GOKHALE

APPRECIATION & REMINISCENCES

Speech delivered by **Mr. C. Ramalinga Reddy** at the Gokhale Hall, on 4th March 1920

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MRS. BESANT AND GENTLEMEN,—I beg to thank Mrs. Besant for the kind references made to me—references which are especially valuable as coming from one who may be regarded as the greatest English patriot of India and whose illustrious career needs no word of praise or appreciation from any of us assembled here.

It is a marvellous tribute to the memory of the great man in whose honour we are gathered this evening that his anniversary should have become a festival of patriotism in India celebrated in all parts and by all communities.

GOKHALE'S POSITION AMONGST OUR LEADERS.

If Gokhale had lived in a time desolate of genius his importance might have been regarded as being purely relative and accidental, like that of the one-eyed amongst the blind. But he lived in an age of giants, amongst contemporaries who filled a large place in the heart and eye of the country. Yet was he not only not dwarfed by their presence but in comparison rose higher—a sure proof that chance had very little to do with his greatness and that it rested on incontestable merit. To my mind, there have been only two persons who were pre-eminently entitled to be held as national

leaders unreservedly and without limitation of any kind. There was Sir Syed Ahmed who sacrificed in some measure to tribal or communal leadership the genius that might have federated the two great creeds and races of India and anticipated the comradeship that now exists by about half a century. Swami Vivekananda, one of the deepest thinkers that India has produced, and a man of fiery, though well restrained, if not disguised, patriotism had perforce to confine his ideal of nationalism in the shell, however large or dazzling, of a particular religion. He also missed an effective national or universal appeal. According to the pretty parable related to me by Gokhale, Ranade likened himself to the stones which are crushed and buried underneath the foundations. They render the commencement of the future structure possible, but they themselves are not seen but get crushed under the hammer blows of stern opposition under which reformers and pioneers never fail to be tested. Paradoxical as it may look, for that very reason perhaps Ranade stands out to-day as a tower of glory. But his part consisted more in preparing disciples, in playing the all-important role of the master or the manager behind the scenes. Inspirer he might have been, but only to the few that gained a lodging in his intimacy. He was cautious to a degree and such caution is apt to be mistaken for calculation which is a damper on popular enthusiasm. Gokhale, the greatest of his disciples, inherited a good deal of his caution but without the calculation or even the appearance of it, and was therefore able to fire people with enthusiasm to a degree that his master never succeeded in doing. Sir P. M. Mehta too could be regarded as one of the greatest formative influences on Gokhale's career. He might

be described as the master of political tactics while Ranade excelled in strategy. Ranade had a greater influence on Gokhale's character than on his career; while Mehta determined his career to a much greater extent than his character. As in the case of most tacticians, Mehta's influence was more local than general. He was no doubt a lion amongst men, but his roar did not, as a rule, carry far beyond Bombay. There are then to me two exalted personages who in the fullest sense of the term and absolutely stand out as national leaders—Dadabhai Naoroji and Gokhale. Dadabhai Naoroji will ever remain in the grateful recollection of our people as the honoured patriarch of Indian politics, the great fore-runner who, though he achieved little himself, prepared the way by his skill and courage for those developments which to-day have resulted in our people enjoying the first taste of constitutional liberty.

SPIRITUALITY OF PUBLIC LIFE.

The distinguishing contribution of Gokhale to the political life of India was not his great intellectual gifts, mighty as they were, nor his great oratorical and debating talents, striking as they were, nor his political insight and astute mastery of manœuvre such as were exemplified by the decisive influence he exercised at a critical moment in shaping the Morley-Minto reforms, but rather the moral fervour which he brought into politics, the spiritual power by which he was enabled, as by the power of prayer, to move mountains and to quicken dead ashes into a living fire. He was fond of saying that our public life should be made more spiritual, by which he meant that personalities should be avoided; that full credit should be given to the good faith and motives of

our opponents; and that even between the different parties there ought to be, along with the differences which are bound to exist, a spirit of accommodation, and where fundamental national interests were concerned, solidarity and co-operation such as are seen in the political life of Western countries. That, further, life should be dedicated to the service of the mother-land, the love for which should transcend all other love. I do not know how it is, perhaps it is in our climate and the very air we breathe, but a religious tint and flavour attach to whatever appeals to the Indian heart and imagination most deeply. Aravinda Ghose declared, "Nationalism is a religion and comes from God." Personally I believe that, even if nationalism be a religion, it cannot be the highest development of it; and that universalism is higher though the human soil is not yet prepared for this further and more glorious growth. Gokhale was not a mystic like Aravinda Ghose and I do not know, if I am exaggerating it, when I say, that to him the country was almost a substitute for God.

A LOGICAL AND CONSISTENT PATRIOT.

At the great meeting held in Calcutta to honour the memory of departed Gokhale, Mr. Surendranath Banerji is reported to have exclaimed, "A Prince and Patriot has fallen"; and indeed Gokhale was a prince by a title higher than any that heraldric courts could produce. He was a prince by reason of his patriotism and his patriotism was of a type not ordinarily met with. In a sense we are all of us patriots. We have a vague feeling of national unity, which in many cases is nothing more than national vanity, and a still vaguer feeling of what is called love of country, but these sentiments are, as a rule, too feeble to influence conduct to any extent

excepting during our student days and are likely to be worsted in conflict with interests of a more personal character in after life. Gokhale differed from us in not being a patriot for nothing. He felt so deeply the low state into which we had fallen and the low regard in which we were held by races and people enjoying the dignity of independent nationhood that his sense of honour was deeply stirred and he resolved to give us as far as in him lay, a standing of higher self-respect. The political problem with him was part of the moral problem, which it undoubtedly is. It was the problem of creating those conditions which would best conserve the honour and self-respect of a people. In private conversation, whenever he wanted to stir our honour, the positive faculty, or shame, which is its negative counterpart, he would use the expression, 'If we, Indians, had been within a hundred miles of manliness, would we not have done such and such a thing?' The hundred mile gap between manliness and us was ever in his thoughts and he did his best to abridge the distance. He was greatly annoyed whenever people spoke about his self-sacrificing labours, as though striving for honour and self-respect was a sacrifice and living in shame, self-fulfilment. In one sense he doubtless sacrificed his self; in the sense, namely, in which self is used to denote low personal ambitions, worldly aspiration, ease and the ignoble spirit of getting on at whatever cost or humiliation; but surely that is a self which every honourable man should renounce. In a higher sense it would be truer to speak of his self-realising labours because his self consisted of a passionate love of his country; in serving her, working for her and in giving up wealth, office, title, all earthly honours and joys for her sake, he was true to himself and true to the

guidance of his heart. Patriotism with him was less of a duty than passion.

The very fierceness of his patriotism prevented him from becoming popular as popularity is often understood or rather mis-understood. He could not abide people with pompous talk and feeble nerve; and insincerity provoked him to open condemnation. Both morally and intellectually he was too quick and too impatient to suffer knaves or fools gladly. I remember how on one occasion in the Library of the National Liberal Club he snubbed a member of the Indian Civil Service who gave us the benefit of his criticism of certain proposals which Gokhale was advocating. He bluntly asked him whether he had done any constructive work in the cause of the country himself, which alone could entitle him to appear or to be heard as a critic. He was not easy of access to people, for he valued his time and hated to expend it in useless talk leading to nothing. Some of these temperamental traits probably explain why, while he had a large public following, he had so few satellites and hero worshippers in his court. Some accused him of impatience, others of being oversensitive, as though patience and a thick skin were two of the most desirable properties of human personality. Confident in the singleness of his aim and the perfect testimony of his conscience, he disdained the arts of the demagogue, and the applause of the vulgar throng was not the tune to which he was willing to dance. For all these reasons he had a smaller personal following than men of less austere purpose or smaller substantial worth. There was too much gold and too little tinsel in his composition. The inexorable consistency of Gokhale's conduct must have been very trying to some of the average Hindus. He said he was an Indian pure

and simple without modification or occult reservation and he remained one all his life. He ceased to observe caste. He treated with much tenderness the special claims put forward by Moslem Leaders on behalf of their community, and in social relations he was a cosmopolitan. The welcome that Aligarh extended to him could not have been excelled in warmth by any section of the Hindus, and his popularity amongst the Mahomedans was unbounded. It was because he was for all India that every part of India and every community in India was for him as leader. The fire that was in him was able to fuse the divergent elements in our country into one golden image.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE PAST AND SOCIAL REFORM.

While he was not a sectarian but rather an ardent social reformer and champion of the rights of the classes victimized by our socio-religious history, I noticed that he would not, in explicit terms, admit the disastrous part played by Hinduism in producing social divisions and disparities the full effects of which, I rather felt, he did not realise. Nobody spoke with more burning indignation of the wrongs of the untouchables and the depressed classes. In Dharwar he turned fiercely on the audience and asked whether we had any right to resent the wrongs heaped on us in South Africa while we ourselves were guilty every hour of our life of far more serious wrongs inflicted, not on an alien race, but on a section of our own people. It is also well-known how towards the end he felt obliged to admit the seriousness of these divisions and to propose separate representation for the Lingayet community. I doubt, however, if he would have echoed, with appropriate modifications of course, Gambetta's famous

declaration, 'Clericalism is the enemy.' He was a reformer; of that there can be no doubt; but like a practical man intent on results, he felt that raking up ancient wrongs was not the best way of arriving at a conciliatory solution. He refused to quarrel with the past or even to trouble himself about it, while he did everything possible to remedy existing wrongs so as to render a more harmonious future possible. I am not sure if this is not the best and most reasonable attitude to adopt. True that every nation has to pay the debts of its history and that there is much to be said for the view that the accounts accumulated in previous ages have to be settled on an equitable basis; but at the same time practical men will proceed on the maxim that sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof and will not complicate a difficult situation by recriminations based on memories of ancient wrongs and rivalries. Let the dead past bury its dead. I recollect how during a conversation on this painful subject he quoted Newman with happy effect; "Remember not past years."

NATURE OF POLITICS AND POLITICAL ORGANIZATION.

The sentiment of patriotism was in him well regulated, firstly, by the long apprenticeship which he underwent under Ranade and Mehta and secondly, by a sound estimate of the possibilities of our situation, of the amount that we could achieve with the existing stock of moral and material resources. He was a great believer in political apprenticeship and thought that much harm was being done by immature minds addressing themselves too openly and violently to political questions. If you want to enter on a commercial line you must undergo apprenticeship. If you want to practice as a Vakil you have to undergo apprentice

ship. How comes it then that in respect of politics most of you act as though you are to the manner born and require no special study or apprenticeship? "Strength with restraint" was another of his favourite phrases; and indeed when you come to think of it, it is the weak people that have very little self-control. It is the strong that are always cool, collected, and sober in thought, feeling and action. They speak less, scream less, promise less, are less excitable but perform more. It is the invalid that loses control of himself at every turn and on the slightest provocation. I have already told you how he disdained amateur criticism. "Responsible criticism" was another of his favourite maxims. The critic to be worthy of a hearing must either have done something for the cause or be ready to put his views into effect or work for their adoption by the other leaders. The critic comfortably seated in an armchair finding fault with everybody, satisfied with nothing, and himself not doing anything, was to him an object of contempt. The discipline under which he held that the sentiment of patriotism ought to be placed, sometimes led him to lengths which dangerously approached what is commonly understood, though perhaps not justifiably, as the spirit of Jesuitism. He wanted his disciples to have the zeal of missionaries and the subordination of soldiers and in his conversations he was fond of drawing a distinction between conscience and judgment. "Keep your conscience to yourself," he would say, "but subordinate your judgement to the order of the superior." With what a wealth of illustration did he not bring home to us this root principle of organisation. "The soldier," he would say, "might think what he likes about the justice of the war or about the soundness of the movement which he is ordered to carry out. In his heart of hearts

he may feel that his Commander-in-chief is a fool and idiot, but he cannot set up his judgment against that of his Commander-in-chief and while thinking what he pleases he obeys the orders or in other words subordinates his judgment to that of the superior. If this is not done there could be no army and it will dissolve into an anarchical horde of individuals. In the same way in politics too. If each one talks as he likes, criticises as he likes, there could be no organised effort, and we shall be reduced to the position of a people amongst whom leaders have no followers and the very word leader has become meaningless." In saying this he was laying his finger on one of the weakest spots of our national character. "We are," he often used to exclaim, "cleverer as individuals than the Europeans and yet less effective both as individuals and as a people." That is because we have too much logic and too little common sense, or as Fairbairn put it, too much philosophy and too little of the historical way of estimating. He had therefore a profound distrust of mere feelings and wishes unaccompanied by a proportionate effort to organise the available material in the country so as to create a force by which they could be realised. This was really the root of his objection to Mr. Tilak and his party. He thought that they went about rousing passion, talking theory, and ignoring the basic principle that politics is business. In business our operations are limited by the capital we can command. It may be desirable for a firm to have agents all the world over but if it has not the capital and the men, it is not likely to waste time in building castles in the air. No business can succeed if it has not a good grip of realities and if it does not avoid moon-shine and imagination. Now that I have mentioned Mr. Tilak and his party, I

had better say, though I do not relish saying it, that there was still another root of antipathy, namely, Gokhale's distrust of the candour and the straightforwardness of Mr. Tilak. It is curious, and I know not what ground there might be for it, but a large number of people that I have come across, though I have also come across exceptions, regard Mr. Tilak as a latter day serpent going about tempting people wandering too innocently in the Paradise of politics—if politics could ever be a Paradise—tempting them to their downfall. From certain recent pronouncements of Mrs. Besant I gather that she too has undergone disillusionment with regard to her original estimate of Mr. Tilak. In a way it is a great pity that the gods are not always united, but perhaps in another way it is a good thing; for it gives us poor mortals an opportunity to assert ourselves. When gods differ men come by their own; when Pandits differ good taste and common sense generally prevail.

A third root of antipathy lay in the conviction that Mr. Tilak's idea of liberty was negative and narrow, consisting mainly of a desire to limit, if not to abolish, the British control, while other controls of indigenous origin, however iniquitous, were to be kept, as far as possible, intact. The combination of advanced politics with social reaction or inaction for which the school of Mr. Tilak is supposed to stand was as hateful a mixture to Gokhale as it is at the present time to Mr. Paranjpye, which is to say, that nothing could be more hateful. Poona nationalism, as contrasted with the more genuinely liberal Bengal nationalism, is a concept too complex for most of us to understand and I am not certain that I uuderstand its full scope and intent myself. To the intitiates it seems to make a clear,

axiomatic, irresistable appeal. The layman gets bewildered in its presence, finds it a trifle too tortuous to serve as a simple rule of life and ends perhaps by revolting. In Poona itself it is credited with aiming at a revival of what in the private parlance of that locality is called "Peshwari," by which is to be understood the mastery of the Hindu over the other races in India, of the Brahmin over the Hindu, and the substantial preservation of the hierarchical organisation with due concessions made in form and for the sake of keeping up a modern appearance. I need hardly add that Gokhale's conception of liberty was more positive, wider in scope, and more full of the milk of human kindness, and included social equality as well as political. Gokhale was against all privileges which could not be reconciled with reason and justice ; against those conferred by Manu no less than against those claimed by the British. The two schools were thus wide asunder as the Poles and it was just as well that they found it impossible to keep up a fictitious appearance of unity, which in the prudential counsels of some of our leaders, it is so necessary that we should maintain, however hollow it may be and however much it may savour of insincerity.

Mere abstract reasoning and all the tall talk about everybody's rights do not lead us far, because politics is business and rests fundamentally on the social strength and solidarity that you could develop. One day reading a speech delivered by a prominent politician with reference to our position in South Africa and in India, in which he had quoted the Proclamation of 1857 and the latest theories on human rights, he commented bitterly on the inadequacy of theoretical argument. "The Europeans go out and discover lands and do the pioneer work and after enormous trouble,

colonize and settle down, losing in these operations many lives and much treasure, and then we go about with a paper in our hands claiming equal rights. They discover lands ; we read them up in Geography ; and how on earth is an equation possible ? " What impressed him most in European life was not its freedom but its self-imposed restraints. " Look," he once said, "if you have a hundred Europeans at a social gathering there is not the least noise—they talk in low whispers, their movements are characterised by dignity and repose, but a similar number of Indians," and he never finished the sentence. " Do you think," he once asked me, " that the social and political liberty of England would have been possible if the people were not under a strict regime of self-imposed restraints? " To him beauty and order were almost convertible terms. There could be no beauty unless there was order and all order was beautiful. I do not know if this is an æsthetic perversion but I have always attributed his strong feeling for order to his training as a mathematician.

Action based on mere feelings without taking into account the power that we could muster and the opposition that we would have to face, he regarded as dangerous in politics in which the proper adjustment of means and ends was the all important consideration. I remember his telling me once that feeling without power was hysterics and power without feeling brutishness. A nation should be neither hysterical nor brutal ; it should be human ; it should strive for what it can to accomplish and it must accomplish, with due regard to the higher law of our being, all that it is capable of.

SOCIAL FACTORS AND POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS.

This was the reason why in the best sense of the term he was more a statesman than a politician, more

a judge than an advocate. There was breadth, sanity, wisdom in his views. He looked at all sides of a question, made proper allowances for all the factors, rational and irrational, that entered into its composition and arrived at solutions which were practical and formed the best bargain under the circumstances. Raw youth often mistook this moderation for lack of vigour, for raw youth has a way of mistaking shouting for strength and hysterics for vigour. He never allowed mere sentiment, however laudable, to obscure his insight. On one occasion referring to the fact that Indians while in England are fierce nationalists but after return to India cool down in their enthusiasm owing to the caste and communal differences which are found so largely in our life and even become sectionalists with hardly a vision of the country as a whole, he said, " while in England you see the wood and not the trees and after you come back to India you see the trees and not the wood. Could you not manage to see both and talk less nationalism while you are in England and think less of our differences while you are in India? " The Hindu-Moslem problem was another of his great vexations though with the eye of faith he divined the new era of harmony and comradeship. Some of you may remember how some seven or eight years ago a committee composed of members of both creeds was appointed with H. H. the Aga Khan as Chairman to draft a scheme of compromise in respect to the causes and incidents which are the standing menace of our unity and integrity, and how it unanimously resolved to request Gokhale to serve on it though, I believe, he was not an original member. That Committee which ought to have produced a soothing solution by which all religious irritation was to be

allayed and prevented has not yet given publicity to the specific which it was commissioned to discover. Meanwhile events have been moving with irresistable force and have already resulted in the unity that we have been wishing for all these years.

It was his good fortune that Gokhale was spared the sight of the bitter communal differences which have reached their climax in South India. So far as this aspect of our problem goes, Gokhale himself might be charged with having seen the wood but forgotten the trees, as has now become evident by developments in the Madras Presidency and the Mahratta country. But it must be remembered that he lived in a part of India in which these differences are not so acute or widespread and that therefore there was considerable cause why he could not feel the full force and inwardness of the non-Brahmin and Depressed Class Movements. In Poona, for instance, *Drishti Dosha* does not prevail. All communities could dine together though not in the same row. Life in Northern India is characterised by a greater spirit of liberalism and modernism than is the case with us, and indeed it may almost be said that *Drishti Dosha* and all other varieties of communal rigidity are the peculiar property of the Cauvery water. They do not affect to the same extent the more generous flow of the Krishna and Godavery even. But that Gokhale did see the trees, when they forcibly obtruded on his reluctant vision, is borne out by his so-called political testament in which he conceded the desirability of giving separate representation to the Lingayets.

But on the whole it might be said that he realised as was to be expected of a disciple of Ranade, who had the further advantage of having paid frequent visits to

countries in which the social structure is more solid and homogeneous, the grave defects of our Puranic system of life and law and did his best to have it supplanted by a better order more in consonance with modern ideas of equity and the requirements of nationhood. He was a staunch promoter of women's progress in education and liberty. The Panchamas and the untouchables found in him a splendid advocate of their rights and interests. There could be no better statement of their cause both from their point of view and that of the moral obligations of the country, not to speak of political expediency, than the speech he delivered at Dharwar in which he flatly told Indians that so long as they continued to treat a section of their own countrymen in the manner they did they had no right to complain of the ill-treatment that other races meted out to them.

HIS COURAGE.

Gokhale's courage was not always turned in the direction of the British Government; the needle, whenever occasion warranted it, had a disconcerting way of being deflected against his own countrymen. It requires very great confidence indeed in the patent character of one's patriotism and popularity to be able to face one's own countrymen, which is, in the best of circumstances, an invidious task easily susceptible of misconstruction. Gokhale could afford to run the risk and emerge triumphant from even this ordeal, which is the best proof of the extent and solidity of his empire over the people's regard. In democracies, more so than in other forms of Government, is there room for the energetic play of this quality. No democracy can possess much chance of success or stability if the leaders are not made of the stuff that, when necessary,

would resist popular pressure; would give forceful direction; rule instead of always obeying; and withstand instead of always yielding. It must not be forgotten that even in a democracy a leader must lead, and set the tone and pace; he should be something other than a mere trimmer or echoer of popular feelings. There is no form of Government in which leadership is superfluous. If you enquire into the root of this principle you will find it in the moral law which we have to obey both as individuals and collectively. The essence of moral duty, in its positive aspect, is the pursuit of ideals, and in its negative, resistance of temptation and evil whether they spring from the self or the people, state, society or other group of which the individual is an organic part. With the growth of constitutional liberty in India, the British Government ceases to be the only target of criticism. The responsibility for our sins will be on our own heads, and vicarious punishment does not work well in politics even if the British Government were willing to suffer for our sake. The people will have to blame themselves or each other if affairs are ill-managed. So we had better commence practising at each other and learn the gentle art of civil warfare, though to judge from recent happenings this advice is happily superfluous!

HINDUISM AND NATIONALITY.

I rather think that he had a profound distrust of the capacity of Hinduism to adjust itself to the requirements of the ethics of modern life and nationalism, though, I do not suppose, his distrust ever reached the degree of despair. This much I know. I was in Poona when an appeal was received from Mrs. Besant and other promoters of the Hiudu University scheme requesting him to give his support to the movement, and

he flatly declined. I also know that he sternly discountenanced religious education, fearing that, whatever the theory of it, in practice and fact, it would accentuate caste and communal differences and bitterness. Now that I have mentioned education, I had better add that when I met him in England in 1913 and discussed with him the project of a University for Mysore, he expressed himself as being in favour of a University in which the Vernacular should be the medium of instruction. You cannot, he said, reach or elevate the masses except by scientific knowledge spread broadcast through the natural medium of instruction. I cannot say that this represented his considered opinion. It was spoken in the course of a conversation, and we cannot attach full responsibility for everything that is said in the course of a talk and though I mentioned this to some of the authorities in Mysore, I have never used it as an argument in favour of the change in regard to the medium of instruction which I have always advocated, so far at least as the High School courses are concerned, and of which Mrs. Besant has been one of the best champions.

FAITH IN BRITISH DEMOCRACY.

Gokhale differed from some schools of patriotism in India in having not only great admiration for England, but profound faith in the British democracy. So far as admiration for English people is concerned, that, I believe, is fairly wide spread in the country. Gokhale in his own personal character reproduced many of the typical British traits such as a reserved manner; a dislike of personalities in conversation or public propaganda; a certain aristocratic aloofness which some of his countrymen misunderstood; a spirit of practical compromise in politics; a distrust of abstract logic as a

solvent of political problems ; and a natural instinct for what was practical and aversion for extremes. In addition to this admiration he had a profound faith in the British Democracy. He believed that it was on the whole fair-minded, just and not too selfish. In the constitution of the Servants of India Society he gave curious expression to this view. Curious, because I have always doubted, as I shall show later on, whether it reflected his inner, personal faith in religion. The expression I am thinking of is the one in which he claims that the connection of India with England is a Providential dispensation. This theological invocation was necessary perhaps to impress the Indian public with the full strength of his faith in the matter. With this admiration and faith in the British race, no matter how acutely he differed from the Government of India and the individuals composing it on questions of policy, he found no difficulty in establishing warm personal relations with Lord Morley, Lord Minto, Lord Hardinge and Lord Crewe and other illustrious personages, who constitute the moral justification of the British Empire in India. Of Mr. Montagu too he often spoke to me in terms of warm regard and full confidence. The work he did and the influence he exercised as representative of the Bombay Presidency Association in connection with the Morley-Minto Reforms are well-known. I was once told by a reliable authority that Lord Kitchner had not only a great regard for Gokhale but intended, if he ever became the Viceroy of India, to make him the Finance Member.

HIS PASSIONATE NATURE.

The wonderful thing about Gokhale is that all this discipline and restraint he succeeded in imposing on a

character which was by nature passionate and impatient of control. It is a mistake to think that self-possession and self-restraint came natural to Gokhale. The truth is they came as a result of hard schooling and constant discipline and that he was frequently breaking into violent erruptions in spite of his efforts at complete serenity. In fact my impression has always been that he had succeeded, as it were, in harnessing a volcano; but if he was quick to lose his temper he was quicker still to regain it and the breeze disappeared in a moment leaving the heavens as bright and clear as before. The first time I met him it was at a luncheon party given by Sir William Wedderburn at which the chief guests were Gokhale and Massingham, the Bayard of British Journalism. Gokhale was all sun-shine and smiles, and made a convert of Massingham to the Indian National cause by his brilliant advocacy and impressive devotion. The next time I met him it was at Cambridge. Owing to some little mistake or-other on my part he flew into a few minutes' fury, suddenly stopped short, smiled, laughed, shook hands and was the gayest of company during the rest of his stay as my guest. Sir Ratan Tata told me of two incidents which might be recalled in this connection. You all remember how the compulsory education bill introduced by Gokhale was opposed by the industrial magnates and business interests of Bombay, and I believe their opposition was due to the fear that widespread education would lead to labour unions, strikes and all those labour developments that are the nightmare of capitalists. At Calcutta Gokhale and Sir Ratan had a conversation on the subject, when Gokhale, as Sir Ratan himself told me with a laugh, used violent language, left him, and within half an hour sent a nice note of apology and made it all

p. Sir Ratan said, " I never
okhale because he was so true,
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ypocrite;" and they remained firm
The other incident was with referen
Mehta. It will be remembered that S.
did not quite approve of the compromi
Gokhale entered with the Government of
regarding Indian residents and Immigratio
P. M. Mehta had given public expression to
pointment even before Gokhale had completed
of South Africa and returned to Bombay. Of
there was nothing personal in this but Gokhale felt
he was judged unjustly and by the one man wh
favourable verdict he most coveted and he was hurt to th
quick. Some time after when Sir Pherozeshah invited
Gokhale, he politely declined the invitation, and I am
on very firm ground when I say that during the latter
part of their lives the paths of the two great political
comrades diverged to a certain extent. I may now
mention what was known in several quarters at the
time that, on a certain occasion, when the Dewan of an
Indian State who had done something hurtful to the
dignity of the Servants of India Society called on him
with a view to give a personal explanation, he bluntly
refused to receive him. Those who think that Go-
khale's so-called moderation was the result of indiffer-
ence, callousness or cowardice labour under a big
mistake. Nobody had more fire in him than Gokhale,
but he digested it and digested it with an ill-grace and
reluctantly for the sake of the country. He once told
me during one of our evening conversations at the
Servants of India Society that he abhored the term
Moderate which was applied to him and to his party.

e designation 'Progressive,' but
espect of politics or yourselves,
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HIS RELIGION.

ouch upon a more intimate part of his life
at comments on this have appeared in the
notices of Gokhale. Some have claimed him to
indu, a term which fortunately is wide enough to
a multitude of doxies. A typical orator of Mysore
med that because his ashes were thrown into the
anges he must be regarded as an orthodox Hindu—a
test which will expose all of us to the risk of being regarded orthodox without a chance of protesting in as much as we cannot have full control over the disposition of our ashes. The truest estimate of him is that given by Mr. Nevinson and Mr. Fisher who found in him a philosophical radical of the school of Bentham. He drew much of his inspiration from that pure fountain of humanitarian grace, John Stuart Mill, and if he was religious he was religious in the sense in which Matthew Arnold defined religion, *viz.*, as morality touched with emotion.

Like all men of action he was an optimist; and perhaps there is a necessary connection between optimism and the spirit of action. Action can never be at its best and fullest unless there is the lure of hope, and all hope is rosy, radiant; and if you have the hope of success, it is not likely that you would be idle. It is the idler that is too often both critic and pessimist. Gokhale had full faith in the future of our country.

HIS LITERAR.

He had much of the gra
the early Victorian orators.
weighty, serious in tone, dignified in
the ease and conversational tone w
contemporary European oratory. He
that he had no sense of humour, which w
at all events that the light touch and gra
his, which is no wonder considering that
models were Burke, Macaulay and Bright.
of his letters to me there are playful referenc
dulness of his compositions. They certainly
never dull. He used to bemoan his decaying ple
in literature. In most people the faculty of aesth
pleasure begins to suffer impairment at about midd
age when they pass out of the stage of golden illusions
into the dry light of life, and in the case of Gokhale
the preoccupation with politics must have been an
additional cause. Often he broke into splendid phrases
and epigrams which penetrated into the inmost core of
the subject. Comparing two Cambridge contempora-
ries, an Englishman and an Indian, who were about
equal in their studies and in the public position they
held in the University, but whose subsequent careers
showed great difference of station and importance, the
Englishman rising high and the Indian struggling in
the mediocre levels which were all the prospects before
him in his own country, he put it thus during a conver-
sation I had with him at the Natinal Liberal Club in
1913: " What is the difference," he asked, " between
the Englishman and the Indian? As individuals they
are equal, but the former has the momentum of his
race behind him which carries him to the heights of
power. The latter has no such momentum to back

erjected his favourite mathema-
s figures are the same in both
gure representing the Englishman
ge number of zeros representing the
while the figure representing the
zeros to follow." During the same
e said, " We forget that the individual is
ng and the nation everything. We com-
ves as individuals with Englishmen and
gainst the injustice of our low rank. We
operly to compare the nations and not indivi-
I have already referred to his favourite phrase
ding the one hundred miles between us and manli-
s. Another of his phrases has become immortal
English literature. In a letter to Mrs. Naidu, who
was then in feeble health, he asked, "Why should the song-bird have a broken wing?" and "Broken Wing" became the title of the most moving of the volumes of the gifted Poetess.

INCIDENTS OF HIS SOUTH AFRICAN TOUR.

I recall with particular pleasure a visit I paid to him at the National Liberal Club in 1913. He was in feeble health and in spite of the doctor's orders and my own protests he made me sit down, and topic leading to topic, he related to me the story of his South-African tour. I do not think this story has been told fully yet. I think it is time that it should be, and I shall relate all that I was told on that occasion. He applied for a first class berth in one of the steamers going to Cape Town. He was informed by the Company that he being an Indian could not be given a single berth because no Europeans would care to occupy the other berths in the cabin, as the Europeans had a rooted

objection to bunk with Indians, especially in the South African boats on which the caste spirit was strong and *Verna Dharma* was rigorously observed. To which Mr. Gokhale replied that he was not prepared to pay for more than one berth and if no Englishman would care to share the cabin with him he was quite resigned to monopolising the whole cabin but would on no account pay for the unoccupied berths and added that if the Company would not issue a ticket on these terms he would appeal to the Chairman, who, I believe, was Lord Sutherland. As there was fear of this personal incident developing into a political, wiser councils prevailed and he was given a ticket and I believe the whole cabin. Evidently Lord Crewe, then Secretary of State for India, felt perturbed by the possibility of similar or worse incidents occuring during the tour in South Africa and like the generous man and able diplomat that he was he wanted to prepare the ground for the full social recognition of Gokhale by the aristocracy, if it could be called an aristocracy, of South Africa. So he arranged a dinner with Gokhale as one of the guests at which no less a person than His Gracious Majesty the King had condescended to be present. That was the way in which the stage was prepared for Gokhale's historic visit to South Africa. It is usual on board steamers for the steward to allot places for the different passengers at the dinner table. Gokhale was sensitive, very sensitive indeed on the subject of courtesies and proper treatment. Fearing that he might be relegated to some nook or corner which he could not with dignity occupy, he stayed in his cabin determined that if nobody approached him and assigned a proper place he would remain there and dine by himself. A few minutes before dinner the steward himself

called with the compliments of the Captain and informed him that the Captain requested the honour of his company at the officers' table, at which Gokhale was very pleased; and so he was forthwith admitted to the company of the gods. So far as social life on the steamer was concerned that served as passport and privilege. During the voyage a tournament of games and amusements was got up and Gokhale entered himself as a competitor. One of the items was to carry something about one indicative of the name of some well-known book in English literature. Gokhale told me that he did not know what to carry about which would indicate in a clever enough manner any of the well-known books. At the last moment just as he was dressing he found the programme of the tournament on the table. He pinned that to the breast of his coat and went on deck. And when the master of revels asked him for the solution of the puzzle, which nobody could solve, he took out the programme and said, "The History of our Times by Justin McCarthy." And with boyish glee he told me that he won the prize—the prize for English literature. On arrival at Cape Town, much to his surprise and pleasure, he was greeted by an officer deputed by the South African Government, who came on board to convey the compliments of General Botha and informed him that every arrangement had been made for his comfort and that he had been appointed to be in attendance on him throughout his stay in South Africa. After that he had a very successful time as you all know, but he told me of one, what may be called, reservation in the social cordiality of his reception, which deserves to be related. Though he was received and entertained by General Botha and the others he noticed that all the entertaining was done

in hotels and he was not asked to their homes; the chief exception to this course being the Governor himself who made no such distinction. So much for his South African tour.

He had great admiration for Generals Botha and Smuts and commended highly the spirit with which they laboured for the reconstruction of South Africa without remembering the wrongs inflicted by England in the past and intent only on securing those conditions of racial and imperial harmony which in their judgment were necessary for the progress and permanent good of South Africa. He told me more than once that it was necessary for us in India to cultivate some such spirit of practical accommodation; that we should not brood too much over the past whether in respect of our political or social evils, but should strive our utmost to secure as speedily as possible those conditions of inter-racial and inter-social harmony and solidarity without which our national future would never be assured.

GOKHALE IN ENGLAND.

I must say a word or two about my meetings with Gokhale in England. Our connection sprang up by mere accident. You remember the Congress campaign which was arranged to be conducted in the winter of 1905 in connection with the general election that was then impending and which in the result brought the Liberal Party to power under Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. The first of the Congress meetings was to have been held in Shoreditch but the two Indian speakers announced, Gokhale and Lala Lajpat Rai, were not able to be present, and since it was necessary that some live Indian should be there, to give it local colour and dramatic touch, Sir William Wedderburn telegraphed

to me, then an undergraduate at Cambridge and officer of the Union Society, to step into the breach, which accordingly I did, my leader on the platform on the occasion being Sir Henry Cotton. Soon after Gokhale arrived, and Sir William Wedderburn who had arranged for a series of private conferences between Gokhale and the leading journalists over the luncheon table at the National Liberal Club was kind enough to include me in some of the parties. So far as I knew no Indian of high standing had been invited as a visitor to the Union Society of Cambridge and as I happened to be the Vice-President I moved the President and the Committee to extend an invitation to Gokhale which they were only too glad to do. Not wishing that a visit of that kind should pass away in an ordinary hum-drum manner, poor Mr. Badrinath, who is now no more, son of the late Dewan Amarnath of Kashmir, gave a dinner-party to which many of the best men in Cambridge were invited. Gokhale's speech on the occasion was a revelation to most of us. He took the full measure of his undergraduate audience, quickly adapted his style to the undergraduate taste and made an impassioned plea in favour of self-government for India. The speech was received with rapturous applause and the motion was carried by a large majority in spite of the opposition offered by a Burmese undergraduate and Sir Edward Candy, who too is now no more. We held a series of social functions in honour of Gokhale and amongst the young men whom he met there he singled out J. M. Keynes for special admiration. He foretold great things of Keynes and said how lucky India would be if he came out as our Finance Member; and those who have followed the career of Keynes know how grandly he has fulfilled the anticipations of

Gokhale and his other friends. He addressed a meeting of the Cambridge University Liberal Association, of which I happened to be the Secretary, at which again there was a duel fought between Sir Edward Candy and Gokhale. The three or four days he spent there might be regarded as an Indian Festival in Cambridge. What struck me as the pleasantest feature of Gokhale's character was the readiness and ease with which he mingled with youngmen, becoming young himself, though occasionally his imperious nature would flash forth but never so as to be offensive.

CONCLUSION.

Before concluding I would like to say that it is not in strict accord with the ethics of political war-fare to go about enlisting the dead promiscuously in the ranks of combatants. Much mention has been made about the so-called political will and testament left by Gokhale. I do not yield to any one in my respect or affection for the great master under whom I served my apprenticeship for a time. But I must protest against his being dragged into the din and dust of current controversies. Politics is not private property which anybody could bequeath by will or testament, and no prophet, whether it be Manu or Gokhale, has the right to bind the future and deprive it of self-determination with due regard to its own circumstances and to what it should be a preparation for. Let us by all means have gods, but no fetishes, in our midst. History rarely ever repeats itself and each day brings to light its own problems and each hour its own solutions. Moreover since the lamented departure of Gokhale from our midst events have been moving with a terrific speed. Much water has flown under the bridges and since the outbreak of the great war the waters of history have been rushing

with unprecedented volume and velocity. A new light has been shed on the world by the far flashing gleam of millions of uplifted swords and I am not sure that this new light has not brought in its own way illumination as deep, penetrating and generous as any afforded by milder scriptures. The value of Gokhale as well as all the heroes who in their day had done their best and are now no more and have left us to face life without their aid and support, consists chiefly in the spirit which they brought to bear, and not so much in the couclusions they drew. Let us judge in the manner in which Gokhale judged, which does not mean that we should necessarily adopt his judgments. Let us bring to bear in the conduct of our life the dispassionate vision, the anxious spirit of enquiry and study, the moral earnestness, concentration of purpose, noble self-devotion, charity, and spirituality that Gokhale so well illustrated in his resplendent career. If Gokhale raised public life to the level of a religion, as he undoubtedly did, let us remember that he never gave himself the inhuman right, that priests sometimes claim, to dogmatise and to persecute those who dare to differ. No age can look back too long or too far without going backwards itself. Let us, therefore, with the aid of the light afforded by the past and the light, no less necessary or glorious, that we are able to produce in the present from ourselves, explore the regions and direct our steps unitedly and without faltering towards the great goal of a real nationalism, political and social, which was the goal of Gokhale and of all our departed patriots.