

GOKHALE

The Indian Moderates and the British Raj

BY B. R. NANDA

Mahatma Gandhi

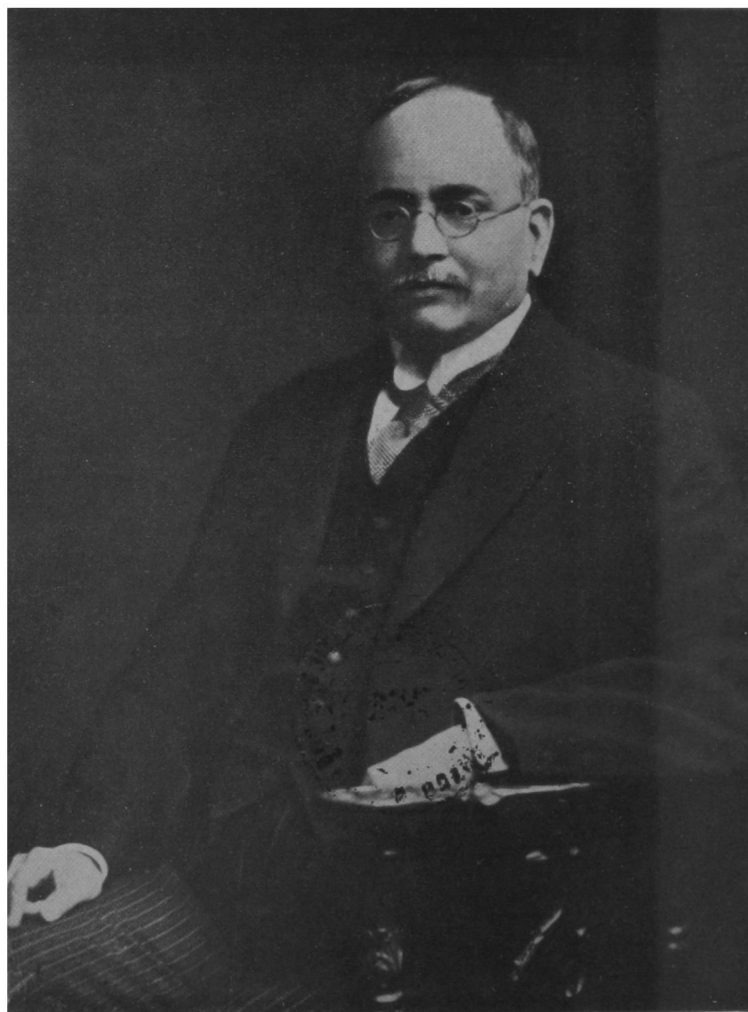
The Nehrus

Gokhale, Gandhi and the Nehrus

Socialism in India (ed.)

Indian Foreign Policy (ed.)

The Nehru Years



Gokhale in England, 1912

[*Frontispiece*]

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THE INDIAN MODERATES
AND THE BRITISH RAJ

B. R. NANDA

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To Baba

Preface

When I started working on a biography of Gopal Krishna Gokhale, I had no idea of the time and labour it would involve. It did not take me long to discover that the transformation in the Indian political scene, which came with the emergence of Gandhi after the First World War, had obscured the role not only of Gokhale, but of almost the entire leadership of the Moderate era. Gandhi himself was, of course, not responsible for this, as he never ceased to pay tributes to the Moderate veterans, and especially to Gokhale whom he acknowledged as his political mentor. However, the 'generation gap' impeded the understanding of the social and political environment in which the early leaders of the Congress had to function.

With the passage of time and the availability of fresh sources, it is now possible to take a more balanced view of this period, and especially of the milieu in which Gopal Krishna Gokhale worked. We have a huge mass of material, published and unpublished, including memoirs, diaries, unpublished official records and private papers of Indian leaders as well as of Viceroy, Secretaries of State, Governors and other participants as well as observers of the political scene, for a study in depth.

Gokhale's political career practically coincided with the first thirty years of the Indian National Congress. He was much younger than its founding-fathers, but it was his good fortune to come into intimate contact with them, to win their confidence, and to become their ablest spokesman. While he was still in his thirties, he became the authentic spokesman of his country's aspirations both in India and England. As a leader of the Indian National Congress, as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council, as the confidant of the British Committee of the Congress in London, as India's unofficial envoy to England, Gokhale occupied a unique vantage point in Indian politics. He belonged to a not-too-common species—an intellectual in politics. He was not only one of the main actors in the Indian political drama, but one of its shrewdest and most vocal observers. The study of his life thus offers valuable insights into the history of Indian nationalism and Indo-British relations.

viii *Preface*

I have drawn upon a mass of unpublished materials, including the correspondence of Gokhale, his associates and critics among the Indian leaders, and of British Viceroys, Secretaries of State, Governors and other administrators, and the official records. I have tried to understand and interpret, rather than to uphold and condemn. I hope the diversity of sources will contribute to a well-proportioned and objective account of Gokhale's life and times.

My thanks are due, for their unfailing courtesy and assistance, to the Librarian and staff of the Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Poona, the National Library, Calcutta, the National Archives of India and the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi. I am grateful to the Rockefeller Foundation, which made it possible for me to travel to the U.K. in 1964, and consult unpublished records and papers in various repositories, such as the India Office Library and the British Museum in London, and the National Library in Edinburgh. The Bibliography at the end of the book includes collections of unpublished records and papers, to the owners or donors of which I acknowledge my debt of gratitude. I have kept references in the notes to the minimum, and as a rule have cited them only for direct quotations.

That I write a biography of Gokhale was first suggested to me by Pandit H. N. Kunzru and Shri B. Shiva Rao. Pandit Kunzru, Shri D. V. Ambekar, Shri S. R. Venkataraman and the late Shri S. G. Vaze were kind enough to provide me with their reminiscences of Gokhale and his times. I had very valuable interviews with Professor N. R. Phatak, the late Shri R. P. Paranjpye and Justice Dhavle, the son-in-law of Gokhale. My thanks are due to Shri S. G. Gokhale and Shri S. R. Venkataraman for the photographs which appear in the book.

I am grateful to Dr S. R. Mehrotra and Shri V. C. Joshi for reading through the entire manuscript and making useful suggestions. Finally, I am indebted to my wife for her constant understanding, encouragement and support, without which I could hardly have completed this work.

B. R. N.

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December 1904

Gokhale with Gandhi, Kallenbach and members of the
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Gokhale with Dadabhai Naoroji (sitting) and D. E. Wacha,
London, 1897

A. O. Hume

Sir William Wedderburn

Lord Curzon

John Morley

Lord Minto

Lord Hardinge

Pherozezshah Mehta

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Mahadev Govind Ranade

Abbreviations

B.P.	— Butler Papers
C.P.	— Curzon Papers
D.N.P.	— Dadabhai Naoroji Papers
E.P.	— Elgin Papers
F. Wilson P.	— Fleetwood Wilson Papers
G.P.	— Gokhale Papers
H.P.	— Hardinge Papers
L.P.	— Lytton Papers
M.P.	— Morley Papers
P. Mehta P.	— Pherozeshah Mehta Papers
S. Ray P.	— Sarla Ray Papers
V. S. Sastri P.	— V. Srinivasa Sastri Papers
AIR	— All India Radio
confdl.	— confidential
G.O.I.	— Government of India
hony.	— honorary
I.N.C.	— Indian National Congress
IOL	— India Office Library
Jud.	— Judicial
NAI	— National Archives of India
NMML	— Nehru Memorial Museum & Library
Pol.	— Political
prob.	— probably
proc.	— proceedings
P.S.	— Private Secretary
Pub.	— Public

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