

POLITICAL THINKERS OF MODERN INDIA — 2

# Gopal Krishna Gokhale



EDITED BY :

**VERINDER GROVER**

## **The Book**

The contribution of Gopal Krishna Gokhale towards the enrichment of the Indian National Movement both on the ideological and operational fronts, have earned him a niche of honour. Gokhale did not bequeath political treatises to posterity but his whole life agglomerated the essential syncretization of the courage of his convictions, consistency of his values and the moral force of his intrinsic spirituality. Not by theorising but by translating his ideas and ideals into purposive and vigorous action, and always with robust optimism, Gokhale put the stamp of nobility and recognition on liberalism as a vibrant medium of public life in India, which still continues.

This book critically analyses the thoughts and ideas of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. It studies in detail: Gopal Krishna Gokhale: A Life History; Political Philosophy of Gokhale; A Discerning Liberal; Exponent on National Economic Thought; Gokhale's Ideas and Services; Economic and Fiscal Thinking; The Impact of the West; Gokhale and Nationalism; Budget Speeches; Gokhale's views on British Indians in South Africa; Constitution Reforms in India; Self-Government; Swadeshi Movement; District Advisory Councils; Gokhale as Spokesman of Indian Nationalism; Development of Primary Education; Influence of Gokhale's Political Thought on present-day India; His place in history; Gokhale: The dedicated Freedom Fighter; Gokhale: The Man and his Mission, etc.

This book is a treasure for all teachers, scholars and students of political science, modern history and modern social thought; all university, college, legislative, judicial, public and other libraries in India and abroad and for all those interested in the study of Modern Indian Political Thought.

**Rs. 600**

**ĠOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALĒ**

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(POLITICAL THINKERS OF MODERN INDIA—2)

*Edited by*

**VERINDER GROVER**

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and Managing Editor, Indian Political Science Review  
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## PREFACE

Gopal Krishna Gokhale was born in a poor Maharashtrian family at Kolhapur in the year 1866. He studied at college in the same place and passed the F.A. examination. Thereafter he joined the Elphinstone College, Bombay, and in the year 1884 passed his B.A. examination from there. Gokhale was appointed Professor of History and Political Economy in the Fergusson College, Poona, on a monthly salary of Rs. 70. At the time of joining Fergusson College, he came into contact with Mahadev Govind Ranade who was mainly responsible in shaping his character. For more than twelve years he studied political economy under the able guidance of Justice Ranade. As a result, Gokhale's opinions on economic questions are still regarded in India as authoritative. Gokhale held Ranade in great reverence and considered him his master.

Gokhale became the editor of the *Quarterly Journal* of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha and was also appointed honorary secretary to the Deccan Sabha. In addition to this he was also the editor of the Anglo-Marathi weekly the *Sudharaka*, of Poona. He held office as Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Conference for four years. He was also appointed Secretary of the Congress Session held in 1895 at Poona. Gokhale joined the Congress movement right from the beginning. He attended almost all the Congress Sessions and delivered speeches at them. His most famous speech was the one he delivered at the Congress Session held in Bombay in the year 1904 on the balance in the Indian Treasury.

Gokhale for long aspired to creating a way of life for political workers whose single aim would be service of the country. So these men should devote their lives to political work in every province in India. Keeping this in view, he established the "Servants of India Society". The aims of the Society are indeed noble and it had been rendering good service to the country.

One cannot fail to appreciate how truly and totally committed Gokhale was to India's cause. In the historical process of interactive proximity of imperial splendour and India's squalor, Gokhale's self-effacing public service and self-imposed penury stand out as hallmarks of dedication and patriotism.

While introducing Gokhale to the people of South Africa, Gandhi said, "It may not be possible for all of us to attain the wisdom and brilliance which Gokhale, who has given his whole life to the service of the motherland, possessed; but surely, it is possible for all of us to identify ourselves fully with the work we undertake as he did with his. Gokhale has completely devoted himself to the cause which he has made his own. And that is the reason why the whole country and its friends honour him."<sup>1</sup> This total dedication to the cause of India led M.K. Gandhi to look upon Gokhale as his *Rajguru*.

This volume is divided into three parts. Articles in Part I throw light on the Political Philosophy of Gokhale as well as his Economic Thought. Part II consists of the writings, speeches and addresses delivered by Gokhale in England as well as in India. His speeches in the Imperial Legislative Council reflect his wonderful grasp of the political and economic conditions prevailing in India at that time. Part III consists of articles assessing the place Gokhale occupied as one of the national leaders of India.

This anthology is a systematic piecing together of articles contributed by scholars and specialists to the various journals of national and international repute. My special thanks are due to the *Political Science Review*, *Indian Journal of Political Science*, *Gandhi Marg*, *The Modern Review*, *Young India*, *Kesari*, *Indian Opinion*, *Indian Journal of Social Work*, *Bengal Past and Present*, *Journal of Indian History*, *Yojna*, *The India*, *Contemporary Review*, *The Madras Review*, *Bombay Chronicle*, *United Asia*, *Education Quarterly*, *Organiser* and *Swarajya* from which I have drawn freely. I express my deep sense of appreciation to all the contributors for their scholarly papers and gratitude to the various librarians and eminent scholars in the field who extended their co-operation to me.

New Delhi

VERINDER GROVER

1. *The Indian Opinion*, 1912.

## **CHRONOLOGY OF THE LIFE OF GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE**

- 1866 Birth on 9 May at Kotluk in Chiplun Taluka, Ratnagiri Dist.
- 1876 Migrated to Kolhapur for education.
- 1879 Death of his father
- 1880 Was married.  
New English School was started in Poona.
- 1881 Matriculated.
- 1882 Studied in Rajaram College, Kolhapur.
- 1883 Studied in Deccan College, Poona.
- 1884 Studied in Elphinstone College, Bombay, and took the B.A. Degree.  
Joined Law Class.  
Formation of the Deccan Education Society.
- 1885 Joined the New English School as Assistant Master.  
Fergusson College opened.  
Maintained coaching establishment for Public Service Certificate Examination.
- 1886 Became Life Member of the Deccan Education Society and began teaching in Fergusson College.  
Wrote frequently in the *Mahratta*.  
First introduced to M.G. Ranade by S.H. Sathe.  
First public speech at Kolhapur on India under the British rule.
- 1887 Married second time.
- 1888 Edited English section of the *Sudharak*.  
Elected Secretary, Bombay Provincial Conference.

- Public speech (perhaps not delivered) upholding the action of Lord Reay in the Crawford case.
- 1889 First participation in the Indian National Congress, held at Bombay.
- 1890 Elected Secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha and Editor of its *Quarterly*.  
Spoke at Calcutta Congress on the reduction of salt duty.  
Tilak resigned from the Deccan Education Society.
- 1891 Appointed Secretary of the Deccan Education Society.  
Spoke at Nagpur Congress.  
Death of his first wife.
- 1892 Spoke at Allahabad Congress on Public Services.
- 1893 Death of his mother.  
Engaged in collection of funds for the Deccan Education Society.
- 1895 Worked as Secretary to the Reception Committee of the India National Congress which met at Poona.  
Elected Fellow of the Bombay University.  
Editor of the *Rashtra Sabha Samachar*.
- 1896 Resigned Secretaryship of the Sarvajanik Sabha and Editorship of its *Quarterly*.  
Helped in organizing the Deccan Sabha of which he became the first Secretary.  
First meeting with Gandhiji.
- 1897 First visit to England. Evidence before the Welby Commission.  
Plague measures in Poona. Publication in England of complaints on the subject.  
First meeting with John Morley.  
Return from England. The Apology incident.
- 1898 Took prominent part in plague relief work in Poona.
- 1899 Elected Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. Criticised famine relief measures of Government.
- 1900 Death of his second wife.
- 1901 Opposed Land Alienation Bill. Walk-out from the Council.  
Opposed introduction of the communal principle in the District Municipalities Bill.

Supported Temperance Movement.  
Elected to the Imperial Legislative Council.  
Death of Ranade.

1902 Retired from the Fergusson College.  
Budget speech : Criticised Government's financial policy in respect of :

1. Currency surpluses;
2. High level of taxation;
3. Salt duty;
4. Army expenditure.

Elected President, Poona Municipality.

1903 Budget speech :

1. Reduction of salt duty;
2. Abolition of excise duty on cotton goods;
3. Indianization of services;
4. Increased efforts for spread of education.

Elected additional Joint General Secretary to the Congress.  
Gandhiji stayed a month with Gokhale in Calcutta.

1904 Received title of C.I.E.  
Budget speech : Criticised increased Army expenditure.  
Opposed the Official Secrets Bill.  
Opposed the Indian Universities Bill.

1905 Founded the Servants of India Society on 12 June  
Opposed the Universities Validation Bill.  
Budget speech :

1. Reduction of salt duty;
2. Pleaded for relief to agriculturists;
3. Indianization of services.

Second visit to England as Congress Delegate to represent India's case, in view of British General Election.  
Presided over the Indian National Congress at Banaras.

1906 Third visit to England to agitate for the prospective Reforms.

1907 Death of his brother.  
Deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai.  
Undertook lecturing tour in Northern India.  
Budget speech :

1. Urged complete abolition of salt duty;
2. Pleaded for free primary education;
3. Pleaded for Constitutional Reforms.

Congress split at Surat :

1908 Evidence before the Decentralisation Commission.  
Fourth visit to England to agitate for the prospective Reforms.

Announcement of the Morley-Minto Reforms.  
Arrest and imprisonment of Lokamanya Tilak.  
Defamation suit against the *Hindu Punch*.  
Indian National Congress at Madras.

1909 Declined offer of lecturing tour in America.

1910 In the Imperial Council :

Moved a Resolution on Indentured Labour to Natal (adopted).

Moved a Resolution on Elementary Education (with-drawn).

Criticised the Press Bill.

Acted as Secretary to Sir W. Wedderburn at Allahabad Congress.

Founded the Ranade Industrial and Economic Institute.

1911 Introduced the Elementary Education Bill.

Opposed the Seditious Meetings Bill.

Contributed a paper on 'East and West' to the Universal Races Congress.

1912 In the Imperial Council :

Spoke on the Resolution of Bhupendranath Basu on Police Administration in India.

Moved a Resolution on Indentured Labour.

Moved a Resolution on resources of local bodies.

Defeat of the Elementary Education Bill.

Fifth visit to England in connection with the work of the Public Services Commission on which he had been appointed this year.

Visit to South Africa.

1913 Sixth visit to England with the Public Services Commission.  
Raised funds for the South African struggle.

1914 Seventh visit to England with the Public Services Commission.

Declined offer of K.C.I.E.

Gandhi-Smuts Agreement.

Met Gandhiji in London.

Attempted a Congress compromise but failed.

1915 Visit of Gandhiji.

Death on 19 February.



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