

Supplement to *Public*

Rajaji Birthday Lecture, 1965

GOKHALE AND HIS MESSAGE

BY

Dr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

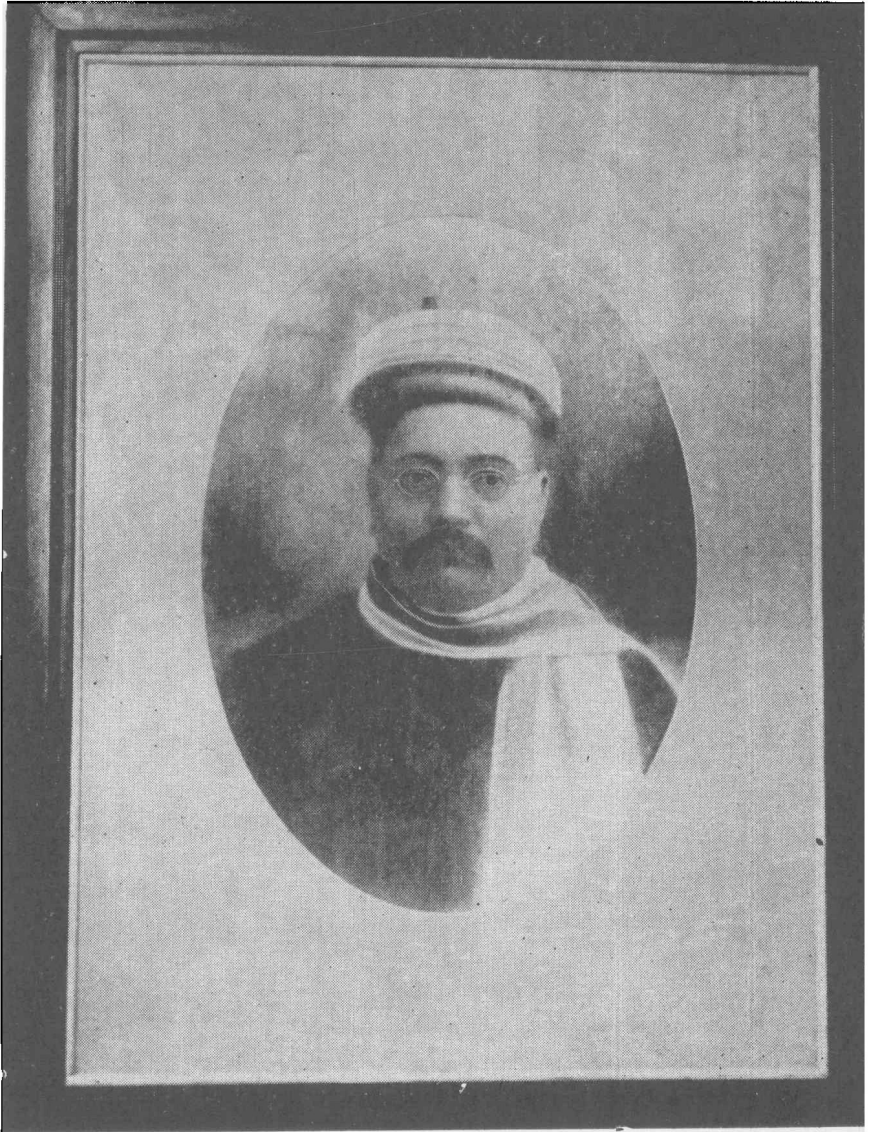


Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 7

GOKHALE INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

BANGALORE - 4

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GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE
(Portrait unveiled by Mahatma Gandhi, on 8-5-1915; G.I.P.A.)

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RAJAJI

Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, popularly known by affectionate abbreviation as Rajaji, was born in the year 1878 in Torapalli, a village near Hosur, Salem District in the State of Madras. He was a student of the Central College, Bangalore, and completed the B.A. course in the Presidency College, Madras. He took his B.L. degree from the Law College in Madras and joined the bar in 1900. His early practice as a lawyer was in Salem and later in Madras upto 1919. He was a delegate to the Indian National Congress at Calcutta in 1906. Responding to the call of the Mahatma in 1920 he joined the non-cooperation movement for the independence of India. He edited Mahatma Gandhi's weekly *Young India* during the latter's imprisonment. He was General Secretary to the Indian National Congress in 1921-22, and a member of the Congress Working Committee from 1922 to 1942, and again in 1946-47. He suffered imprisonment on five different occasions in Congress campaigns between 1921 and 1942.

He was Vice-President of the Dakshina Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha, Madras, and in the wake of the political reforms under the Government of India Act, 1935 and the Congress decision to contest elections, he became Prime Minister of Madras from 1937-39. He resigned the Prime Ministership in October, 1939, along with other Congress Ministers throughout the country and rejoined the national struggle. He however resigned from the Congress in April 1942 on account of differences of opinion but was soon back in its fold in 1944 and in September of that year he assisted Mahatma Gandhi in the Gandhi-Jinnah talks. At the end of the national struggle in 1946, when the Interim Government was formed, he became a member in the Governor General's Council from September 1946 to August 15, 1947. Following the disturbed political conditions in Bengal, he became Governor of Bengal in August 1947, and later, in succession to Earl Mountbatten, Governor-General of India in November 1947, and, after transfer of power was the first

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Governor General of Free India from June 1948 to January 26, 1950, the date of the inauguration of the Indian Republic. He was Minister without portfolio in the Government of India for a brief period, May-December 1950 and Minister for Home Affairs from January to November 1951.

The difficult political situation in Madras in 1952 called him from his retirement and he became Chief Minister of Madras, from 1952-54. He was given the highest award of Bharat Ratna in 1954. From then onwards, he was chiefly concerned with guiding the nation's affairs through numerous articles in newspapers, which paved the way, particularly after the Avadi Congress, for the founding of the Swatantra Party as an all-India party by him. Interested in world peace, he led the three-men Indian delegation on behalf of the Gandhi Peace Foundation to America, England and Italy in October 1962 to canvass support for the banning of nuclear tests.

His publications, which are a perennial source of thought, wisdom and enlightenment, are both in Tamil and English. Important among his Tamil books are: Socrates, Kutti Kadhaigal, Kannan Kattiya Vazhi, Aureliussin-Atmachintanai, Upanishada-Palagani, Abhedha Vadam, Vyasara Virundhu, Chakravarthy Thirumagan, Valluvar Vachagam and others, some of which have been translated into other Indian languages. His English books include Jail Diary, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Kamba Ramayana-Ayodhya Kanda, Cripps Mission, SatyamEva Jayate-Vols. I, II and III, Voice of the Uninvolved, Hinduism - Doctrine and Way of Life, and others.

The G. I. P. A. has much pleasure in making available to the public, as Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 7, this brochure containing chiefly the instructive and inspiring address delivered by Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar on the 8th of January 1966 as Rajaji Birthday Lecture.

Many requests have been received for the speech from members of this Institute and from the public, and we trust this publication will be widely welcomed as a contribution to the Indian political literature of our day — particularly by the younger generation who are separated from the times of Gokhale by so much as half a century.

This year, as it happens, is the year of the centenary of Gokhale's birth, and the G. I. P. A. is happy to open the Centenary Celebrations with this publication.

G.I.P.A.
Bangalore 4
9th May 1966

D. V. GUNDAPPA
Hon. Secretary

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RAJAJI BIRTHDAY LECTURE

INTRODUCTORY

The first lecture under the endowment instituted at the Gokhale Institute of Public Affairs, Bangalore, by Mr. & Mrs. T. Sadasivam (Sri Bharathan Publications, Madras) to celebrate the birthday of Sri Rajagopalacharyar, was delivered by Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar on Saturday, 8th January 1966, in the hall of the Institute. The subject was "*The Message of Gokhale*". The hall was crowded with eager audience which included the elite of Bangalore, and several hundreds had gathered on the lawns outside the hall to listen to the lecture. Mr. D. V. Gundappa, Hon. Secretary of the Institute, welcomed the gathering in the following words :

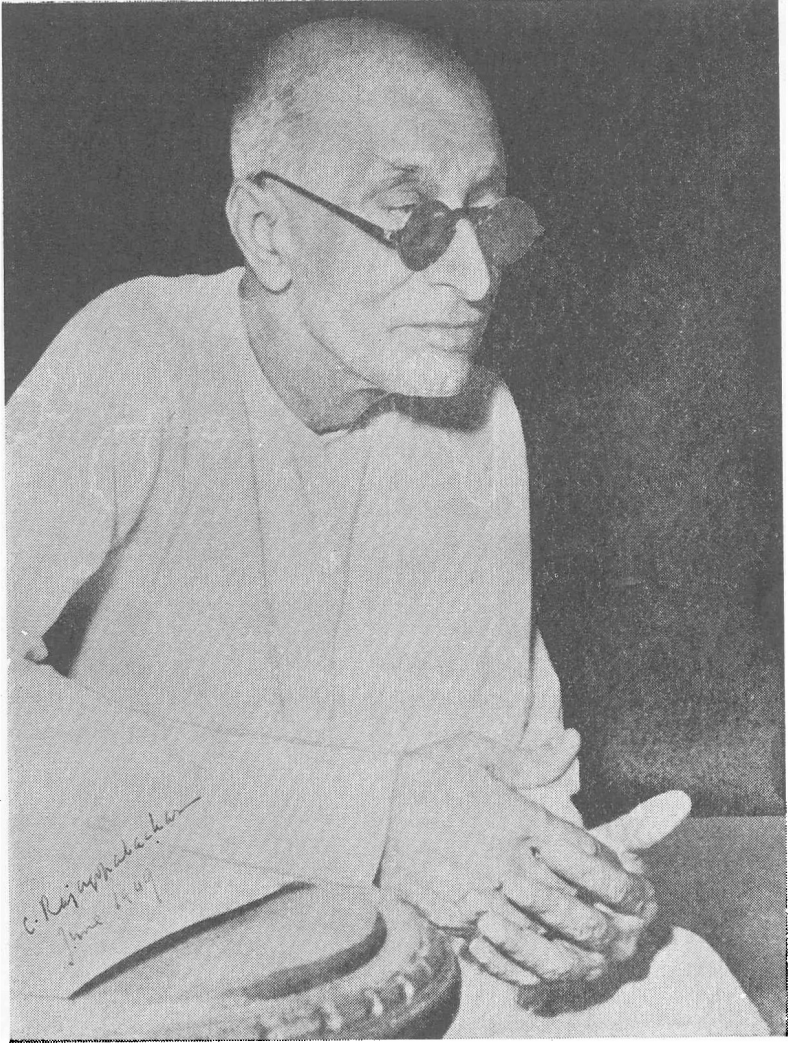
Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar, Sir ; Dr. Madhava Rau, Sir ;
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This day is a day of great importance to this Institute. When the speaker is one of the eminence of Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, and the subject is one so inspiring as Gokhale and when the occasion is one so pleasing as the birthday of Sri Rajagopalacharya, everybody will agree that there is an unusual coincidence of three conspicuous kinds of importance. On behalf of the Institute and its Study Circle, I offer a cordial and respectful welcome to you to this happy function. By way of introduction, I beg leave to say just a word or two.

Let me begin with a reminiscence. Fifty years ago, Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar came to Bangalore in this

very season, to speak at the Swami Vivekananda Jayanti in the Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama not far from this place. A very large and eager audience had gathered there, and it was my good fortune to be there with some friends, among whom I would mention two—M. G. Varadachar and N. Narasimha Moorthy, both known to Dr. Madhava Rau, our Chairman of this evening. When Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar arrived there, we noticed a look of sadness on his face, and in a moment we came to know why. The previous evening Gokhale had passed away from our world in Poona. The words in which Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar announced the mournful news to the assembly and the tribute he then paid to the departed patriot moved us most profoundly and induced in a few among us thoughts of an organization of some kind to continue the Gokhale tradition of public work in our own humble way.

Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar was then already—if I may say so—a front-rank leader in public life. As lawyer and politician, as scholar and thinker, as statesman and administrator, as educationist and economic planner, as the exponent of a broad and humane culture and as India's cultural ambassador to Europe and America, Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar has served the motherland and the world for over sixty years now. Eloquent of speech and generous of hand, he has built up many public institutions including the Congress, and has helped many public causes. It has naturally been our earnest wish for many years to secure to this Institute the blessing and the prestige that come from the personal association of one so illustrious in so many fields of public life; and if we had



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to wait for it for so long, the reason is not at all any want of sympathy on his part, but only the non-co-operation of circumstances. Dates convenient to both were difficult to find. We often sought his help in other ways, and his response was every time generous and encouraging. We have today the satisfaction of seeing a long-cherished desire of ours fulfilled. We are deeply grateful for this.

The occasion is significant in other ways. What a high place Sri Rajagopalacharya holds in the affection and reverence of his countrymen, it is needless for me to dwell upon. Sri C. Rajagopalachari's interest in this Institute has been keen and constant from the very beginning. In May 1949, when he was Governor-General, he gave us a generous donation and spoke words of appreciation and encouragement and has done us many kindnesses since. The portrait on view here was given by him at my request, and it was unveiled by Sir Mirza Ismail on 15th August 1949, when Sir Mirza paid glowing tributes to Rajaji. The ready and hearty manner in which Dr. Ramaswami Aiyar acceded to our request that he should be our first Rajaji Birthday Lecturer shows in what high esteem he holds Rajaji. Of course, they are friends. Ties of mutual personal regard and affection bind them to each other, as also common ideals of public service. It is our good fortune to have two such doyens to guide the nation in these trying times. God grant us the continuance of this blessing for long long years.

I cannot on this occasion omit reference to the founders of the Rajaji Birthday Lecture Endowment—

Mr. & Mrs. Sadasivam. This splendid endowment is one of their numerous acts of free-handed support to this Institute. I have every confidence that, by this means, the Institute will every year arrange that a scholar or publicist of distinction will give the public the benefit of his study of some subject connected with the welfare and progress of India and her contribution to the world's welfare. I am sure the country will gratefully appreciate the thoughtful public spirit of Mr. and Mrs. Sadasivam.

Dr. Madhava Rau has long been one of us at this Institute. He has helped us materially in times of need; he has taken part in our activities and encouraged and guided us when we felt weak or discouraged. The high intellectual and moral prestige that belongs to his name has been an unfailing source of strength to this Institute. He is the most honoured of our fellow-citizens; and we are proud and happy that he presides over this evening's function.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I request Dr. N. Madhava Rau to preside and Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar to deliver the address.

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING SPEECH

By *Dr. N. Madhava Rau*

Dr. Gundappa, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar,

Ladies and Gentlemen :

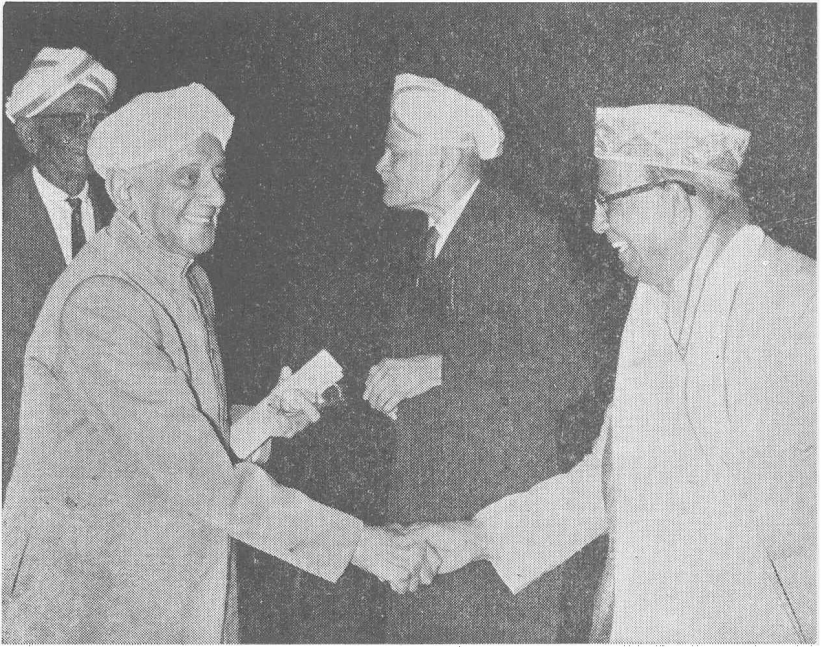
I am very grateful to Dr. Gundappa for the very kind words in which he has spoken about me. To preside over a distinguished gathering like this is a matter of pleasure and of honour ; but at the same time it can be a source of embarrassment. But on this occasion I am spared that cause for embarrassment for two reasons. In the first place, the lecture of this evening is by an eminent person known all over the country. Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar needs no introduction to the Bangalore audience. To attempt to do so would be not only unnecessary but impertinent on my part, and Mr. Gundappa himself in his introductory remarks has explained the special appropriateness of Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar's delivering the first lecture under the Rajaji Lecture endowment at this Institute.

Next to introducing the lecturer is the president's duty to wind up with some observations of his own on points arising from the lecture. I shall spare myself this embarrassing task too (*laughter*)—the more readily because I know from experience, repeated experience, how often the so-called concluding remarks of the chairman could bore the audience (*prolonged laughter*).

The work and life and mission of Gokhale have been a subject on which much has been heard and discussed. But I remember that at no time has it failed to arouse fresh interest, and often inspiration.

It is a subject with many facets which often have a direct or indirect bearing on some of our current problems, though they are set now in a different context. A foreign rule existed then. But independence has not brought us all the good things we had hoped for (*hear, hear*). In fact, the country is now in a very sad state, economically and otherwise : a situation which is no doubt the result of mis-planning, ineffective execution, and ideological confusion. Honesty in politics and sanity in handling the finances of the country, for which Gokhale pleaded during all his public life, are now more important and more urgent desiderata than they ever were when India was under foreign rule. The British at least knew that Government is a task for the thoughtful.

I have now great pleasure in requesting Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar to deliver the lecture which we are all eagerly waiting to hear.



(L to R) Sri A. R. Nagesvara Iyer, Sri C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar,
Sri N. Madhava Rau, Sri D. V. Gundappa.

MESSAGE OF GOKHALE

By

SIR C. P. RAMASWAMI AIYAR

Dear Dr. Madhava Rau, Dr. Gundappa, and my good friends,

I account it a special good fortune to be called upon to deliver a lecture on Gokhale's Message, the lecture being the first of a series of utterances which will be delivered under the auspices of this well-known institution which owes so much to you, Dr. Gundappa (*Applause*). These lectures have been rendered possible on account of the discerning munificence of Mr. T. Sadasivam and his talented wife Srimathi Subbalakshmi Ammal.

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The person to commemorate whom these lectures are delivered is Sri C. Rajagopalacharya, whom Bangalore has known so well from the days of his studentship. He is a person whom I have known for many many years. He is just one month younger than myself (*cheers*); and on one occasion, speaking on a public platform, when Rajagopalacharya was sitting next to me, I had occasion jocularly to remark that if I insisted on my seniority he had to prostrate before me (*loud cheers*). But joking apart, my good friends, he is a man who has been rightly regarded as a dynamic leader. He and I have differed quite often; but at no time have I withheld my tribute of admiration and of appreciation for those qualities for which he is pre-eminent. He is a man who can resolutely think for himself; he is a man who does not get nervous or dispirited when he has to differ from others all over the country. The occasions on which he has chosen to differ even from his chosen *guru*, Mahatma Gandhi, are well-known to most of us. He is a man who takes trouble to form his opinions; and he is not afraid of

adhering to those opinions. He is a person who in politics has deliberately espoused pronouncedly unpopular causes. Time has sometimes shown that he was right, sometimes that he has been not so right ; but whether he was right or wrong, he was always a man who trod a path wrought by himself. He does not usually follow beaten tracks.

Specially remarkable is his contribution to literature. In fact I regard his work of popularizing our epics and classics in Tamil as the greatest work that has been done in recent times by any man in the South of India (*applause*). By nature he is one of those who question and interrogate and are not easily led to accept what other people say. To such a man came the message of our great epics and our *Upanishads* and classics ; and he has imbibed freely of that perennial fountain, and he has bestowed those living waters also to the people at large. He possesses rare gifts of thought and of choice expression. His Tamil style is simple and striking ; and he may be styled one of the founders of modern Tamil prose along with Subrahmanya Bharati and U. V. Swaminatha Aiyar. After all our politics are forgotten, after all temporary strife or controversy is ignored, people will think of him as a man who blazed a new trail, the trail of a fearless leader, the trail of a person who followed the path of enlightenment.

To Rajagopalacharya therefore, as a political leader, as a fearless thinker, and as a master of Tamil prose and a great adapter of ancient ideals to modern needs, our homage is due. And so I consider it a privilege to deliver this lecture, the first lecture under the Rajaji endowment.

You, Sir, have referred to what happened fifty years ago on the occasion of Gokhale's death. Even Kodanda Rao, the busy and tireless biographer, probably does not know that I was one of the aspirants for a seat in the Servants of India Society (*cheers*), and I should, if left to myself, have joined the Society.

Both Gokhale and myself had agreed on that matter. But my father insisted, with some peremptoriness, that I should join the Bar; and my earlier ambition was frustrated.

Normally speaking, as you are all aware, I deliver my speeches *ex tempore*. But this is a special occasion, and I have thought it best to write down what I wish to say, so that what I say may, at least to a small extent, be worthy of the person whom we have met here to remember.

THREE TYPES OF LEADERS

In the chronicle of human endeavour and achievement, there are found to be at least three different types of leaders of thought and action. One type may be described as comprising those who affirm great truths or produce monumental results, who inspire as well as spur one to action. Amongst them may be counted the seers who produced the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, the Bible, the Koran and other scriptures of mankind as well as Lord Buddha and Mahavira. Along with them may be included others like Euclid, Newton, Darwin and Einstein in the field of science and great protagonists of literature like Homer and Valmiki, Vyasa and Kalidasa, Dante, Shakespeare and Goethe, and also creative statesmen including Alexander, Julius Cæsar, Asoka, Sri Harsha and Akbar. Another group may be described as the critics, the doubters and the dialecticians who pursue the path of enquiry and criticism, and by the methods of dialectics, question the foundation of belief and arouse and stimulate discussion and dialogue. Socrates and Plato, Voltaire, Renan and Marx, and in our own country the originators of the philosophies and *Darsanas* not based on the Vedas and the agnostics and followers of what was termed the higher criticism, at a later date, pursued the path of disputation. A third group may be termed conciliators or reconcilers, those who seek harmony and pursue the middle path between the

practical and the real. These are not riders of whirlwind but, according to a description given of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, "masters of the possible". From the earliest days in India, the value of such men has been recognised and their watchword and their method of action have been described as *Samavaaya*. In a great Vedic passage, persons are enjoined to come together, to talk and discuss with each other and thus to attain mutual understanding and tolerance.

Ravindranath Tagore, in his life, typified an attitude of cultural reconciliation. When founding the Visva Bharati, he said, "I experienced the want of an institution in India which should be a true centre for all the different cultures, especially the civilization of India itself and those of the Far East and that of Islam". He emphasised in his poems and dreams as well as in the Visva Bharati the need of free cooperation with all nations, in a world-wide brotherhood, as the natural end of human history.

Swami Vivekananda appreciated and admired the organising power, the practical philanthropy and the beneficent canalisation of charity that characterised the West. In his own language, he meant to make use of the greatness of the West in order to reinforce and proclaim the spiritual heritage of India. His whole endeavour was to take the message of the Vedanta to America and Great Britain and to impart the practical ideals of the West, to stimulate and to reform and reorganise the social and economic life of India. A similar, but differently oriented outlook characterised the merger of the Eastern and Western spiritual experiences which was the task of Sri Aurobindo's life.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was the devoted disciple of Mahadev Govind Ranade who was a dynamic factor in the renaissance of Indian political and economic thought. His spiritual urges were turned to practical ends. Gandhiji may be said to be in a separate category by himself. He utilised his African and Indian

experiences to pose the most searching of questions to a great Empire. Through the methods of peace and the exaltation of the means over the ends, he also solved the questions he propounded to Great Britain by constructive initiation of a new policy as a substitute for the British regime. In their different ways, all these personages were great harmonisers.

GOKHALE—JUDGE OF THE POSSIBLE

Gokhale was essentially a scholar politician ; and politicians normally live for the moment. But he was a man who transformed the politics of this country and spiritualised it by insisting on self-surrender as well as on tolerance and on purity of motives and action. In 1907 he stated " we are at a stage of the country's progress when our achievements are bound to be small and our disappointments frequent and trying. Such is the place which it has pleased Providence to assign to us in this struggle. It will no doubt be given to our countrymen of future generations to serve India by successes. We, of the present generation, must be content to serve mainly by our failures ". Thanks to the work not only of liberal statesmen headed by Ranade, Gokhale, Wacha and Srinivasa Sastri, of Dr. Beasant and her colleagues of the Home Rule Movement, of Gandhiji, Nehru, Patel and the leaders of the Congress, the opportunity that Gokhale prophesied has now come to us. We are again passing through a trying period, face to face with economic difficulties and the crises of planning as well as unforeseen situations brought about by the aggression of our neighbours ; and we are again confronted with the duty as well as the obligation of converting our difficulties into opportunities.

Gokhale's career has been compared by John S. Hoyland to that of Count Cavour, the constructive statesman of Italy. Both the men had the same political purpose and the same determination to use what they had in their hands to the

fullest advantage in order to gain more. In his thought-provoking "Life of Gopal Krishna Gokhale", published in 1933, Hoyland has characterised the two statesmen thus :

"They were both 'masters of the possible', setting before themselves limited objectives, using the existing machinery, however defective, for the attainment of those objectives, and when they were obtained, going forward one step more to some other practical and limited objective. They were both inherently constitutionalists, *i.e.*, men who perceived that revolutionary methods, even if they succeed for a time in realising the popular will, have, as their inevitable ultimate results, a reaction which may carry things backward. In consequence, both of them were anathema to the hotheads in their respective lands. The followers of Mazzini hated Cavour even more than they hated the Austrians, and it is perhaps true that some Indian extremists hated Gokhale worse than they hated the British."

In 1914, at the instance of Lord Willingdon, whose great merit as a true friend of India has not been adequately recognised, Gokhale prepared a scheme of reforms which, it was hoped, would be inaugurated by the British Government of their own accord. This scheme was entrusted to the Aga Khan, and it was published in 1917 after Gokhale's death. It has been usually termed 'Gokhale's Political Testament' and it embodied his conception of the next step that should be taken towards his ideal of a fully self-governing India. It is most illuminating as affording certain grounds of comparison and contrast with the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms and later constitutional developments; but, in the main, it embodies what this 'master of the possible' thought might be of immediate value and significance. If it had been adopted, the history of political India would have been very different.

Two dominating traits of Gokhale were his love of order and his dislike of political hysteria and of direct action in any shape or form. He often used to quote Burke and say that the formation of opinion is of greater importance than laws or executive power in maintaining order and running Governments; and in describing the Bengal disturbances of 1907-1908 and Bal Gangadhar Tilak's activities which led to his arrest in 1908, Gokhale announced and maintained doctrines which can be fairly compared with the ideals of Greece of the Periclean era. The law of life of Greece was embodied in the two maxims: (1) Nothing in excess and (2) Know thyself; or, in other words, in self-discipline and self-regulation, the pursuit of the middle path and consequently the pursuit of the policy of making haste slowly (*festina lente*).

BIOGRAPHICAL

Gokhale was born on the 9th of May 1866 in a typical Mahratta village, and his early life was lived in close contact with the life of the village peasantry. His family, in common with his fellow-villagers, encountered dire poverty, and the struggles of Gokhale's mother and of his brother to go to the utmost limit in financing the studies of Gokhale constituted an epic of self-sacrifice and a conspicuous example of the close family-bonds which has been so vitally strong throughout the ages in India. From his earliest days, Gokhale exhibited a marvellous capacity for memorising and for prolonged hard intellectual labour. His ancestors had played an honourable part in Mahratta history, and he belonged to a scrupulously orthodox and conservative community and family. Many of his ancestors displayed qualities of responsible leadership which Gokhale inherited. His secondary education was financed by his brother, Govinda Rao, who gave up all his prospects and accepted a small post of Rs. 15/- a month out of which he spent more than half for Gokhale's support. From the time that Gokhale passed

his Matriculation examination in 1881, he never looked back on his intellectual development and maintained himself on scholarships, specialising in Mathematics and in English. There was a period of hesitation when he had to decide between the Law, Engineering and the Civil Service. Gokhale, with rare discrimination and rarer abnegation, decided to make education his life-work and became an Assistant Master in a High School in Poona. When the Deccan Education Society called on him to dedicate his life to the work of the Society, he had no hesitation. At that time, there were many influences tending to call a young man to the service of the country. Tilak and Agarkar were conducting a new English School which Gokhale joined and this meant his willingness to be content for 20 years with Rs. 75/- per month. It has been said that Gokhale's decision to join the Society was like taking up monasticism and involved a renunciation of all the usual ambitions for worldly prosperity.

When the Deccan Education Society opened the new Fergusson College in 1885, Gokhale began to teach English there as well as, when called upon to do so, Mathematics, History and Political Economy. His connection with the college continued till 1904. Gokhale's mathematical attainments gave him that grasp of statistics which was of great use to him later on. His contact with Ranade was a turning point. Ranade, who was described as the uncrowned king of Poona, was a sage whose political wisdom and whose historical and economic researches made him an admirable guide for Gokhale. Ranade perceived the latent potentialities of Gokhale and deliberately set himself to develop them. For 14 years, until the death of Ranade in 1901, Ranade and Gokhale were in constant contact, and Gokhale received a rigorous training which included the study of original documents, of masses of blue-books and of statistics. Gokhale was soon entrusted with the work of drafting memorials to Government having, in the meantime, been made the Secretary of the Sarvajanic Sabha, an important

political organisation which was an example to other political institutions in India.

Differences of opinion had arisen as early as 1887 between Agarkar with whom Gokhale worked in close collaboration and Tilak on many questions including the topic of social reform. Later, Gokhale became the Secretary of the Deccan Education Society and had to undertake, undeterred by opposition, the duty of collecting funds for the Society. In addition to the political experience which he received as a disciple of Ranade, he had the opportunity of editing Agarkar's Reformist *Sudharak* Weekly, the English part of the journal being mainly written by Gokhale.

EARLY WORK

In 1889, Gokhale became one of the speakers at the session of the Indian National Congress, and one of his very early speeches was in respect of a cause which he made particularly his own throughout his life, namely, the Indianisation of Public Services. Through Ranade, Gokhale became acquainted with Dadabhai Naoroji. The speech that Gokhale made on the occasion of Naoroji's 81st birthday is characteristic of the man. He said :

“ I think it is to the infinite honour of British rule and the wise and large-hearted policy followed in the administration of the country—especially in matters of education—that what was then almost difficult to conceive has now already become a fact and reality. And to Dadabhai Naoroji and the earliest band of Indian reformers that worked with him belongs the credit of understanding aright the true meaning of the new order of things and the possibilities that it implied for their countrymen and of throwing themselves heart and soul into the work of realising those possibilities in practice. Since then one generation of workers has entirely disappeared from the scene, and of

the next only a few are left—may they long remain with us!—to guide us. But Dadabhai Naoroji has all through remained in the forefront of the movement, and neither age nor disappointment has chilled his ardour, nor has absence diminished his hold on his countrymen.”

Certain domestic difficulties including a second marriage during the lifetime of his first wife who was a permanent invalid, made it difficult for Gokhale to take up the leadership in social reform movements and gradually an estrangement developed between Gokhale and Tilak. They had been fast friends, but perhaps Tilak was a difficult person to deal with as a colleague, and many of the views of Gokhale and Agarkar diverged from those of Tilak. It was in 1890 that Tilak broke his connection with the Education Society and the work of the Fergusson College. As time went on, Tilak, exercising an increasing influence in Poona, became one of the uniform and consistent opponents of every detail of Government policy; and his views on the use of force to further political programmes made a further point of divergence between Gokhale and Tilak. Tilak became, as the years rolled on, more and more devoted to the ideals of *Sanatana Dharma* and to the reorganisation of India along rigidly nationalistic lines so as to achieve independence of foreign rule and all foreign influence even if to do so meant the use of physical force. In these matters, as on the question of Hindu-Muslim relations, differences between the two great leaders of Maharashtra became more and more pronounced. Tilak accumulated a growing popularity whereas Gokhale was very often subject to criticism among groups that deemed themselves advanced and patriotic. It is at the same time remarkable that Gokhale was, characteristically, a great admirer of Irish leaders whose steady work and disinterested sacrifice he greatly appreciated.

One of the turning points of Gokhale's political career coincided with his insistence on the importance

to India of the British connection ; and the ideal of Dominion Status was always before him, notwithstanding that Gokhale realised the defects of British administration especially during Lord Curzon's regime. He advocated from the beginning the attainment of India's ideals by constitutional methods, by the education of Indian opinion, by making the most of every avenue open to the expression of that opinion and by practical demonstration of the fact that Indians were capable of responsible self-government.

TRIALS

Gokhale became the Secretary of the Indian National Congress in 1895 and quarrels arose almost at once between Tilak's party and Gokhale's over the question of the venue and location of the All-India Social Reform Conference. The Sarvajanic Sabha was captured by the extremer section, and the great work done by Gokhale in the Welby Commission was not as fully appreciated as it should have been. Gokhale and his life-long friend, Dinshaw Wacha, went to England and appeared before the Welby Commission dealing *inter alia* with the economic and financial problems of India and wasteful and excessive expenditure on items like the Indian Army. Before that Commission, Gokhale also pleaded for the Indianisation of the Services and the enlargement of the educational programme and he proposed an increasing Indian control over financial transactions of India and displayed remarkable powers of analysis and criticism. It was at the time when he was absent in England that plague broke out in India, and Gokhale, on the materials before him, sharply criticised the administration of the Indian authorities as well as the conduct of the British soldiers who were employed in enforcing segregation methods. His information was found to be inaccurate and he manfully tendered an apology. The famous apology incident created a furore in India ; but the fact that Gokhale was manly enough to offer an apology,

imparted to him the strength to stand alone against the world. It may be noticed that, after the incident, Gokhale did conspicuous service in connection with the sanitary methods to deal with plague, and his services were widely recognised even by his erstwhile critics. A Commission was appointed by Government to go into the plague measures, and Gokhale was nominated as one of the members. Unfortunately, the findings of the Commission did not lessen the agitation. About this time, Mahratta nationalism manifested itself strongly and Gokhale had often to plead for Hindu-Muslim unity. His endeavours culminated in the Hindu-Muslim Pact of 1916.

LEGISLATOR

From 1899 Gokhale began his work as a legislator in the Bombay Legislative Council. He was elected as the representative of the Bombay Municipal Council and took part in notable debates on the famine problem and the land alienation bill; and it was here that he proved that he was not merely a negative critic, but could make positive proposals. It was in the Bombay Legislative Council that Gokhale developed his remarkable powers of interpellation and criticism in a courteous though effective spirit. In 1902, following the resignation owing to ill-health of Sir Phirozeshah Mehta, Gokhale was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council at the age of 36. From this date, for over 13 years, he was the leader of non-official opinion and voiced the point of view of enlightened India in the supreme legislative organ of the country at that time. His annual budget speeches were an epoch-making contribution. Gokhale insisted that his function was not merely to oppose Government, but to put before the Government the Indian point of view on every question. In the result, his budget speeches were listened to with attention by the representatives of the Government, and they very often bore their fruits in succeeding years. As an advocate of retrenchment, his services were conspicuous. Even Lord Curzon, Gokhale's

consistent political opponent, affirmed that "God had endowed him with extraordinary abilities and he had freely placed them at the disposal of his country. It is a pleasure to cross swords with him." Lord Minto, referring to his budget speech of 1906, stated that even in England there were few men on the parliamentary front benches capable of such an effort.

Gokhale's growing responsibilities in the Legislative Council led to his resignation as a Professor in the Fergusson College after 18 years of service. It may be remembered that Gokhale was throughout getting a salary of Rs. 75/- and that after retirement, his pension was Rs. 30/- per mensem. When he took his seat as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, the Viceroy was Lord Curzon, and when the budget of that year showed a surplus, Gokhale made a wonderful speech criticising currency surpluses, the salt duty and the expenditure on the army. He inveighed against the delusion of regarding surpluses as indices of financial prosperity. The reduction of the salt tax and the reorganisation of Indian education, the Indianisation of the Public Services and the criticism of what he called the policy of drift in the system of administration in the hands of the Indian Civil Service, were the recurring theses of his speeches. It is characteristic of Gokhale that he paid a tribute to Lord Curzon for what he termed his wonderful intellectual gifts, his brilliant powers of expression, his phenomenal energy and boundless enthusiasm for work. He added that the gods were jealous and they had withheld from Lord Curzon a sympathetic imagination without which no man can understand an alien people.

Gokhale's criticism of the Universities Bill of 1903 as an essentially bureaucratic measure was one of the highlights of his sober oratory. The need for agricultural relief and for the association of Indians in the work of the Government were concurrent themes of later addresses, and it was in 1905 that he delivered the greatest of his budget speeches.

SERVANT OF INDIA

Mr. T. V. Parvate, in his life of Gokhale says : “ In Gokhale’s rather short-lived but crowded career, 1905 is the most glorious year. A number of important events, all indicating that he had become a trusted leader and representative of the people, took place in this year. More than that, he officially began to describe himself as a Servant of India from June 12, 1905—which in reality he always was—because on that day was founded the Servants of India Society of which he became the President or First Member. He was elected to preside over the session of the Indian National Congress at the end of that year ; and only a few days before that, he had returned from his second visit to England, where he had gone as an accredited representative of the Congress, his other colleague being Lala Lajpat Rai. His countrymen were full of admiration for the educative propaganda he and Lajpat Rai had carried on among the British people on the eve of a general election. In the same year, Gokhale was elected for the second time President of the Municipality of his home-town, Poona. In the midst of all this work, he was busy collecting funds for the Ranade Memorial and subscribers and donors for *India*, the weekly propaganda bulletin conducted in London, by the British Congress Committee. ”

The ideals of the Servants of India Society were thus set out :

“ Its members will direct their efforts principally towards—(1) creating among the people by example and by precept, a deep and passionate love of the Motherland, seeking its highest fulfilment in service and sacrifice ; (2) organising the work of political education and agitation, basing it on a careful study of public questions, and strengthening generally the public life of the country ; (3) promoting relations of cordial goodwill and cooperation among different communities ; (4) assisting educational movements,

especially those for the education of women, the education of backward classes, and industrial and scientific education; (5) helping forward the industrial development of the country; (6) the elevation of the depressed classes.

The headquarters of the Society will be at Poona where it will maintain a home for its members, and attached to it a library for the study of subjects bearing on its work."

CONGRESS SPLIT

The Indian National Congress session of 1905 already disclosed those fissiparous symptoms which were to come to a head in the Surat Congress of 1907 and to lead to an open cleavage. The opposition to the partition of Bengal, and the resolution of the Congress that India should be governed in the interest of the Indians themselves, formed the main themes of Gokhale's discourses to successive Congresses; and he continuously emphasised that India's political future should be analogous to that of the self-governing colonies. He was, as is well-known, constantly consulted by Lord Morley before embarking on the Minto-Morley Reforms, and Morley has described Gokhale as the most courteous of opponents whose great attributes were an abounding common sense as well as an appreciation of the other side's point of view and responsibilities. His willingness to negotiate, Lord Morley added, was not a sign of weakness but exemplified his practical wisdom as it did that of Augustus Cæsar. Tilak's prosecution and announcement of the Minto-Morley Reforms were unfortunately practically simultaneous. Gokhale expected that the announcement of the reforms would be satisfactory to our side in India, the most important item being an elected majority in the Provincial Councils with the power of passing resolutions on important matters of administration and finance. In his budget speech of 1908, Gokhale stated, "whatever reforms are taken in

hand, let them be dealt with frankly and generously and let not the words 'too late' be written on every one of them." The result of his appeal was the granting of the Minto-Morley Reforms, and it was generally agreed that Gokhale's explanations to the British public of the Indian situation contributed to the result.

Speaking at the Congress of 1908, Gokhale insisted on the growing Indian unity and the feeling of nationality. He added, "hitherto we have been engaged in agitation from outside; hereafter we shall be engaged in responsible association". In a spirit of generous appreciation, Gokhale remarked of Lord Morley that he had saved India from drifting into chaos. All the time, however, Gokhale was assailed by numerous opponents as a temporiser and as lacking in patriotic fervour.

It is needless to speak at length of Gokhale's work in respect of Elementary Education and his constructive proposals which culminated in 1911 when he introduced his Elementary Education Bill. It was in his last speech on the Bill that Gokhale concluded thus: "I know that my Bill will be thrown out. I make no complaints. I shall not even be depressed". But he added that he had always felt that "We, of the present generation can only hope to serve our country by failures".

In 1912, he raised a powerful voice against the Indentured Labour system and took up the cause of the Indians in South Africa. He proceeded to that country on the invitation of Gandhiji in spite of failing health. The arduous work done by Gokhale for the cause of Indians in South Africa and in connection with the Public Services Commission of which he was a member, led to a rapid degeneration of his health. The last few weeks of his life were rendered miserable for him by the controversy regarding the Congress creed and the open split between those who wished to obtain

self-government within the British Empire and those who wished to be outside the Empire. His health progressively deteriorated, but he displayed marvellous fortitude and, before he died on 19th February, he is reported to have said in Marathi, "This side of life has been good to me. It is time that I should go to see the other."

PERSONAL QUALITIES

One of Gokhale's most attractive features was his capacity for deep personal friendships and loyalties. His great respect and admiration for Dr. Annie Besant were fully reciprocated by her, though they did not always agree. One of his great regrets before he died was that he could not complete his work on the Royal Commission dealing with public services. He stated:

"My end is nearing. I have deceived my country. It would have been better if I had been spared for a couple of years more. I would have gone to England and striven hard to bring about a most satisfactory termination of the Royal Commission and thus would have repaid, although in the smallest degree, the debt I owe to my mother country."

MESSAGE

Mr. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri (afterwards a Member of the Privy Council) joined the Servants of India Society in 1907, and as Gokhale's successor and India's unofficial ambassador, he continued to implement Gokhale's message through his brilliant oratory and persuasive skill and enthusiasm for all good causes. Mr. Kodanda Rao, who became an important member of the Society and who was closely associated in several capacities with Mr. Sastri, has epitomised Gokhale's works in connection with the Society and his remarks have a wider applicability than to the Society itself.

"Gopal Krishna Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society in Poona in 1905 with a view to training

national missionaries for the service of India in the secular field in the spirit in which religious work is undertaken. He was the chief disciple of Mahadev Govind Ranade, who was a judge of the Bombay High Court and was the main inspirer of all progressive movements in Western India at the time. In politics, he was the philosopher of liberalism, constitutionalism and gradualism, as opposed to extremism, direct action and revolution which appealed to the school of nationalists, led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The tablets of Indian Liberalism were thus inscribed by Ranade :

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

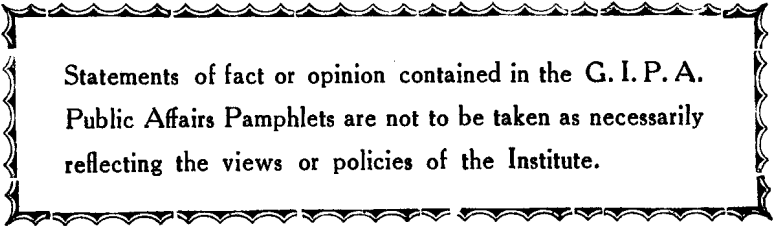
In fine, it would be appropriate to evaluate the message of Gokhale's life and work as one of reconciliation and wise compromise. Lord Morley, the friend and admirer of Gokhale, has defined the significance and limits of such compromise. He says as follows in his book *On Compromise* : “It is legitimate compromise rationally to acquiesce in the fact that your contemporaries are not prepared to embrace your idea and to say ‘I do not expect you to support this reform or to surrender your prejudices. At any rate it shall not be my fault if the reform remains unknown and undeclared’. It is illegitimate compromise to say ‘I cannot persuade you to accept my truth. Therefore, I will pretend to accept your falsehood.’”

THANKSGIVING

At the conclusion of the address, the Chairman Dr. N. Madhava Rau thanked the lecturer and observed that it was a very instructive and inspiring speech.

Mr. D. V. Gundappa offered the grateful thanks of the Institute to the two eminent men who brought distinction to the occasion and gave the public the benefit of their thought and experience, in the speeches they made. He garlanded both the chairman and the lecturer amidst hearty applause of the audience.

The meeting closed with the recital of *Jana Gana*.



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