply took no further notice of me. After his resignation I once went to urge him to stand for his constituency again. I did not, not succeed. "I am yet young," he said, "and can afford to go out of public life for some years and re-enter it when I choose. I am poor....." and seeing a look of incredulity on my face, he added, "I am a poor member of a rich family, and must earn enough to support a growing family." Almost the last occasion I saw him was after the McCardie judgment in the O'Dwyer-Nair case. The judge had blamed the Secretary of State for India at the time without caring to acquaint himself with the facts of that aspect of the case. Montagu felt the sting of it—from the Indian point of view—and writhed under it like a man in physical pain. He thought that, if Mr. Lansbury's motion were slightly amended, it

had every chance of being accepted by the House. He grieved that neither Mr. Asquith (as he then was) nor Mr. Ramsay MacDonald took that view. His parting words were so tender that I can never recall them without emotion: "Forgive my talking like this. Everybody tells me that you are nowadays so dispirited that I must try and cheer you up. But here I have been talking for the last hour of nothing but my troubles, and woe."

Of the many British statesmen that have served India, only two deserve by their eminence to rank with him—Burke and Morley. In the lives of both of them India was but an episode, and neither visited India or knew many Indians. Burke had his warm Celtic blood froused to passion by the tale of India's wrongs and employed in her defence his vast knowledge, exuberant imagination and gorgeous eloquence. But the sum of his gigantic efforts was only to establish that in India Europeans had obligations and Indians had rights. Morley brought an immense reputation and great personal influence to bear on his task in Whitehall. And though his reform was substantial for his day, he shrank from the full application of liberal principles to the case of India and ruled out parliamentary institutions as almost unthinkable. It is the unique glory of Montagu to have cherished from the beginning faith in the capacity of the people of India to bear the burden of responsible government. His liberalism possessed the rare quality of courage and comprehended Asiatics in its range. He had bold plans for binding India to the Commonwealth of Great Britain. He devoted his great talents solely to the furtherance of these plans and did not hesitate

when the time came to sacrifice himself in the cause. Whether we test his record by intention or measure it by actual achievement, he stands a clear head and shoulders above all other benefactors of India. Here was a Montagu, when comes such another?

SIR TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

Who will think Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru a septuagenarian? He is so full of fun and fight. Talk to him—no decline in the vigour of his thought, the fecundity of his wit, or the intensity of his hope and despair as he weighs the chances of Indian affairs! Why did he the other day declare he would not take a Governorship? Some of us hailed the rumour as heralding the dawn of a bright day. How quickly, alas it went the way of all good rumours in our ill-starred land? South Africa nominates a Boer to the Governor-Generalship of the Union, and the Crown obediently appoints him. What should keep Sapru and the likes of Sapru from such positions in their own country? Take any test; ability, knowledge of law and constitutional evolution, loyalty to the established order, courageous adherence to principle, rounded experience, sympathetic understanding of the peoples to be cared for, devotion in heart and soul to the honour and prosperity of the country, which of these is not there in ample measure? The lack, the lamentable lack, the lack that bodes ill for San Francisco and its progeny, is the lack of will on the part of the British authorities of all ranks and persuasions to abandon the trusteeship of Eastern peoples that has been divinely bestowed on

them, a trusteeship *sui generis* and without end, for the ward never grows and ought not to be allowed to grow lest he should grow wrong.

I do not know what may be in store for Sapru. They say an elaborate report from his pen will soon see the light of day his *magnum opus*, recording his unique experiences, hopes and disillusionments against a background of India's political history. The young patriot will find rare education in its pages; for, incredible as it may seem, he is a young patriot still, quick to respond to suggestions of promise and quick too to droop when the sky darkens and the stars hide their lights. Writing a few weeks before the celebration of his 71st birthday, I will risk a prophecy. The book will disclose the ideology of a statesman who has striven during many years to avoid the harsh extremes on both sides and to find the golden mean. Vain quest! In the universal flux the golden mean itself shifts continually. Sapru now acknowledges no political affiliation having broken the bond of the Liberal party, to which he had belonged till 1931. Men's memory, however, is incurably tenacious in certain respects, and he is still called a Liberal. Perhaps he resents the label. But so long as he and I agree on nine out of ten large questions of the day, why should he not follow my excellent example and exhibit without shame or compunction the gracious calligraphy of Brahma on his political forehead? Fate is inexorable whether in Madras or in Allahabad. In distant London the perspective is even less clear, and we are all swept together in one comprehensive description.

I do not pretend that we have thought or acted exactly alike in all public matters. I should despise him and myself if that were the case. But our differences, even when they were sharp, were within those limits which in my opinion party discipline should tolerate, for I am a born rebel against totalitarianism of every kind. Our disagreements were numerous and pronounced at the 1930 Round Table Conference. In particular I dreaded what appeared to me in dangerous leanings towards the view point of the Princes. But with my innate horror of contention I repressed all expression of dissent, and only when the repression seemed unjust to the general cause and myself did I venture to indicate a deviation from the line marked by Sapru. His leadership, as any one could see, was able, sound, vigilant and respected on all sides of the House. Besides the main object of our proceedings was to ascertain the general trend of thought on the important issues and not to measure it one way or the other with accuracy. No vote was to be taken and members were to remain uncommitted till the scheme had to be shaped. Variety of views was not then a fatal flaw; and it might be an advantage if, when one plan had to be discarded, an alternative was ready to take its place and not wholly unfamiliar. So my occasional divergence could not have seriously embarrassed our leading spokesman. The ultimate outcome of the effort of that year and of the four succeeding years was the Government of India Act of 1935. It was so enormous in size and so complicated in its provisions that Sir Samuel Hoare won great renown for skill in parliamentary negotiation, grasp of detail and intellectual power as well as physical

endurance. But the measure encountered almost universal execration among politicians in India. Sapru, who was connected with it from its inception, must have been unhappy. He would have liked the country to give the Act a trial, but some years of confusion were to follow before Congressmen could be persuaded even to look at it.

Another mighty attempt at constitution-making awaits Sapru. His wisdom and resourcefulness and those of men of his calibre will be called into full exercise within the next three or four years. Let us hope that they will bear good fruit and lead India to the haven of freedom and prosperity. Sapru's friends and admirers would pray too that his career should be crowned by a few years of helmsmanship of the Union of India when she takes a proud and honoured place in the front rank of the peaceful Armada of the nations voyaging together for the conquest of Universal Harmony and Blessedness which will make a second Heaven of this Earth.

The Mahatma has raised the expectation of life of his friends and followers to 125. How does Sapru view the prospect of another 55 years? I think often of Swift's Struldburgs and make myself miserable. For comfort I turn to our own *Chiranjivins*. But the question occurs "What do the seven persons do to justify their immortality"? All we know is that Hanuman wanders about listening lugubriously wherever the name of Rama is sounded. The others, for all we know, don't care even to cry. Is there an antidote against the decay of age? In Sanskrit fable, there is a story of an old maid, who performed hard *tapas* for several years. When the deity was pleased he appeared before her and asked

what she wanted. At the same time he lifted an admonitory finger and warned her "mind you, only one boon". The suitor was not nonplussed. She said to herself: "I'll teach this miser a lesson". Then summoning all her feminine wit to her aid, she spoke at her pleadingest. "Shining one, grant that I may, from the third floor of my mansion, cast my delighted eye down on my great grand children playing on the street and cry *shabash* every time I see or hear anything of interest". Long life for her husband as well as for herself, faculties of seeing, hearing and speaking unimpaired, capacity to enjoy children's play, affluence above the ordinary, prosperous neighbourhood,—what more *could* one desire?

Whether Sapru is nonagenarian or centenarian let a kind fate continue two of his sweet qualities undiminished. There is not a more generous, more attentive or more tender host. I have enjoyed his hospitality and should know. He has warmed me when I was cold, doctored me when I was ill, comforted me when I was low. Under his roof nothing was wanting that a nobleman may reasonably covet. Then of evenings, when he sits on the verandah, imbibing scented smoke through the hubble-bubble, you hear a raconteur of the first quality entertaining a fair-sized audience of visitors of all ages and laughing and shouting with them. The anecdotes are varied and clean and full of interest. Story-telling as a drawing-room or dining table accomplishment is cultivated with care in western society. In India it is comparatively un-common, and most men's repertoires are small. Sapru's narration is lively, pointed and of literary merit. He is great on

court happenings and repartees of bench and bar. One must listen to him on matters of professional etiquette and honour, a branch of legal lore in which he has specialised. Shall I hear Sapru's yarns any more? Let me hope I shall. But may he regale a full generation yet out of the vast store of his learning and experience: And may they cherish and reverence him as he deserves to be cherished and revered!

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR¹

I have performed the ceremonies ascribed to me. I have opened the Satram and unveiled both the portrait and bust; and it is now my pleasure to declare the Satram open and to express the wish that it will be as useful to tourists and pilgrims of all sorts and castes as the organisers wish it to be.

It has been to me a matter of the utmost pleasure to come here and assist in the celebrations that are going on. Amongst other reasons there is this one that I have been connected with the politics of the land for a great many years; and I always welcome an opportunity of expressing my gratification at anything of importance or consequence in the domain of politics. This is the Birthday, the sixty-second, as I prefer to call it, of the Sachivottama. It is the day after the birthday of H. H. the Maha Raja of Travancore. It may not be an exact coincidence; but it is a by-incidence. And it is not altogether without some note. They have been associated together, as the papers read before you today witness, they have been associated together in many acts of great beneficence to this State. I may not forget to mention in the first instance the Temple Entry Proclamation to which reference was made in the last of the statements that were read.

¹A Speech delivered on the opening of the Sachivottama Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar Shastabhapurti Memorial Satram on October 31, 1940.

Ladies and Gentlemen, that is a subject which, in this land of castes and creeds and various communities, is apt to create a difference of thought and a difference of outlook. But, I do hope that when things have taken place there is enough toleration in this land to look upon the achievement as having marked a milestone in the history of the land and as being entitled to the respectful acquiescence of all parties, even those who may happen to be dissentient from the particular matter. I make an appeal on this occasion, if I may, to the orthodox communities of the land to recognise this step as having been ordained in the wisdom of Providence, as having been placed above dispute and cavil and as therefore demanding from all an amount of passive acquiescence, if not of active approbation. In my own judgment, it is an act of the greatest philanthropy. It takes rank amongst the noblest accomplishments of reform activity; (Cheers) and if there is nothing else to mark the association of the Ruler of the land with the subject of our respect to day than this act of amelioration of the lower classes of the land, if there were nothing else to mark their association, it seems to me that there still would be enough to make it a historic event. Ladies and gentlemen, in recommending this act to your hearty acceptance I have only to remind you that it has the homage of the noblest in this land as of well-wishers of humanity on the rest of the globe. You may remember that the Mahatma makes it a very special object of his care to advance in every possible way the interests of the classes hitherto held down in social subjection. The Temple Entry Proclamation is to him a symbol not the crown by any means, but the symbol of the

process of liberation which has begun and begun surely. To him nothing is a greater reward in life than to be recognised by the Harijan community as one of their own. He wishes to be recognised as living their life, as performing their humble duties, as weighed down by the same disabilities but as much the creature of God as any other. He has set his heart on the removal of untouchability and other disabilities resting on this community. I have heard him say often, and I have read his writing frequently to the effect that, in his judgment, untouchability has already become a thing of the past, a mere memory of a time that has vanished, a spirit of the dominion of man that has been banished from India for ever. I say 'Amen'! with all my heart. May we never know again words like 'untouchability' or 'unapproachability'! May we never know again in this land how man can, not merely in material but in immaterial and subtle ways, exercise tyranny over his brother! May we once for all recognise that we are of one family, brothers in spirit as well as in blood, bound therefore in the bonds of mutual love and co-operation, perhaps bound to part on political lines if we must, but certainly not to know again differences either of birth or anything similar to birth. That the Sachivottama has borne a part with his Ruler and no mean part in the accomplishment of this great reform is certainly a feather in his cap, and I take leave to doubt, believer as I am in his great qualities, whether he is going to add to it a more shining or brilliant feather. (Cheers)

But the story does not end there. The catalogue of his achievements, to which we have listened,

referred to him more than once as a statesman of the front rank. The Sachivottama is somewhat junior to me in age, and unless my memory fails me, as it does very often unfortunately, I believe he came later than I did to the field of politics. I well remember the time when he was sowing his political wild oats. (Laughter) I was then, ladies and gentlemen, always on the side of the angels, (Laughter) although as a suspicious Government, they often put two policemen after me. I have been more or less closely associated with Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar. I have always admired his dazzling abilities. I have admired his abounding energy. I have admired the dauntless courage with which he faces difficulties. I have not always agreed in his judgment of men or things or of the particular measures appropriate to the occasion. But that scarcely matters except in the private relations between him and me. What is of real consequence is that he is a power of great force and potency, that he is capable of great deeds. Amongst men and women, I think also, there is a small weakness which I may mention. I hope you will all see that I am only touching a spot in your own hearts. Those of us who can see sometimes inside ourselves and recognise our weaknesses are apt to view with extraordinary admiration the presence in others, and the active efficiency in them of qualities in which we are ourselves lacking. I may tell you something as a matter of confession which I hope the reporters will not take down. (Laughter) For I do not want to be witness against myself to posterity. I may make a general confession that I am particularly weakminded. I cannot come to strong and

decided resolutions. I am in the habit of looking round and round, of weighing things in the scales of right and wrong ; and as you know a man who thinks too much of right and wrong is apt to land himself in utter confusion. The moment for action is gone ; the time for decision is left behind ; and then all too late you tell yourself ' I must be up and doing something ' and you come to a resolution ; and the first encounter which you meet in the pursuit of that resolution lays you flat. (Laughter) You are overcome with a sense of defeatism. You say ' Apparently I ought to have come to the opposite resolution, not knowing that if you had done that you would not have met with any less opposition. For, this world has always different views upon the same subject. It always has opposed platforms. It always has contrary courses of action. You call aloud for the worker. There is no unanimity possible. Where a thousand wills have to unite, there must be division, and the man who is afraid of division I am afraid proclaims himself unfit for the active jobs that await a citizen in this somewhat involved world of ours. A man therefore like the Sachivottama who sees things clearly in front of him, who knows exactly what his aims are, and who marches straight towards them, not minding whom he pushes aside, not minding the bruises he leaves on the bodies of prostrate people, that kind of man is marked out as amongst the efficient forces of this world ; and all we have to wish when we see such a force, such a centre of magnetic power, all that we have to wish is that that body must be charged with the benevolent kind of electricity (Laughter) so that the active man who bustles and cries aloud for this thing and that

thing being done may be also a good man with good aims in front of him, is actuated by a good heart and means well by his fellows. If we are generally assured then of the good qualities of an active and powerful man, I tell you, my friends, ladies and gentlemen, young and old, take your hats off to him (applause), make way for him, let him lead the way, march behind, do his behests and become true and valiant soldiers in the work of progress for mankind. That is the testimony that I was anxious to pay to my friend the Sachivottama. I am glad he is not here; I am not offending his modesty, though I know that like other persons whose hearts are in their work he will be delighted to appreciate the fact that he does not labour in vain, that the seeds that he scatters fall on receptive and fruitful grounds, and that, if not he others after him may see the fruit of the harvest for which he now labours. Ladies and gentlemen, I rank the Sachivottama amongst the great workers which India has produced. (Cheers)

A long time ago, when the Indian National Congress was still young and had not become the boisterous institution that it now is, when our politics was smooth, our resolutions were politely worded, and we spoke in accents of respect to the wielders of authority, in those early and forgotten days, I quite well remember that we were animated by feelings of the greatest friendliness towards Indian States in general. The first Presidents of our Congress organisation, the most eminent of our spokesmen, the writers of our authorised pamphlets, the exponents of our accepted views all over the world, made it clearly known that they regarded

the existence of Indian States as a great asset to Indian politics. They were very friendly in their spirit to the Rulers of the States. Many of them were personal friends of these Rulers. I have known occasionally a Ruler come and sit amongst us, not as a delegate but as a very interested spectator. I have known them make contributions to our funds. In their welfare we, the elder congressmen, now superseded and pushed aside, we took active part, for, we regarded those States as nurseries of that statesmanship to which we have heard references made to-day. Remember, please, those of you that are very young, that I am talking of the old time when Indians could not rise even to the rank of Collectors of districts, when they had never become High Court judges, when they had not become Members of Executive Council, when a bar sinister was placed definitely against the promotion of Indians to posts of high responsibility. If you read the earlier reports you would be amused at the tiny little things which we asked for and which year after year were denied to us. (Laughter). Naturally therefore when Indians could be appointed to be Dewans in large States, when they could handle the affairs of millions of people, when they could manipulate crores of public revenue, when they could devote their talents to the promotion of public welfare of all sorts, when they could build schools, dig tanks, open canals, when they could do things for which the people would bless them, was it a wonder that we looked with a friendly eye upon these States? We had given a great many statesmen of the first rank to these States. Many Dewans wrote their names large on contemporary annals. They

did great things for which they are still blessed by the people amongst whom they laboured. This Province of Madras has had its share, some envious critics from other provinces might say that we have had more than our fair share (Laughter)—of the Dewanships that went about in the land. Our best men reaped in these States a harvest of renown, a harvest of benevolent activity which British India in those days denied to them. Yes, Madras can boast of a galaxy of Dewans of first-rate ability, of statesmen who if they only had fair play in British India would have risen to the highest rank. But they dwelt and laboured in times when Indian talent was still repressed.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have said all this in order to lead up to this point, that the Sachivotama whose birthday we are celebrating today by the opening of a Satram in his name and by the unveiling of a portrait and a bust that commemorate his features, to whom we are paying our meed of homage is one who belongs to the long line of able statesmen who have made the Indian States what they are. True! Our particular friend of this morning has played a part on the larger stage both of all-India and provincial activity; but somewhat narrowed though his beat may be, you will admit that his work now knows concentration and intensity which it did not know before, and that he is now crowning a brilliant career with a record of activity which, when he lays down his office—I hope that day will be distant—which when, he lays down his office, will redound to his name, and to the name, if I may say so with pride, of the statesmanship of Madras. (Loud and continued cheers).

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