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THE  
Story of my Deportation

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LALPAT SAI.



LALA LAJPAT RAI.



THE  
STORY OF MY DEPORTATION

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BY

✽ LALA LAJPAT RAI ✽

“In Exile because I have loved Righteousness and hated  
Iniquity.”—*Gregory VII.*

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TO  
**MY FATHER**  
AS A MARK OF MY LOVE.

## INTRODUCTION.



अपामीत्रामप विश्वामनाहुति-  
मपारार्तिं दुर्विदत्रामवायतः ।  
आरे देवा द्वेषो अस्मद्युयोतनो-  
रुणः शर्म यच्छता स्वस्तये ॥

Drive away all disease and impure sacrifice, keep off the wicked man's malice and hatred, keep far away from us all enmity Lord, and vouchsafe us perfect shelter for our happiness. (Rv. X. 63-12.)

Take no counsel but from God, from the inspirations of your own heart, and from the imperious necessity of rebuilding a temple to *Truth, Justice and Faith*. (Pope Gregory VII).

I do not think many words are needed to introduce this little book to the reader. It is a plain narrative of my life in exile and makes no pretensions to literary merit. It does not contain anything of permanent value and no attempt has been made therein to sermonise. The book has been written in a hurry and during intervals of time spared from engagements which required constant travelling

For the first five months after my return from Burmah, I was not allowed to enjoy even a fortnight's stay at home at a time ; consequently I have had no time to attend to its literary side. When I was at Calcutta in January last, several interviews were asked for by representatives of the Press (including reporters of more than 2 Anglo-Indian Dailies) to get at facts relating to my life at Mandalay. I, however, declined to give facts piecemeal, and promised to publish the whole thing in a book form which I do now. Ever since I have been constantly worried, and numerous questions have been put to me about my prison life, at almost every station which I happened to visit during the course of my tour in connection with famine relief. It is in response to this universal curiosity that this little book is offered to the public.

This is not, however, all that I propose to say about the matter. The more important part of it, *viz.*, the one containing my version of the alleged irritation which led to my deportation and dealing with a short history of the causes of the so called unrest in the Panjab, has been withheld for the present.

**Discussion of the causes of unrest reserved.**

So far the Government have not seen their way to disclose fully the grounds upon which they took action against me. When questioned on the subject in the House of Commons by some Liberal M. P's, the Secretary of State for India, generally took shelter under the stereotyped reservation that it was not in the public interests to make a full statement. It is well known, how from day to day, he was heckled and challenged to disclose the grounds on which the action of the Government was based or to order an open enquiry into my case. Viscount (then Mr.) Morley not only failed to give any good grounds for his action but was very unfortunate in the partial statements he from time to time made. His facts were invariably wrong and his information faulty and incomplete.

The "Englishman" of Calcutta, however, pretended to supply the omission on the authority of a Punjab Correspondent, and charged me with having tampered with the loyalty of the Native Army. The statement of the "Englishman" has been

**Libellous  
statements by  
Anglo-Indian  
and Yellow  
papers.**

challenged and now forms the subject of a libel suit filed by me against that paper in the High Court at Calcutta. I have no hesitation in repeating here, that the statement is absolutely false and has no foundation in fact. Another yellow Journal of London (The Daily Express) trotted out another cock-and-bull story, to explain away the mystery connected with my exile, and charged me with having intrigued with the Amir of Kabul for the overthrow of the British Raj in India. The charge being a tissue of lies and absolutely unfounded, an attempt was made, even before my release, to start legal proceedings against the "Daily Express." A lawyer friend (The Hon'ble Mr. Dixit of Bombay) addressed a letter to me at Mandalay, asking for authority to proceed against the paper on my behalf, in a Court of Law. This communication was, however, intercepted and the attempt frustrated by Government. On my release, however, my lawyers (Messrs. Bhupendro Nath Bose and Company, of Calcutta) have served the Proprietor, the Publisher and the Editor of the "Daily Express" with a notice calling upon them to retract the libellous statements made in their paper and make proper amends, fail-



ing which legal proceedings will be taken against them in due course. Of my other traducers the chief culprit, who practically set the ball in motion, was the "Civil and Military Gazette" of Lahore. Almost everything that appeared in the English Press against me was based upon the false and mischievous statements circulated by this paper. A suit has been filed against this paper also and is at the present moment pending in the High Court at Calcutta.

The Government of India have to thank these friends of theirs for the awkward position in which they find themselves to-day, because no impartial observer of contemporary events, can help remarking that the present situation owes much of its bitterness to the narrow-minded insolence of these advocates of repression. The deportations really form only a link in the chain of circumstances that have led to the existing tension in the relations of the rulers and the ruled in this country. Lords Minto and Morley are only reaping what was sown by Lord Curzon and his lieutenants. The lust of power, the greed of gain (both personal and national) and the habits of intolerance and

insolence begotten of an unlimited and unchecked authority over the subject races, have added immensely to the anomaly of an alien rule. The present discontent owes its origin to that policy of defiant Imperialism which was started long before Lord Curzon came out to India, but which was perfected by him. Its effects have been deepened by the insolent and scurrilous tone of the Anglo-Indian Press.

The only redeeming feature of the situation is the occasional intervention of those high-minded sons of Britain and Ireland who sincerely believe that the best interests of their Empire require that all its component parts should be kept bound in ties of affection and contentment and should be treated with fairness and justice. There are some among them who are actuated by even higher motives and who hold that no nation has a right to exploit another, and that if, by chance, one nation acquires supremacy over another, it is the bounden duty of the former to be guided in their rule by a regard for the best interests of the latter, and to treat them only as their wards till they are able to assume control of their own affairs. The number

of this latter class, however, is very limited. Consequently their voice is feeble and they fail to make any substantial impression upon the British Democracy either in the House of Commons or outside of it. Sometimes they succeed in eliciting a frank and hopeful declaration of liberal principles from a British statesman, but the failure of the latter to fulfil the expectations thus raised and the wide divergence between their principles and their conduct, between their promises and their doings, adds considerably to the complexity of the political situation. At the same time there can be no doubt that the little group of liberal and nationalist M. P's who take interest in the affairs of their Empire beyond the seas, by raising their voice against the oppression directed towards the subject people and by pleading for right and justice in their dealings with the latter, render an inestimable service to the Empire. It will be an evil day for their Empire when these advocates of the application of liberal principles to the affairs of the Empire disappear from the British Parliament leaving the Jingoës a free hand in the dismemberment of the Empire, the unmanageable greatness of which has turned their little heads into pump-

kins. It is true that these gentlemen are not able to make any practical impresson upon the affairs of the Government of India, but the service which they render to the cause of humanity is by no means to be despised. Their efforts help in the evolution of a sympathetic European public opinion which is a source of great encouragement to a struggling humanity. We are living in an age where complete isolation is impossible. The affairs of the different nations are so intertwined, dependent and inter-dependent upon one another that the affairs of one part of the world cannot fail to arouse the interest of the other. The sympathetic interest of the other great nations thus becomes a valuable asset to every nationality struggling for independence. Under the circumstances although I share the opinion of a large number of my countrymen that our political salvation is not likely to be achieved by begging for it at the bar of the British public, yet I sincerely think that the raising of Indian debates in the House of Commons has its own uses and the gentlemen who raise them are entitled to our gratitude. If there are any amongst my countrymen who expect that any group of members of the House of Commons

can get them a Charter of political liberty they are, I am bound to say, mistaken. It is not in their power to do so, but even if it were they would do nothing which would be opposed to the interests of their own country. An Englishman is nothing if not a patriot. But then there are patriots and patriots. There are some who think that the highest patriotism does not require the trampling under foot of less powerful nationalities. In their opinion Jingo Imperialism involves a loss of moral virtues which degrades a people and eventually prepares the ground for the subversion of those liberal principles which alone can be the basis of a democratic state.

These people represent the best conscience  
 of England, and to them I beg  
**Thanks to** to offer my grateful acknow-  
**Liberal M. P's.** ledgments for their having

raised their voice against the un-English and high-handed proceedings of their own Government in deporting me without a hearing and a trial before a regularly constituted tribunal of justice. Their task was at best only a thankless task and they performed it nobly.

There is one thing more which I think I must notice before I close this part of my introduction. **Quiet in the Panjab after the deportation.** Failing to justify my deportation on its own merits the authorities have maintained that the result justified the step. The Panjab, it is maintained, has been quiet ever since. It is characteristic of human nature that a drowning man catches at a straw.

Being conscious of their failure to satisfy the public conscience of the justice of their proceedings, they fall back upon the old jesuitical plea that the end justified the means. But here again, I am afraid, they are not on firm ground. The so-called excitement in the Punjab in the spring of 1907 was explained by me in a letter written on the day of my arrest and published in the *Panjabee* two days after (*Vide* appendix B). No one has yet been able to controvert the facts stated therein. The principal fact was the agitation over the Act which affected the rights of the colonists in the Chenab Canal Colony. This Act having been vetoed, the chief cause of excitement was removed. The deportations, the wholesale arrests and searches at Rawalpindi and the public meetings

Ordinance no doubt played their part in stunning and demoralising the educated classes, but the excitement not being due to any direct action of these classes their own demoralization could not have killed the agitation outright, if the Colonies Act had not been withdrawn. It should not be ignored that this Act affected the educated classes also, as a good number of their leading men had proprietary interests in the Colony which they considered were threatened by the proposed legislation. This was the common platform upon which the educated and the uneducated had joined hands. The platform having been removed from under their feet the combination ceased and the cohesion gave way. The result would have been exactly the same even if the deportations had not taken place.

Having disposed of the deportation and the grounds alleged in support of it, I wish to address a few words to my countrymen on the present situation, though this is hardly the proper place to give my opinions in full relating to it. I want to say only one word.

That we have entered on stormy days is patent to every one. Who raised the storm and

how, are matters, a discussion of which is not likely to help us materially in suggesting measures which may enable us to get through it successfully. That the Government is chiefly responsible for it, none need doubt, though it is questionable whether even the Government could altogether avoid it. It is all very well to be wise after the event, but wisdom at the right moment is a rare commodity. The Government in India is composed of human units, every one of whom has his personal idiosyncracies, failings and weaknesses. And so have the people. It is fruitless to attempt to apportion the blame between the two. It is sufficient if both parties appreciate the gravity of the situation and try to meet it in such a way as may lead to the peaceable settlement of the problems involved. The Government know their business and I do not presume to advise them. But I have a right to speak to my own people and claim their indulgence. To them I say, "weigh the situation coolly and calmly. Do not over-estimate your capacities, nor underestimate your difficulties; make an exact estimate of both and then proceed with a determination and firmness worthy of *men*." It is true there can be no gains without incur-



ring risks. But nations, circumstanced like ours, are not made or saved by dare-devil methods or by a boldness which does not count upon the likely losses and risks. The road is uphill and infested with dangers. The number of pioneers who have to go forward and clear the ground as sappers and miners is few and far between. Any uncalled for and unnecessary sacrifice of life and energy is a crime greater and more heinous than any, of which any one can be guilty in his individual interests. Indians who have consecrated their lives to the service of their country are no longer their own masters and have no right to throw away their lives like mad men. By doing so we cut the very ground-roots of the tree over which we have sought an asylum. It may be *heroic* to die under an impulse of patriotic duty but it is nobler to resist the temptation and live a life of renunciation and sacrifice. Life must precede death. To die nobly one must first learn to live nobly. Noble is the death which towers the edifice of a well-lived life, a life lived for principle, for the motherland and for humanity. One does at times feel that perhaps the sons of India care more for life and the comforts of life than for honor. They were not

so in olden times. Their present callousness to honor is a proof of their degradation, but this makes it all the more necessary that those in whom the consciousness of a duty towards their country and towards a life of honour has awakened, ought to try to live as long as they can, consistently with their ideals of honorable life. An honorable death is no doubt better than a dishonorable life, but an honorably lived life is infinitely superior to a death under a short-bred impulse. The number of those who can and are willing to die for their country or to live for it is exceedingly limited. It is a pure waste of valuable material to allow their ranks to be thinned by recklessness.

The country is in a state of transition. The different parts of it vary in the stages of their development. Some parts are yet far behind. Their political consciousness has yet to dawn. Moreover, they greatly differ in intellectual calibre, religious fervour, social purity and physical backbone. In the matter of education, too, there is a great deal of divergence. The ideas that have filtered downward to the masses in one province are yet only on the surface in another. The

social environments, too, are different. It is impossible, therefore, to speak of the situation from the standpoint of the most advanced and the best developed parts of the country without qualifications and limitations which considerably take away from the value of such generalisations when put to practical test. Every responsible man has, therefore, to work (speak and act) under restraints imposed by the conditions of life surrounding him. It is no use fretting at things which must take time to change. Nor is it profitable to cavil at conditions over which one has no control. I do not claim any intimate knowledge of the conditions of life in Bengal, Bombay and Madras, but, knowing Upper India as I do, I must say that the conditions of life prevailing there require the services of a large number of capable and devoted public men whose sole or first care should be their country, before the political consciousness of the people can reach the level it occupies in the better educated and better developed provinces. The responsibilities of public life, in Upper India, require a clearer and a bolder conception. This, however, is not to be gained by the irresponsible talk of undisciplined enthusiasm, much less by violent methods. The man is unfit to be a

leader who is not capable of taking a dispassionate view of things in times of excitement when passions have been roused up to a high pitch. But a coward is he whose calculations of personal interest and personal safety do not let him take a higher and broader view of life when the right moment comes. Real wisdom lies in doing the right thing at the right time. Real courage consists in not flying from the consequences of one's acts when the latter overtake him. Bravado is not manliness, nor rashness patriotism. There should be no halting or faint-heartedness after a thing has been well thought out, but doing things merely under spasmodic impulse, without devoting the necessary thought to their *pros* and *cons* is neither politic nor wise. Having passed the period of tutelage we are no longer children to be led by the nose by others. "It remains to us to throw aside the youthful overconfidence and the no less youthful discouragement of nonage. We are grown men, and must play the man

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield,

cherishing the good that falls in our way, and bearing the evil, in and around us, with stout

hearts set on diminishing it. So far, we all may strive in one faith towards one hope :

It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,  
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,

. . . . but something ere the end,  
Some work of noble note may yet be done."

Before I close, however, I have to tender my most affectionate thanks to all classes of my countrymen who sympathised with me in my trouble. The feeling evoked in the country by the deportation was simply wonderful. I have met with innumerable proofs of it since my return. They have touched the deepest chords of my heart and I wish I had deserved at least a hundredth part of what my countrymen think of me. Barring certain classes of Indians who live and prosper on calumniating their own countrymen and whose chief business in life consists in carrying tales to the foreign rulers of the land, the whole country entered an emphatic protest against the deportation, from the Himalayas to the Cape and from Diamond Harbour to Karachi. I do not know if within the memory of man any other act of the British Government ever evoked a similarly universal outburst of indignation. The whole country spoke like one man irres-

pective of caste or creed. The Mohammedan merchants of Ahmedabad and Surat gave a crushing reply to the lie circulated by Anglo-Indian journalists that the Mohammedans were happy at my deportation and had no sympathy with me. One of the big representative gatherings of Mohammedans held in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh that was reported to have expressed satisfaction at my deportation was attended by seven men only. My thanks are equally due to the large number of my countrymen outside India. Students or traders, lawyers or doctors, merchants or manufacturers, in London or in Paris, in Great Britain or in America, in South Africa or in the East, in Japan or in Mauritius, all combined to protest against the deportation and to express their joy on my release. I do not know how to adequately thank them. I am fully conscious of having done nothing to deserve such universal marks of love and respect from my countrymen. My services in the cause of my country are too insignificant to fully account for all this. I can only ascribe it to that growing sense of national unity that has found a sudden realisation within the last three years and which has simply surprised both friends and foes. I thank God for hav-

ing spared me to see it, and my earnest prayer is that I may have the strength to do my duty to my country in this all-important period of its life. As a Hindu it is my devout prayer that I may be born again and again in this Land of the Vedas to contribute my *Karma* to the corporate *Karma* of the nation.

My best thanks are also due to my friend Mr. Madanjit of Rangoon and Mr. P. J. Mehta who sent me a large number of good and useful books which enabled me to pass my days of confinement with comparative ease.

LAHORE: }  
*June 15th 1903.* }

LAJPAT RAI.



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# APPENDIX A.

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## REGULATION III OF 1818.

### A REGULATION FOR THE CONFINEMENT OF STATE PRISONERS.

(PASSED ON THE 7TH APRIL 1818),

I. Whereas reasons of State, embracing the due maintenance of the alliances formed by the British Government with foreign Powers; the preservation of tranquility in the territories of native princes entitled to its protection, and the security of the British dominions from foreign hostility and from internal commotion, occasionally render it necessary to place under personal restraint individuals against whom there may not be sufficient ground to institute any judicial proceedings, or when such proceeding may not be adapted to the nature of the case, or may for other reasons be inadvisable or improper; and whereas it is fit that, in every case of the nature herein referred to, the determination to be taken should proceed immediately from the authority of the Governor-General in Council; and whereas the ends of the justice require that, when it may be determined that any person shall be placed under personal restraint, otherwise than in pursuance of some judicial proceeding, the grounds of such determination should from time to time come under revision, and the person affected thereby should at all times be allowed freely to bring to the notice of the Governor-General in Council all circumstances relating either to *the supposed grounds* of such determination, or to the

manner in which it may be executed ; and whereas the ends of justice also require that due attention be paid to the health of every State prisoner confined under this Regulation, and that suitable provision be made for his support according to his rank in life, and to his own wants *and those of his family* ; and whereas the reasons above declared sometimes render it necessary that the estates and lands of zemindars, talookdars and others situated within the territories dependent on the presidency of Fort William, should be attached and placed under the temporary management of the revenue authorities, without having recourse to any judicial proceeding ; and whereas it is desirable to make such legal provisions as may secure from injury the just rights and interests of individuals whose estates may be so attached under the direct authority of the Government ; the Vice-President in Council has enacted the following rules, which are to take effect throughout the Provinces immediately subject to the presidency of Fort William, from the date on which they may be promulgated.

2.—*First*.—When the reasons stated in the preamble of this Regulation may seem to the Governor-General in Council to require that an individual should be placed under personal restraint, without any immediate view to ulterior proceedings of a judicial nature, a warrant of commitment under the authority of the Governor-General in Council and under the hand of the Chief Secretary or of one of the Secretaries to Government, shall be issued to the officer in whose custody such person is to be placed.

*Second*.—The warrant of the commitment shall be in the following form :—

To the (here insert the officer's designation.)

“Whereas the Governor-General in Council for good and sufficient reasons, has seen fit to de-

termine that (here insert the State prisoner's name) shall be placed under personal restraint at (here insert the name of the place), you are hereby required and commanded, in pursuance of that determination, to receive the person above-named into your custody and to deal with him in conformity to the orders of the Governor-General in Council, and the provisions of Regulation III of 1818.

“Fort William the

“By order of the Governor-General in Council,  
“A. B., Chief Secy. to Govt.”

*Third.*—The warrant of commitment shall be sufficient authority for the detention of any State prisoner in any fortress, jail, or other place within the territories subject to the presidency of Fort William.

3. Every Officer in whose custody any State prisoner may be placed shall, on the 1st of July of each year, submit a report to the Governor-General in Council, through the Secretary to Government in the Political Department, on the conduct, the health, and the comfort of such State prisoner, in order that the Governor-General in Council may determine whether orders for his detention shall continue in force or shall be modified.

4. *First.*—When any State prisoner is in the custody of a Zillah Magistrate, the Judges are to visit such State prisoner on the occasion of the periodical sessions, and they are to issue any orders concerning the treatment of the State prisoner which may appear to them advisable, provided they be not inconsistent with the orders of the Governor-General in Council issued on that head.

*Second.*—When any State prisoner is placed in custody of any public officer not being a Zillah

Magistrate, the Governor-General in Council will instruct either the Zillah Magistrate or the Judges or any other public officer, not being the person in whose custody the prisoner may be placed, to visit such prisoner at stated periods, and to submit a report to Government regarding the health and treatment of such prisoner.

5. The Officer in whose custody any State prisoner may be placed, is to forward, with such observations as may appear necessary, every representation which such State prisoner may from time to time be desirous of submitting to the Governor-General in Council.

6. Every officer in whose custody any State prisoner may be placed shall, as soon after taking such prisoner into his custody as may be practicable, report to the Governor-General in Council, whether the degree of confinement to which he may be subjected appears liable to injure his health, and whether the allowance fixed for his support be adequate to the supply of his wants and those of his family, according to their rank in life.

Every officer in whose custody any State prisoner may be placed, shall take care that allowance fixed for the support of such State prisoner is duly appropriated to that object.

8. *Repealed by Act XVI of 1874.*

9. Whenever the Governor-General in Council, for the reasons declared in the preamble to this regulation shall judge it necessary to attach the estates or lands of any *zemindar*, *jaeedar*, *talookdar*, or other person without any previous decision of a Court of Justice, or other judicial proceeding, the grounds on which the resolution of Government may have been adopted, and such

other information connected with the case as may appear essential, shall be communicated, under the hand of one of the Secretaries to Government, to the Judge and Magistrate of the district in which the land or estates may be situated and to the Sudder Dewanny Adawlut and Nizamut Adawlut.

10. *First*.—The lands or estates which may be so temporarily attached shall be held under the management of the officer of Government in the Revenue Department, and collections shall be made and adjusted on the same principles as those of other estates held under *khas* management.

*Second*.—Such land or estates shall not be liable to be sold in execution of decrees of Civil Courts or for the realisation of fines or otherwise during the period in which they may be so held under attachment.

*Third*.—In the cases mentioned in the preceding clause, the Government will make such arrangement as may be fair and equitable for the satisfaction of the decrees of the Civil Courts.

11. Whenever the Governor-General in Council shall be of opinion that the circumstances which rendered the attachment of such estate necessary have ceased to operate and that the management of the estate can be committed to the hands of the proprietor without public hazard or inconvenience, the revenue authorities will be directed to release the estate from attachment, to adjust the accounts of the collections, during the period in which they have been superintended by the officers of Government, and to pay over to the proprietor the profits from the estate, which may have accumulated during the attachment.

## APPENDIX B.

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### THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE PANJAB.

(The following lines were handed over to us a few hours before the writer's arrest, when yet he had not the slightest idea of the doom in store for him. The interest of the observations is enhanced by the circumstances under which they were written, and they bear proof to the candour, straightforwardness and earnestness of the writer and his close study of public questions—Ed. *Punjabee.*) :—

#### CAUSES OF DISCONTENT IN THE PANJAB.

Some people think that the situation in the Panjab has become very serious. The panic in official circles resulting in the arrest of 5 respectable citizens of Rawalpindi, no doubt, justifies that view. In my opinion, however, this panic has been artificially created by the Secret Police and the Government has simply played into the hands of its own agents. It is silly to reproach this or that man for having brought about this state of things. To suggest that any one or any two or three men in this province possess the power or influence to bring about this state of things is both stupid and absurd. It may be highly flattering to their vanity and in a sense complimentary also, but it cannot stand the test of close examination on the basis of actual facts. Discontent, no doubt, there is and a great deal of it. But this discontent has been brought about by Anglo-Indians themselves and the causes of these may be thus summarised in

chronological order :

- (a). The letters and articles, &c., that appeared in the *Civil and Military Gazette* some time in July and August last year under the heading "Signs of the Times," &c.
- (b). The prosecution of the *Panjabee*, coupled with the refusal of the Government to take similar action against the *C. & M. Gazette*.
- (c). The Colonization Bill.
- (d). The Land Alienation Act Amendment Bill.
- (e). The increase of Canal rates on the Bari-Doab Canal.
- (f). The abnormal increase of Land Revenue in the Rawalpindi District.
- (g). The appalling mortality from plague which has made the people sullen and labour scarce, and raised the wages abnormally.

Now the first 6 causes are directly attributable to Anglo-Indians. The last is a visitation of God. The first two might perhaps have been innocuous but for the four following. Joined, however, they have increased the ~~volum~~ discontent enormously. The sixth has played the most important part. The silent economic revolution caused by the same has acted terribly on the minds of men belonging to the lower strata of Government servants, and has very naturally brought about strikes such as would have been incredible a few years before. Under the circumstances can the Government honestly and conscientiously acquit its own officers of want of foresight and statesmanship in insisting



on unpopular measures and passing them in the teeth of universal opposition, of disregarding the economic changes, and failing to recognise the claims of classes of Government servants to an increase in their salaries proportionate to the increase in the wages of private labourers? Had this been done in time and with consideration, all discontent would have been quieted.

#### AGITATORS RESPONSIBLE AND IRRESPONSIBLE.

Are the agitators to be blamed for having pointed out the Government's mistakes and identified themselves with popular grievances? What have they done? They have enlisted the sympathies of the masses by standing for their grievances and agitating for the removal of the same. The Government had from time reproached them for standing alone and away from the masses, and as, therefore, having no justification to speak in their name. Here was an opportunity for them to remove this reproach. Can any one honestly say that they have done wrong in utilising this opportunity? Should they have stood aloof from the people and refused to take up their cause and articulate the same? Had they done so they would have been unworthy of their education and guilty of treason to their own people. Why should they then be blamed for having espoused the popular cause? A year before they were incomprehensible to the masses. The masses did not and could not be expected to follow them in their cry for Self Government. As for the demand for an increased employment of Indians in higher offices under Government the people were not quite certain if that would immediately help them very much. They said that it made no difference in their lot whether they were governed by a Mister or a Lala or a Maulvi. The recent legislation, however, made them think differently. They found that the services rendered by them to the Empire in the past had really counted

for nothing and could not but suspect that Government was treating them very badly. The class legislation indulged in by Government so defiantly in the proud consciousness of their unlimited strength has affected class after class until there was hardly any section of the population left which could honestly display any enthusiasm for the Government. We know that there is a class of Government hangers-on—their contractors, news-vendors, and title-hunters, &c., whose leaders are always enthusiastic for the Government for it pays them so well to do so. But even they cannot honestly lay their hands on their hearts and say that they had no hand in the agitation over the Colonization Bill and the Canal Water Rates Resolution. The difference is this, that they acted behind the *purdah*, keeping appearances all right, while others acted boldly and openly. These unpopular measures gave an opportunity to some “young talkers” who utilised it to their hearts’ content. Their fearless speeches and their readiness to suffer for their convictions went straight to the people’s hearts and attracted thousands to their meeting places. Now it is silly to assume that they had any responsible people at their back for the simple reason that no thoughtful or responsible man could possibly bring himself to believe that the country was *at all* ready for a political cataclysm. The cry in the Panjab has always been for “organised work.” No organization could be started or perfected in the state in which the Province has been for the last nine months. The tree of organization requires a cool atmosphere and undisturbed soil to take root and fructify. People have not rushed into print or to public meetings to denounce youthful and impulsive speakers or writers, but they have all the same done their level best to influence them towards moderation and towards more permanent and solid ways of doing things such as might leave solid and

lasting results behind. It is unfortunate that they did not succeed to the extent they wished, but even their failure has its own significance. If amateur orators and others whom nobody knew two or three months before, could repulse with impunity the advances of responsible leaders to control and guide them, if they could refuse to listen to the advice of the latter, question their moral courage, and at times denounce them as cowards, and still practically keep the field to themselves, *this* shows that they depended upon the sympathies and appreciation of the people in general, ignoring those who wanted to control and guide them. They had something in them which appealed to the people and which brought them appreciation and encouragement.

#### REAL GRIEVANCES VOICED BY THE AGITATORS.

It is again silly to suppose, that their audiences consisted only or mainly of the juvenile population. Could any one in his senses maintain that meetings at Lyallpore, Multan, Batala, Amritsar, and Delhi consisted of students only? Who attended the meetings at the local "Bharat Mata" Office after the Schools and Colleges had been closed on account of the plague? What is the total strength of the school population at Lahore or at Rawalpindi or at Delhi compared with the numbers that have been attending the meetings addressed by Sardar Ajit Singh and Syed Hyder Riza. The fact is, and it cannot be honestly ignored, that the propaganda carried on by these gentlemen has met with popular approval, it meets the fancy of the masses, and their utterances find a ready and appreciative response from the thousands whom they address, and for tens of thousands more who devour their speeches or writings as reported or published in the vernacular press. The irresponsible writer in the Anglo-Indian journal may talk or write what pleases

him, but the responsible authorities can no longer shut their eyes to the fact that Sardar Ajit Singh and Syed Hyder Riza really represent a solid bulk of public opinion which it will be madness to ignore or treat with contempt. I do not, however, believe that the state of things has come to such a pass as to justify the panic which appears to have taken hold of Anglo-Indian circles in the Panjab. The discontent in the Panjab has not yet assumed proportions so as to lead people to overt acts of violence. The stray acts of violence hitherto in evidence represent the doing of the Secret Police, or of *Gundas*, or of a few frenzied boys, or perhaps of all these combined.

#### THE RIGHT PATH FOR GOVERNMENT.

But there is no denial that this may lead to further and greater disorders if nothing is done to remove the discontent that is at the bottom of it and to soothe the angered and outraged feelings of the people. Repressive measures might cow down the people for a time, but that they are bound to fail in the end, if it is intended to crush the spirit of the people thereby, is certain, so long as the people believe that their interests and those of the Government clash. And so long as these two are in conflict, the popular feeling is sure to burst out from time to time; do what you may to crush or kill it by force. The thing is new just now. After over 50 years of peaceful Government, when the people have quite forgotten the troubles of a disordered state of society, and after they have taken to easy going modes of life, it shocks them to hear of the arrests such as have taken place in Rawalpindi. It may unnerve them for the time, and the political movement in the Panjab may be put down for sometime to come. But as soon as the people recover their stunned

senses, and begin to think how insignificant are individual interests in the struggle for national rights, their sympathies for the first victims will change into homage for the cause and for those who were the first to suffer for the cause. Fear will give way to the desire for martyrdom and panic will disappear. This process will be facilitated and hastened if these arrests become too common, as they are likely to be, in the present state of panic in official circles, but that these arrests will seal the fate of the national movement I decline to believe. The efforts of the Government at repression are only natural. The effect of these measures on the public mind will show how much real political life there is in the country and how far it can be relied on. It will give a fresh starting point to those who desire to devote their lives to this cause. National evolution is bound to proceed on the lines of repulses, defeats, struggles, and the like. None need despair. True wisdom as well as the spirit of resignation to the Divine Will teaches taking things as they come, drawing right conclusions therefrom, modifying ways and means in accordance therewith and then proceeding steadily and surely.

LALPAT RAI.

LAHORE:

9th May 1907.

[The above was not intended to be published over the writer's signature, but under the circumstances which have since transpired we have thought it best to let the public know what he was thinking about just before the fateful hour of his arrest.—Ed. *Panjabee*.]

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