

GOKHALEANA

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Gokhale's 111th Birthday.

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Edited by:

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FOREWORD

The fourteenth issue of Gokhaleana contains tributes paid to Gokhale by Sir William Wedderburn, Mr C. F. Andrews and Dr. Annie Besant who had been intimately connected with Gokhale in his political work, besides the one paid to Gokhale by Sir Valentine Cheroi an influential and outstanding journalist, and International Correspondant of the Times of London and Gokhale's colleague on the Istington Commission.

In addition, some background materials regarding 1897 plague in Poona, the reaction of the public to Gokhale tendering an apology for the statement he had made in London and Gokhale's letters to Dadabhai Naoroji explaining his position are included.

A bio-data from the American Encyclopedia about Gokhale, kindly furnished by Sri Thiruvengadam of the USIS Library, Madras, is also included in this issue of Gokhaleana.

MADRAS-600 014,
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S. R. VENKATARAMAN
Secretary
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C. F. Andrews on Gokhale

At Madura Mr. C. F. Andrews was the principal speaker. He said that he was ashamed to be obliged to speak to them in a foreign tongue about one whose own heart blood was shed for India herself and whose anniversary that day they were for the fourth time remembering. He wished he could speak to them in Tamil so that he could bring home to their minds the wealth of goodness and sacrifice in Mr. Gokhale's life. But he must try to speak to them in English and out of love's own sake to tell something of that spotless life which was lived for India and given for India. His only reason for standing on this platform was that he had been personally acquainted with Mr. Gokhale and he could tell out of his own experience some of those little personal things which after all were the most interesting to hear and might move their hearts. It was very many years ago soon after he first came out to India that he met Mr. Gokhale for the very first time. He had just then written in some magazine about him expressing his great appreciation of the statesman like qualities and powers of leadership of the man. When he met Mr. Gokhale and before a few moments had passed, Mr. Gokhale said: "I read, Mr. Andrews what you wrote about me and I went you to ask one thing. Don't please put me forward as a leader; I am only among the younger men of the Servants of India and it would be unfair for me to take a leading part at such a time as this when there are older men with greater experience than I who are the natural leaders of the people. Please don't put me forward as anything like a leader." This was a very simple incident but it showed to him at that first acquaintance the utter humility of the man and his sense of selflessness. Mr. Gokhale had no wish for ever to come forward and he felt it always to be a burden to take the lead. He would much rather minister than be ministered and much rather serve than be a master, and this was one of the very greatest traits in his character. When he founded his society and called it "The Servants of India," that word was simply a representation of the ideal of all life.

Mr. Andrews saw Mr. Gokhale at another time when he was at the very height of his popularity when the crowds in India in every city went frantic as he passed through when students in their thousands flocked to him to carry him through the streets refusing to allow his carriage to be drawn except by them. The popularity was extreme in its fervour and enthusiasm. The speaker met Mr. Gokhale in the midst of it as he was passing through Delhi and noticed his face care-worn and almost saddened. Mr. Gokhale spoke to him about the burden that this new popularity threw on him. He was afraid of it and thought that it might rather do him harm than good. He was not accustomed to it and did not feel happy while it was around him. Later on towards the end of his life when Mr. Gokhale used to speak to him very very freely about his own life, his own failings, his own attitude and character, he told him one day that his ideal had always been that of the Bhagavad Gita, Nishkama Karma. He said that was the only attitude, which could save the soul of the man who had to do with politics; because there was so much to elate him and so much to depress him that unless he was above both praise and blame, he could not do his work. Mr. Gokhale told him also that at one time he was the most popular man in India. Because he had confessed his fault and had done what this conscience had dictated to him he was regarded as in some way a traitor to his own country, Mr. Gokhale said to the speaker, "I remember how one after another used to ask me 'don't do this, don't do that. You will lose all your reputation if you do that' But I said to them one after another, 'I must do it; it is truth and my reputation can go, but I must do what I feel to be truth.'" And he had thus to face an excessive unpopularity and the only thing that sustained him was the satisfaction that his conscience told him that he was right, and what the people held was wrong.

Then again he remembered the days when Mr. Gokhale was in Delhi trying to lead the whole of India to take up the cause of Mr. Gandhi and his fellow-patriots in South

Africa. That was the time when the South African struggle was at its height. Mr. Gokhale had fever day after day but he absolutely refused to take any rest, lie in bed and let the fever go by. His friends would implore him to take one day in bed. He retorted: "Take a day in bed? I would die rather than give up the struggle. Just think of the suffering men in South Africa. I must go on until sufficient funds are forthcoming to carry on the struggle." Mr. Gokhale felt that the whole burden of this struggle was on his mind. That filled the whole of his imagination and the speaker had never seen such an intense agony, earnestness and a sacrifice as he saw in Mr. Gokhale at that time. Later on in South Africa, Mr. Gandhi told the speaker the same story how, when Mr. Gokhale came to that country before the struggle and began to try and make terms with Boer Government, he had utterly sacrificed himself through that result, how his health had been almost failing and how he knew he was a dying man but would not give up his work as long as he knew he was a dying man but would not give up his work as long as he could give something more for the sake of his country, how the Tamil Coolies flocked to him in thousands as their saviour and had touched his feet, how marvellously he had impressed the Europeans that they had begun to have a new respect for India from his presence, how he had led them over to the Indian side and how he went home thinking that everything had been gained. But it was one of the bitterest disappointments in his life that after sacrificing his health, strength and everything in that visit to South Africa during a time of bodily weakness and sickness, he heard on his return to India in a very few months that his whole work became fruitless, that once more the three-pounds poll tax was threatened and that Indians had to go to prison in thousands. Then after the great struggle was over and Mr. Gandhi had met Mr. Smuts at Pretoria and won at last the terms which alone were honourable Mr. Gokhale summoned the speaker to London from South Africa. When in London Mr. Gokhale used to tell him about his own life, his thoughts, desires and beliefs and the

greatest of all impressions that were produced on the speaker was the depth of his idealism and religious nature. Mr. Gokhale was not one who had formulated religion. He had no formulated dogmatic creed and was not one who belonged to any one sect, religion or party. His belief in God and immortality had been founded upon a supreme conviction, for Mr Andrews heard him from his own lips to say that faith in right and truth that was his guiding star which sustained him both in times of defamation and popularity,

—*The Servant of India, 1919, p. 46*

Dr. Annie Besant on Gokhale .

At a meeting held in Madras to celebrate the fourth anniversary of Mr. Gokhale's death, Mrs. Besant, paid the following tribute to his memory. She said:—

“Looking at Mr. Gokhale's speeches—and they lie before every student of politics—and considering his character, his line of work for his country, the point that was put by Mr. Ramaswami Aiyer of his magnificent equipment, is one which cannot be too highly regarded or more strenuously imitated by those who would follow in his steps, never to speak on a subject, which one has not studied, never to express an opinion until one founds it on serious thought and careful consideration. Those are the qualities which make the reliable leader of a Nation, when it is possible for him to join in the great work of building a people. It is true, and Mr. Gokhale recognised it, that many a blow has to be struck at abuses. You will find in his speeches how thoroughly he realised the injustices under which Indians suffer, and you know how he resented the inferiority that was constantly thrust upon them. But you will also find that his work was not only destructive work, but also constructive. While indignation may destroy, knowledge and wisdom alone are able to construct. Mr. Gokhale had a singular combination of qualities thought to be opposite; of dauntless courage and yet of remarkable caution; of power to inspire and

power to restrain. I remember how in 1914, looking with an eye of long experience on the political position of the time, he spoke of coming days in which the leaders of the people would have to guard the more enthusiastic of their followers who would otherwise like to rush into mischievous and dangerous activity; for like all great men he calculated carefully the forces that were opposed to him. He did not think that courage was shown by disregarding the obstacles in the way, but rather in a careful calculation of the various difficulties that had to be surmounted, a careful turning of means to an end, a knowledge of when to step and when to rush forward, for the struggle in the country in his day was and still more in our day is, a struggle in which generalship is wanted as well as courage and, in that quality of generalship, Mr. Gokhale seems to me to have been one of the remarkable men of his time. Just in the same fashion as you see in the late struggle between the Central Powers and the Entente Powers they could not win while their counsellors were divided, and they could not make progress until they pitted against the generalship of the German High Command a generalship which they found best exemplified in Marshal Foch, so in our political struggles we have also to look over the whole field of battle, we have also to seek unity of counsel, we have also to prepare carefully and fully before we step forward on the path, we must understand the goal which we intend to reach and so it was with Mr. Gokhale in his great struggles. He realised that the path of very very rapid and enthusiastic action was inevitable, that which would attract younger men of the time, and one of the things he said to me in 1914 was that we ought to form a band of men who would be ready to face not only the opposition of antagonists but the opposition of their supposed friends, that they should stand together so that the advance might be steady and not simply a wild rush forward certain to be defeated, and I never thought more highly of him than at the time when he said that he was willing to sacrifice even the apparent love of his younger countrymen in order that he might save them from a peril which they were not experienced enough to understand.

That quality of caution as well as enthusiasm you find in this greatly spiritual man. The eyes of Mr. Gokhale were always fixed on the goal at which he was aiming but he was not so unwise as to overlook the difficulties that studded the path which led to the goal. While he realised that at which he aimed, he was also ready to choose his steps on the path of attainment, willing to compromise, because he knew that just in so far as he could gain one step in advance so he had a fresh step off to further progress. Naturally, that caution of his made some persons impatient, but it often is the case that steady and cautious advance reaches the goal before the wild rush forward and tumbling over the precipice that the enthusiastic person advancing has not taken time to see. In our present struggle in which many forces are contending, the more I think, that we can study the spirit and emulate the example of the great Indian patriot, the more surely shall we advance to our goal. There was one other point that we specially found in this great Indian leader. He never forgot the lessons of courtesy even to his bitterest opponent: He was essentially a man of honour, of strength, of courtesy, and that quality of courtesy is too much forgotten both in his days and in ours. Surely, in our public life we might try to emulate something of that dignity, of that courtesy, of the good manners, which used to be mark of Indians and which now seems to be in danger of falling entirely out of our public life. If we are to have amongst us men whom it is a pride to follow, men who can represent us in the forum of the world, then we ourselves must try to emulate his example of full equipment, of careful speech, of courage joined to caution, of perfect courtesy to opponents as well as friends, and then perhaps we may grow to be worthy to be numbered amongst those who have carried on his great work. And we shall realise that in the sky lit by the stars of Indian patriots there is perhaps no star-certainly there are few that can shine with the glorious lustre of the man whose life-work we are commemorating to-day.

The Servant of India 1919.

Pages 45 & 46

Tribute To Gopala Krishna Gokhale

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN

A message lies before me, which may truly be said to write sorrow on the bosom of the earth—a telegram from Bombay, saying, "Universal mourning in India, Gokhale's untimely death, loss of such true son and patriot irreparable."

His health, strained by ceaseless public duties, had been the cause of deep anxiety to his friends, but since his return to India there had been a more hopeful feeling; and in the last letter received from him he said, "I am slowly but steadily improving." The fatal news has therefore come as a sudden blow, deadening the mind, and making it difficult to write even a few lines to express the feeling akin to despair, which must visit those who for years have looked to him for counsel and guidance.

The telegram truly says that the loss is irreparable, both on account of his intrinsic qualities and on account of the extraordinary influence for good that he was able to exercise both in India and in this country. He was endeared to all who knew him for his saintly character, and he was revered for the power of his intellect; standing before the world as the finest type of the Indian sage. But besides all personal feeling and looking to the future of India, his loss at this critical time cannot be over-estimated: for he enjoyed, as no other living person enjoys, the combined confidence of thinking minds in India and in England. He was a link of true metal uniting the East and the West.

THE SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE

It is not now the time to attempt a record of his life work, but for the general reader in this country a brief reference may be made to some leading incidents in a strenuous career entirely devoted to the service of the

people. In the first place it should be remembered that, during his early years, he sat at the feet of Mr. Justice Ranade, being the favourite "Chela" of that good and wise man, the Gamaliel for the brightest spirits among the young men of that day. Mr. Justice Ranade was himself the disciple of the veteran teacher, Dadabhai Naoraji, so that it was in the third generation that Gopal Krishna Gokhale carried forward that tradition of public service which determined the course of his life.

Shortly after leaving college he associated himself with a band of friends who bound themselves to devote the twenty best years of their life to the education of Indian youth. With self-denial and enthusiasm such as animated the religious brotherhoods of the Middle Ages, they put aside the brilliant professional careers which may be before them, and for these 20 years lived on starvation allowance, working as professors at the Fergusson College, which they founded at Poona, to carry on higher education on an independent and national basis.

His manifold practical activities in India and in England may be briefly indicated. Sympathising with all movements of reform, he naturally took an active part in the development of the Indian National Congress, identifying himself with the party who hold firmly to constitutional methods, and trust to the ultimate justice of the British people. In 1905 at a time of storm and stress, he was called on, as a peacemaker, to preside over the Congress at Benares. A firm hand was then needed at the helm.

His accurate knowledge and power of handling figures served him well when, as the representative of the non-official members of the Bombay Legislature, he became a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council. There as the leader of the independent members of the Council, he took an active part in all the debates, his most prominent work being his Bill to provide free and compulsory elementary education. This measure was very dear to his heart, and he supported it with great power and pathos,

dwelling on the sad and helpless illiteracy of the Indian masses. The Bill did not pass, but he proved his case, and his memory will blossom afresh when, in no distant future, the light is brought to those who now sit in darkness.

But perhaps the undertaking which more than any other will perpetuate his work and influence was the foundation ten years ago of "The Servants of India Society." Believing in the nobility of human endeavour, and that he that would be the greatest should be the servant of all, he gathered around him a band of young men who lived the simple life under his tutelage in the society's home near Poona, and whom he trained to devote themselves whole-heartedly to the service of Mother India.

HIS WORK IN ENGLAND

A few words must suffice regarding his work in England, where he was trusted as a man of sound judgement, undoubted loyalty, and full knowledge of Indian affairs. At public meetings his persuasive eloquence carried his hearers with him; and as an example of the influence he exercised may be instanced his visit to Manchester at a very difficult time, when the interests of Lancashire appeared to be threatened by the Bengal boycott of Manchester cotton goods. On that occasion, two days, he addressed four most important meetings: 1. the Federated Traders Councils, 2. the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, 3. a meeting of merchants connected with India, and 4. the Manchester Liberal Association. In no case did he fail to produce a profound and favourable impression by the accuracy of his information and the cogency of his arguments. At personal interviews he was equally successful. To the credit of British statesmen of all parties, it may be recorded that they have all been willing to give a hearing to Mr. Gokhale; and it is no secret that, as Secretary of State for India, Lord Morley accorded to him prolonged interviews, at which he set

forth fully the needs and aspirations of the Indian people. The information thus imparted influenced in no small degree the concessions granted in the Morley-Minto reforms. Space does not allow me to note, even briefly, the services he rendered to all the Indian races by his mission to South Africa; nor can I refer to his labours on the Royal Commission on the Indian Public Service, which occupied his anxious care to the last hours of his life.

Suffering from the pain of so sudden a personal grief, these hurried lines are all that I can, at the moment, write regarding my friend. In saying good-bye last September he doubted whether he would again see England or again shake me by the hand. In one respect his expressed wish was fulfilled for he has died at home in his own country, in the loving presence of his family and the friends of his youth.

Speeches and writings of
SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN
Pages 472—475
G. A. Natesan & Co., Madras.

Sir Valentine Chirol on Gokhale

Mr. G. K. Gokhale, who amongst all the Indians I have known seemed to me to combine the finest qualities of the Eastern civilisation from which he sprang and of the Western Civilization of which he had assimilated the best elements.

I already knew and admired him as the courageous founder of the Society of the Servants of India for the promotion of the high ideals of social service to which he devoted a life of strenuous endeavour and ascetic self-denial. If he was an ardent Indian patriot who claimed

the release of his country from the leading strings of bureaucratic government, none acknowledged more fully and gratefully all that India owed to the fine example of integrity and intelligence and industry which the European members of the public service had set before his people, and he never hesitated to impress upon the western-educated youth of India that they must not only acquire the knowledge which British rule had opened up to them in modern schools and colleges, but above all emulate the qualities of British character to which Britain owed her freedom and her greatness. He was not only a master of the English language and an admirable speaker, but he had the gift of accurate and lucid statement and of logical reasoning which the ablest Indians often lack; and though Curzon was apt to regard his political independence as tainted with sedition, he was almost the only Indian whom that masterful Viceroy never ventured to treat as a negligible quantity in Council. In the intimacy which grew up between us during the three years we worked together on the Royal Commission, I learnt to entertain a deep and sincere affection for a man who could always understand the Englishman's point of view, even when he could least share it, and knew at the same time how to interpret with firmness and courtesy the very different and often antagonistic standpoint of the Indian. To him I owe a clearer insight than I had ever gained before into the rational and legitimate political aspirations of his fellow-countrymen, deriving straight from the Western education we have given them, and to him also a deeper understanding of the social and religious system of Hindnism in which he had been brought up as a high-caste Chitpawan Brahman. For, if he had learnt to measure and deplore its shortcomings in the light of all the best that the West could teach him, he had too much self respect to depreciate lightly the ancient civilization in which India had lived and moved and had her being from the very dawn of history. *Pages 242-3.*

To my deep regret Gokhale died rather suddenly and very prematurely just before we were to meet at Delhi. It

was a great misfortune for India, who was badly to need in coming years his wise and moderating counsels, and no less for the Commission as I believe that if he had lived, the majority might have gone further to meet his views and there might have been a unanimous report, whereas after the death of his only Indian colleague, Mr. (now Sir) Abdul Rahim grew altogether more uncompromising and insisted upon drawing up a minority report of his own which was dissented considerably from that of the majority. Gokhale spent his falling strength in fighting the spirit of faction which was already impelling the Indian extremists to speculate on England's necessities. —Page 246.

(Fifty years in a changing world. Jonathan Cape 36. Bedford square-London 1927.)

The Obituary Article In The Manchester Guardian

February 22, 1915. On the death of Mr. G. K. GOKHALE
C. I. E. on 15-2-1915.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. G. K. Gokhale the eminent Indian.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was by race a Mahratta, by caste a Chitpavan Brahmin. He was born in 1866 at Kolhapur, of parents who, notwithstanding their high caste, were poor. He graduated at Bombay University in 1884, and soon afterwards joined the Fergusson College, Poona, a purely Indian institution then in its infancy. Mr. Gokhale was one of a group of ardent young reformers who, as members of the Deccan Educational Society, entered into a self-denying ordinance by which they bound themselves to serve the College for twenty years at a salary of £ 60 a year. In Mr. Gokhale's case this obligation was more than fulfilled. Not only did he work out his full term, chiefly as professor of

history and political economy, retiring in 1902 on the modest pension of £ 24 a year; but he devoted many holidays to the collection of funds, and largely as the result of personal efforts, had the satisfaction of a seeing the College established on a sound financial basis

He served his apprenticeship to public life as the devoted disciple of M. G. Ranade, wisest and most erudite of Indian patriots. Their personal intimacy lasted some fourteen years—an invaluable period of training for the younger man, spent as it was in the local affairs of the Deccan.

Mr. Gokhale paid his first visit to Enland in 1897. He was the youngest member of a deputation chosen to present the Indian case to the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, presided over by Lord Welby; and he gained great credit on account both of the substance of his evidence and of the manner in which it was given. During his stay in England there befel a very unfortunate incident. The plague had broken out in Bombay, and the crudeness of the Government's early attempts to arrest its progress caused the most intense resentment among the Indian people. Mr. Gokhale received letters from friends in India containing charges of outrage against English soldiers on plague duty; these charges communicated by him to the English press, were brought before the House of commons. Challenged by the Government to prove his authority, he found himself on arrival at Bombay not in a position to submit the necessary proofs, and accordingly he was induced, before consultation with the Indian leaders, to publish an unqualified apology. For this action he was severely cendemned by his compatriots, and the incident, coming at the outset of a career of the brightest promise proved to be a serious handicap. It weighed heavily on Mr. Gokhale's mind and spirits, and many years were to pass before the affair ceased to be quoted against him.

In 1900 he was elected to the Bombay Legislative Council, and two years later to the Viceroy's Council, and

he was continually re-elected to both bodies without opposition for a long term of years. In 1902 when Mr. Gokhale first took his seat in the Supreme Council, Lord Curzon was entering upon the legislative programme which made the second part of his viceroyalty a period of unceasing controversy. Mr. Gokhale led the Indian Opposition in Council. He fought the Universities Bill, the Official Secrets Bill, and others of Lord Curzon's measures with so much persistence and resource that the Viceroy came to regard him as the only opponent in Council whom it was necessary to meet. But more permanently valuable than attacks such as these were Mr. Gokhale's constructive criticisms of Government policy his repeated analysis of the swollen military expenditure, his demonstration of the effects of the land revenue demand on agricultural indebtedness and the general welfare, his exposure of the results of the artificial appreciation of the rupee and his successful assaults on the salt tax. The more important of his contribution to these questions are contained in his series of Budget speeches, most of which are accessible in volume form. He maintained friendly relations with several Finance Ministers, and the fact that the reforms introduced at intervals followed the lines indicated by him is evidence of the general soundness of his criticism. The Companionship of the Indian Empire was conferred upon him by Lord Curzon.

Mr. Gokhale's power as a combatant was due to a rare combination of qualities, a power of speech at once forcible and persuasive, a finely trained intelligence, a great mastery of facts, and a perfect restraint of temper. His authority in Council was naturally enhanced after the passing of Lord Morley's Councils Act, when the enlarged body of members and wider range of debate gave, for the first time in India, scope for something approaching Parliamentary leadership. Mr. Gokhale was in England during the summer of 1908, and was in frequent consultation with Lord Morley while the bill was being framed.

The outbreak of revolutionary activity during Lord Minto's Viceroyalty placed Mr. Gokhale and the moderates

in a difficult position. They opposed the general policy of repression to which the Government of India, with Lord Morley's sanction, had recourse for example, the Seditious Meetings Act, the earlier Press Acts, and the revival (in 1907 and 1908) of the Deportation Ordinance of 1818: but, in consequence of further outbreaks of violent crime, Mr. Gokhale was led to give qualified and reluctant support to the last measures for the regulation of the Indian Press.

In 1905, after a highly successful tour in England, during which he addressed a large number of public meetings in the country, Mr. Gokhale was chosen president of the 21st National Congress, meeting at Benares. His presidential address contained, in addition to a severe indictment of Lord Curzon's administration, an outline of a constructive plan for the extension of local self government, and it ended on a note of impassioned appeal to Lord Morley, then just entering upon his memorable term at the India Office. At this time Mr. Gokhale occupied a very remarkable position among Indian public men. He was the idol of the Constitutional party, and the extreme Nationalists had not then declared their policy in a form that revealed its incompatibility with the Moderate Programme. Moreover Mr. Gokhale, still under forty, was at his best as a speaker, while his fine abilities, his incessant and unselfish public labours, and the high-mindedness which shone in all his work marked him out as the man who, above all his contemporaries, stood as the justification of the Indian claim to a greater share in the direction of the country's affairs.

In the Spring of 1907, Mr. Gokhale undertook a lecturing tour through the cities of Northwestern India. This may be said to mark the end of his first period. The country was seething with nationalist excitement, intensified by the conflicts then constantly occurring between the Government and the people in connection with the Swadeshi boycott agitation. Mr. Gokhale viewed the growing exaltation of young India with misgiving, and his addresses laid great emphasis on the need of strengthen-

ing the national character, of healing dissensions in the ranks, and of concentrating upon the hard work of education. He was listened to not with respect only, but with enthusiasm; but never again did he command an audience of equal unanimity. The breach between his party and the Nationalists, led by B. G. Tilak, was continually widening, and it culminated in the dramatic disruption of the Congress at Surat in 1907, a catastrophe which Mr. Gokhale did everything in his power to avert. The breach widened during several years, and there was a time, after 1908 when Mr. Gokhale was the object of bitter and incessant attacks from the more pronounced Nationalists.

Meanwhile he was devoting the greater part of his time and thought to the working out of a scheme which for many years had been very near to his heart. This was Servants of India Society established at Poona in 1905. Its aim was the formation of a group of specially trained young men who should devote themselves to the service of the motherland in the missionary spirit. Mr. Gokhale, as usual, was markedly successful in gaining support and raising funds, and he was able to make a beginning with a library, a hotel and a nucleus of members, with himself as head, holding office for life. Every member was required to submit himself to training for five years, to take certain vows of service and personal conduct, and to undertake work in any part of India to which he might be sent, in short, to become a unit in a new order of civic monasticism. In the early years of the Society recruits were obtained without undue difficulty, but it remains to be seen whether the order is capable of continuance and development now that the guiding hand of the founder is withdrawn.

—February 22, 1915

Out Break of Plague in Poona In 1897 and the British Press

At Bombay (Poona) Lt Ayerst and Mr. Rand of the Commissariat was shot dead and Mr. Rand of the civil service a member of the plague Committee was shot at and seriously injured and wounded. (London Times 23.7.97.)

There has been a great change in the tone of the Poona Native Press, since the Poona murders. On the contrary some newspapers write about it exultingly. A Bengali paper says that the memory of Mr. Rand the Poona Plague Commissioner will be cursed by Hindus, Mohammadans, Parsis and Jains owing to his want of tact and sympathy. Our Simla Correspondent says, "With Gangathar Tilak still a member of the Bombay Legislative Council and Professor Gokhale unprosecuted, it is little wonder if the loyal classes among the natives community are beginning to think that the Government is afraid to take action. The worst possible effect will be produced if a policy of inaction be persisted in much longer.

Scrutator in a letter to the Times calls upon Professor Gokhale to deny the public statement that he personally vouched for the truth of the infamous charge made in the Maharatta and Kesari that two native women had been violated by British soldiers, employed on the plague search parties in Poona. The writer says it is for Professor Gokhale and Sir William Wedderburn to justify their conduct if they can or to quit public life for ever.

Sir William Wedderburn who has known Professor Gokhale for many years and knows him to bear the highest character for integrity, writes saying "As regards the violation of women, what he said was that he had received private letters from friends whose words he could trust absolutely in which the allegation was contained, Farther than this he did not go, and in this statement he was certainly correct, as he showed me some of the letters. That the belief was generally prevalent in Poona

is shown by similar allegations which appeared at the time in the vernacular press. Until inquiry is made the truth or otherwise of these serious allegations cannot be ascertained. If the allegations are shown to be false, by all means let punishment be awarded. The Indian Penal Code makes ample provision for such cases.

POONA MURDER

Most of the native newspapers express indignation and regret in reference to the murders, but a few deprecate, what they describe as a deliberate attempt to prejudice the authorities against the people whose offence they say was nothing beyond laying by petitions, popular grievances before the authorities.

The *Mahara ta* published at Poona says that ever since the establishment of British Rule in India no measure undertaken by the Government has interfered so largely and systematically with the domestic, social and religious habits of the people as has the rigorous enforcement of the measures adopted for stamping out the plague.

The native papers resent the punitive measures which have been adopted and very bitter feeling prevails. The reappointment by Lord Sandhurst, Governor of Bombay of Bal Gangadhar Tilak of Poona, the owner of an English and a vernacular journal which have been conspicuous for the use of incendiary language against those engaged in the suppression of the plague, to a seat in the local legislative Council is strongly condemned by the European Community.

From the London Times Weekly Edition. 1897.

Dated 25-6-97, page 414.

THE DISTURBANCE IN INDIA POONA PETITION

At a meeting of the Radical members and others in one of the Committee rooms of the House of Commons last week, Professor Gokhale who came to England to give evidence before the Welby Commission on the Expenditure of India, referred to a memorial recently addressed to the Governor of Bombay by the natives of the Poona district, and stated at some length the objections of his fellow countrymen to the methods adopted for preventing the spread of the plague. The memorial in question stated that the inhabitants of Poona for the last eight weeks had been subjected to a reign of terror due to the irregular oppressive highhandedness of the special agency, employed by the plague Commission for the inspection, fumigation and lime washing of homes for searching out plague patients and for the segregation of healthy persons. The memorialists had but little fault to find with the rules made by the plague Committee under the orders of the government, but unfortunately these rules were often violated and when parties injured applied for redress to the Committee they failed to get it. It was stated that people were often sent to the plague hospital without the proper medical examination, that relatives and neighbours of plague patients and even passersby were hurried to the segregation camp without time to arrange for the custody of their houses. In the inspection of houses, some times persons were forced to remove all the cloths from their bodies in the presence of others ; no respect was shown to religious sentiments of the natives in regard to the sanctity of the kitchen and of rooms where worship was offered ; in some cases idols in Hindu temples were polluted and in a few cases the modesty of native ladies were not respected.

Since British rule commenced the people of Poona had never had such experience.

FRIENDS PUZZLED AT GOKHALE'S APOLOGY

Now came castigation from unexpected quarters. Gokhale's colleagues and the Indian public generally felt humiliated by what seemed to them to be an object apology. Even his friends in England were puzzled as to the need for the withdrawal of his statements in the manner in which he had retracted them. Gokhale's explanations was given to Dadabhai in his letter of August 6 : *Times July 9, 1897 Page 436.*

GOKHALE'S LETTER TO NAOROJI, ON HIS APOLOGY

I have written to Sir William explaining the circumstances under which withdrawal of the allegations became the only honourable course open to me..... Briefly, the situation was this; Before my arrival here, the government had ceased to be British government and had assumed the role of Russian government. Arrests and deportations on the charge of disloyalty has spread such profound panic in Poona that any kind of substantiation was out of the question. Government, moreover, had decided not to hold a public inquiry into the complaints by a commission. Retraction, therefore, was the only course left open to me. In the step I have taken I have bowed to circumstances and have acted in accordance with the best advice available. I know my action has done much harm to the cause which is so dear to the hearts of us all and which I meant to serve all the while.

(R. P. Masani's life of Dadabhai Naoroji, *Page 403*)

GOKHALE'S REPLY TO DADABHAI

"How kind of you" (said Gokhale in reply, September 16) "to write as you have done I I was prepared for a much more severe reproof, and you have written in such gentle and encouraging terms I All I can say is that all my energies will now be devoted to making amends for what has happened." *Ibid p. 404*

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BIODATA

GOKHALE, go'ke-la GOPAL KRISHNA (1866-1915). Indian nationalist, educator, and social reformer. He was born into the elite Chitpavan Brahman caste in Maharashtra. After graduating from Elphinstone College, Bombay, in 1884, he joined the Deccan Educational Society and taught until 1902 at Fergusson College, founded by the society at Poona.

Gokhale also joined the Poona Serva Janik Sabha, a regional political body, and the Indian National Congress, becoming a foremost leader of the moderate nationalists. In the Bombay and Imperial legislative councils from 1899 to 1915 he stressed problems relating to the drain of economic resources from India and the country's resultant poverty. Although attacked by the Congress extremists led by Bal Ganghadar Tilak, his colleague from Maharashtra, Gokhale served as Congress president in 1905 and adhered to his belief that peaceful agitation would lead to a greater Indian voice in National affairs.

In 1905, Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society, which adopted vows of poverty and lifelong service. It worked at education, fostering communal harmony, and raising the status of Hindu "untouchables". Gokhale was the political guru, or teacher, of Mahatma Gandhi. He died in Poona on Feb. 19, 1915.

LEONARD A. GORDON, Columbia University. Further Reading: Wolpert, Stanley A. Tilak and Gokhale (Berkeley, Calif., 1962).

American Encyclopedia

GOKHALEANA

We have here 2 volumes, loaded with tributes, view points and anecdotes on Sastri and Gokhale, from a wide range of friends and contemporaries. Articles penned by these two great pioneers of Indian politics are included, so that the editor's studious and painstaking endeavour to record for preservation two past great lives, is admirably fulfilled. The volumes transcend the compass of a biography. They are far more comprehensive.

Gokhale's role in Indian politics, his patriotism, the moral and religious zeal he evinced in his struggle, his integrity, the moderate progressive outlook he exhibited, that drew even Gandhi to acknowledge him as his Guru, are well known. So too his varied life as teacher at Fergusson College, a "Professor to order", educationalist, politician, and social reformer. It is interesting to trace an almost similar pattern, and development in Sastri's life from teacher to a liberal but astute politician. Gokhale, the Founder-President of the Servants of India Society, was succeeded to the chair by Sastri. Both the volumes substantiate to the fullest measure the life and work of these two men as we know them.

Coming to Gokhale, we find a better compiled and a more valuable record, more of a success with the reader, Gokhale is the better equipped study, Sastri himself paving the way by his article "Gokhale My dear Master".

Noteworthy in this volume is the speech by Mr. C. R. Reddy on Gokhale, an intimate and unbiassed study covering all facts of Gokhale's life, as an incontestable leader of men, a restrained man. The personal glimpses into the man through the many interesting anecdotes, and the heartfelt tributes at his loss, by Tilak, Sir P. M. Mehta, Sarojini Naidu and his colleagues at college, all add to this glowing picture.

The Volumes could have been made into a hand book on these two great patriots if only the editor had filled the void caused by the absence of a detailed biographical sketch of their individual lives. But as it is they remain a praise worthy compilation perhaps the only ones of their type.