



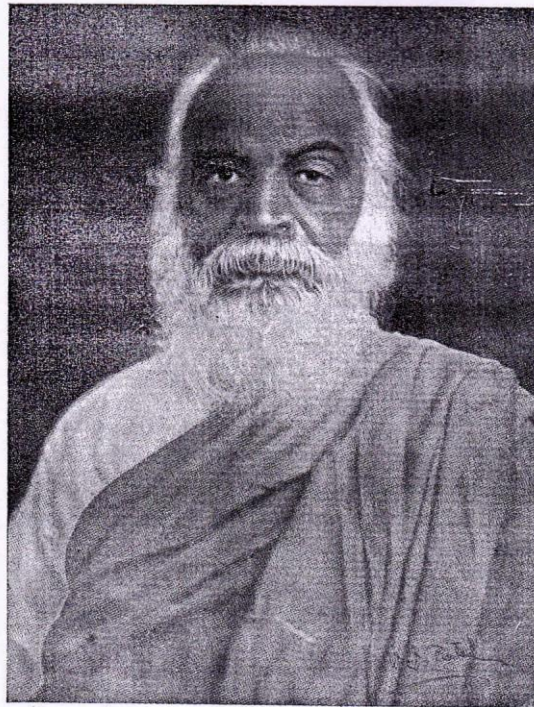
The
1938 Haripura Congress Souvenir

By
Y. G. KRISHNA MURTI
Author of
Magnificent Mysore

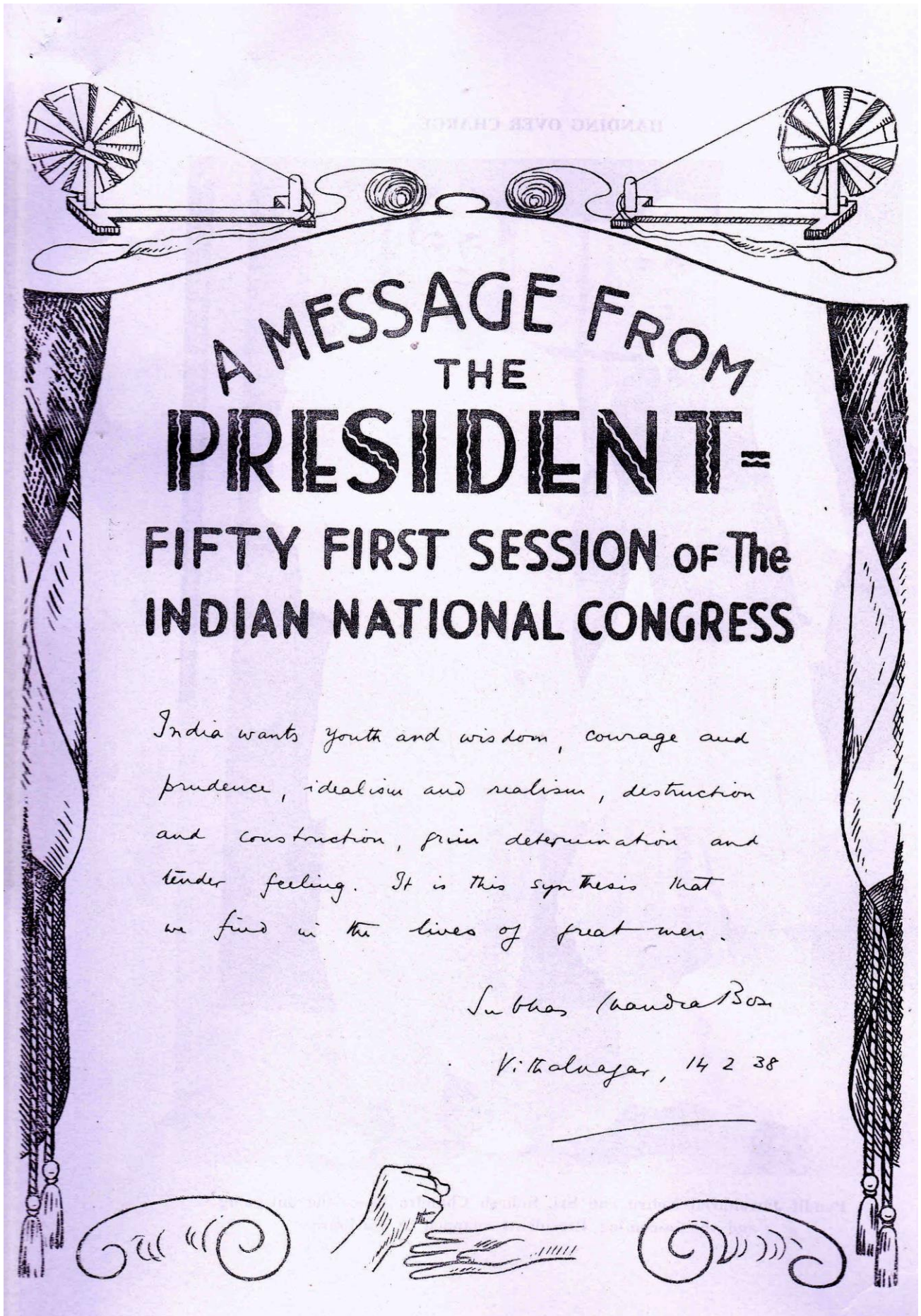
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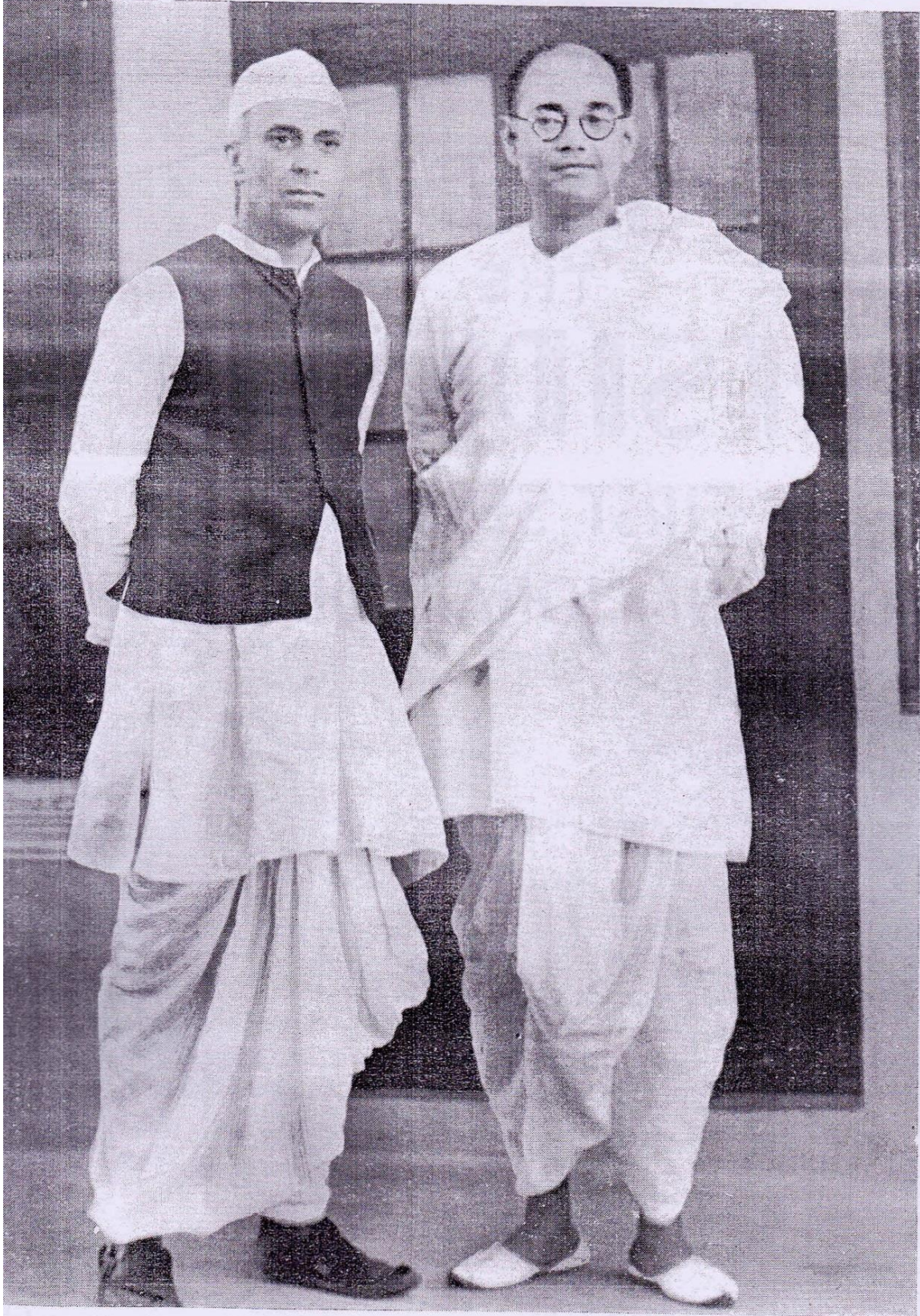
DEDICATED TO



the Sacred Memory of
the late
SJT. VITHALBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL
who sacrificed his life at the altar
of Motherland



HANDING OVER CHARGE



Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sri. Subash Chandra Bose—the out-going and the in-coming Presidents snapped at Haripura.

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Preface

The Haripura Congress Souvenir is the recorded wisdom of the Indian celebrities. A perusal of it will be a useful addition to the stock of mental wealth.

In the short span of our life it is not possible to gaze with the scientist, explore with the industrialist, experiment with the statesman and dream of martyrdom with the patriot. But one can avail himself of their career and the results of their labour. These are chronicled in the pages of this Souvenir and its study will make a profitable reading.

This volume will be useful both for the savant and the enquiring lay man. It is a fact that there is no such work in print. There are some meagre "Who's Who's" which make dull reading. There are expensive biographies, which can never become popular, because their price is prohibitive. This Souvenir meets the serious deficiency.

The leading features of the Souvenir are the development of the Congress Polity, the History of the Auxiliary Bodies of the Congress and the Pen-Pictures. The portraits are the most valuable feature of the book. A succinct biography is given of all persons who have made our motherland great.

Some might question the appropriateness of these biographical sketches appearing in the Congress Souvenir. The reason is obvious. Congress is Nation and Nation is Congress.

The pen-pictures of the Congress Ministers and Congress Legislators claim the attention of the readers. As we go to press we hear the news of the resignation of the United Provinces and Bihar Cabinets. The fate of the other Congress Ministries is yet undecided.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not express my sense of thanks to Mr. G. Ramakrishna, the proprietor, Ramakrishna Bros., who made a novel departure in taking up this general publication. I was ably assisted in my work by Mr. K. A. Doraswamy, a journalist of rare abilities. I take this opportunity to thank the persons who have contributed the thought-provoking articles.

Y. G. KRISHNAMURTI.

Prafulla,
Deccan Gymkhana,
Poona.
15th February, 1937.

Publishers Note

We are bringing out the Haripura Congress Souvenir as a mark of our devotion to the Congress. As far as our ken goes this is the first attempt made to publish the pen-pictures of the myriad persons who have ceaselessly worked for the welfare of our Motherland.

We resolved to publish this Souvenir a month ago. The response given by the various Congress Committees and particularly Mr. K. G. Gokhale, Secretary, Bombay Parliamentary Board Office, was very encouraging. As many Congressmen were very reluctant either to spare their photos or give information about their lives our task became increasingly difficult.

Owing to the short time we were not able to include the life sketches of many legislators, women celebrities, Congress workers and the newly elected A.I.C.C. members. To them we express our sincere regret. Further we had to drop the chapter on the work of the Congress Ministries as many important Bills are still under discussion. We hope to do full justice to all these in our next publication.

We owe our sense of thanks to Messrs. D. K. Parker and Ratansey Jetha of the New Jack Printing Works for having worked with unflagging zeal to make this Souvenir an artistic achievement; Mr. Poonawalla of the Commercial Engravers, Bombay, who executed our block work with astonishing speed and high efficiency and Mr. H. R. Mehta of the Swastik Advertisers for having secured the advertisements within the shortest period.

RAMAKRISHNA BROS.

February 1938.

tion throughout India. Swami Govindanand was imprisoned and released only in 1922. Thus by the year 1915 the Congress had broken with the moderate elements and in its tactics had accepted passive resistance. The highest ideal of the Nation at the time was to obtain "the recognition of India as a component part of a Federated Empire in the full and free enjoyment of the rights belonging to that status."

The sprout had become a sturdy plant, and in 1914 Mrs. Besant had declared that the Indian problem had to be solved not on the basis of a reward but on the basis of an inherent right.

HOME RULE ERA.

The demand for Home Rule spread throughout the land and it acquired a religious and moral significance under the leadership of Mrs. Besant. Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, interned Mrs. Besant, G.S. Arundale and B.P. Wadia in June 1917 and the era of passive resistance began when the provincial Governors spoke about the coming reforms as of a minor character.



Hon. ANAND MOHAN BOSE
1898 (Madras)

CONGRESS SOUVENIR



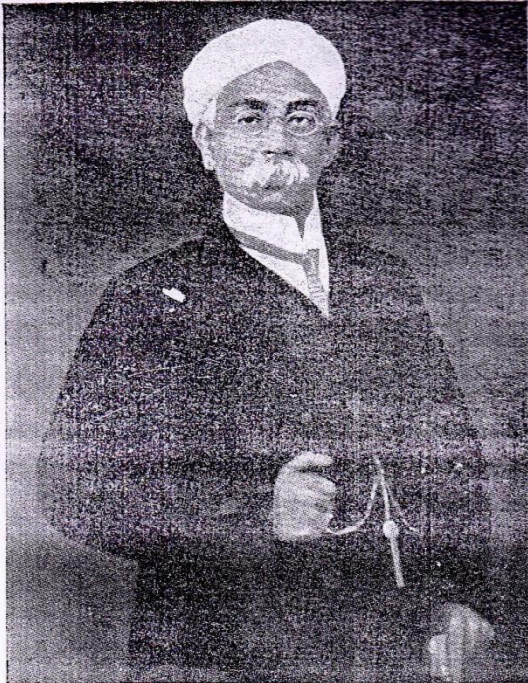
Dr. RAMESH CHANDRA DUTT
1899 (Lucknow)

Meanwhile, the Imperial War Conference was attended by Maharaja of Bikaner and Lord Sinha, who tried to persuade Austin Chamberlain to make a definite pronouncement upon the Indian situation. Gandhiji began his Satyagraha in Champaranya to protect the indigo labourers and this was the first case in India where civil disobedience proved entirely successful.

Montague had declared that the British Government had the object of "progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire."

But the goal had to be achieved by successive stages. The Congress presided over by Mrs. Besant stood for complete self-government resembling that of the Commonwealth and for provinces on linguistic basis.

The Tri-colour Flag of the Home Rule League became the National Flag. But the attitude of the Government discouraged high hopes. In December 1917 the Rowlatt Committee had been appointed. In 1918 Gandhiji began the Kaira Satyagraha and educated the peasants in the art of civil disobedience. In Ahmedabad there was a textile strike,



SIR N. G. CHANDAVARKAR
1900 (Lahore)

which was finally brought to an end by Gandhiji undertaking a fast. Thereafter the Textile Labour Association was formed.

Tilak had been back from a lecturing tour and a deputation to Chelmsford to lift the ban failed. Mrs. Besant still believed in British connection and sent two deputations to England to place Indian demands before the Parliament but both the deputations were turned back at Gibraltar. In June 1918 the Montague Chelmsford Report was published and the moderates completely parted company with the Congress. The Ali brothers who were urging the cause of Turkey were interned under the Defence of India Act.

The Armistice on November 11, 1918 brought to an end the war in Europe and high hopes were entertained that President Wilson's principle of self-determination would be applied to India also. The Delhi Congress reiterated its loyalty to the King, urged the repeal of repressive laws, offered welcome to the Prince of Wales, and demanded complete responsible Government in India at an early date.

The events of 1919 paved the way for Non-co-operation. The Rowlatt Act provoked Gandhiji to offer Satyagraha. Martial Law reigned supreme in the Punjab. On 13th April General Dyer fired upon a peaceful crowd in Jallianwala Bagh. His action was applauded by Sir Michael O'Dwyer and horrors perpetrated at Amritsar, Kasauri and Lahore caused universal resentment. At such a juncture Gandhiji suspended the Civil Disobedience because some ill-disposed persons, not true passive resisters at all, had perpetrated these disorders.

Tilak was now in England and Mrs. Besant opposed the action of Dyer. A deputation containing Vithalbhai Patel and N. C. Kelkar had been sent to England to oppose Besant's propaganda. The Congress appointed a committee to investigate into the Punjab atrocities and it condemned Martial Law as the regime of blood and iron, disgracing even Prussian despotism.

The Amritsar Congress condemned the Reforms as inadequate, but due to the influence of Tilak, responsive co-operation was put forward. A royal amnesty to the political prisoners eased the situation a little. Tilak pinned his faith in



SIR DINSHAW WACHHA
1901 (Calcutta)

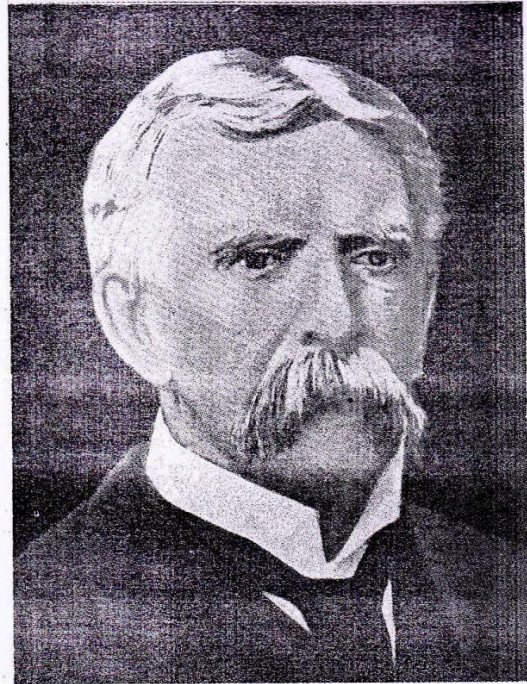
February 1938.

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the Labour Party and gave £3,000 for a permanent organisation in England. In 1920 Non-cooperation was really born. Tilak had formed the Congress Democratic Party which was loyal to the Congress but had doubts about the country's fitness for the self-denying ordinance of Gandhiji.

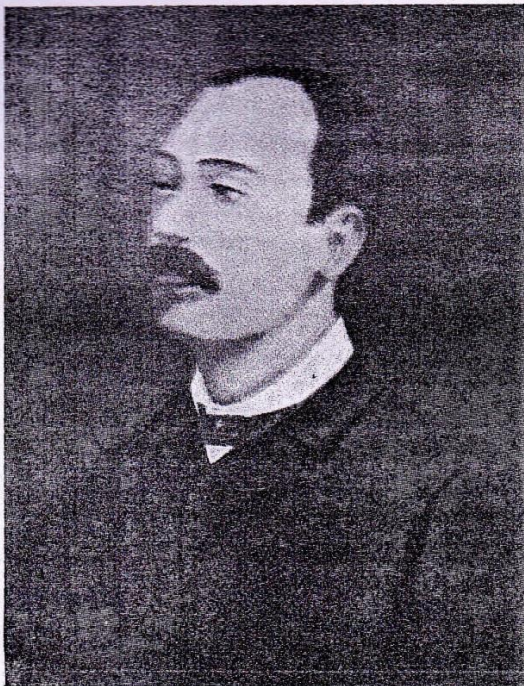
The Khilafat wrongs, the policy of repression and the opposition to the Reforms formed three items in the Congress propaganda. The publication of the Hunter Committee Report roused general indignation and on 2nd June 1920 the Working Committee declared upon Non-co-operation. The Muslims unwilling to live under the martial law in the Punjab and N.W.F.P. migrated to Afghanistan with their bag and baggage, but the Afghan Government refused to receive them and 18,000 persons were turned back after suffering enormous hardships.

Meanwhile the death of Tilak had removed a great personality from the ranks of the Congress. On August 1st Non-cooperation was formally launched in spite of the opposition of C. R. Das. In December the Nagpur Congress under the presidency of C. Vijayaraghavachariar, the Grand Old Man, finally ratified the Non-cooperation resolution and the creed of the Congress was chang-



SIR HENRY COTTON
1904 (Bombay)

ed to "the attainment of Swaraj by all peaceful and legitimate means."



LAL MOHAN GHOSH
1903 (Madras)

RESISTANCE TO AUTHORITY.

The Indian Nation passed from an attitude of helpless anger and servile requests to self-reliance and to a spirit of resistance to authority. In 1921 the Non-cooperation was fought on the issues of the boycott of Law Courts, educational institutions and of foreign cloth. One result of the boycott of schools was the growth of National education. Vidyapithas in Gujrat, Maharashtra, Kasi and Calcutta came into existence and numerous high schools were established all over the country. The Government replied by restraint orders on C. R. Das, Rajendra Prasad, Yakub Hassan and Lajpat Rai. There were firings at Nankana and Dharwar. In Chittagong the labourers struck work under the leadership of Sen Gupta, in Andhra the Chirala Municipality was boycotted, in Kerala Narayana Menon who was saving Englishmen from the Moplahs was imprisoned. The Volunteer movement spread throughout the country and the Hindustan Seva Dal under N. S. Hardikar became a highly disciplined body.



HON. GOPAL KRISHNA GOKHALE
1905 (Benares)

But the Khilafat Volunteers adopted a more militant attitude. In November the Prince of Wales landed in Bombay and in the riots that followed 53 people were killed. Hartal was observed throughout the country and the boycott of the Prince was on the whole peaceful, except at Calcutta and Madras. 30,000 persons were now in Jail. In December the Ahmedabad Congress made Gandhiji the sole dictator, except that he could not make Peace or alter its course without consulting the Congress. Sir M. Visvesvaraya presided over an All-Parties Conference in January 1922 and condemned the repressive policy of the Government. The Conference was willing to suspend the Civil Disobedience if the Government convened a truly representative Round Table Conference. But Lord Reading refused to listen to its recommendations.

Therefore the no-tax campaign was started. The outbreak of violence at Chauri-Chaura on 5th February so moved Gandhiji that he suspended the C. D. Movement. This was condemned by Motilal Nehru and Lajpat Rai in very strong terms. The A.I.C.C. however authorised individual civil disobedience purely as a defensive measure. The Government retorted by arresting

Gandhiji on 13th March and sentenced him to six years imprisonment. But the Civil Disobedience Committee continued to function and the Lawrence Statue Satyagraha, the National Flag Satyagraha, the no-tax campaign in Borsad and the Akali Satyagraha at Gurukabad, kept the country in ferment.

In the absence of Gandhiji a new party standing for council entry was gradually coming into existence. The C. D. Committee reported that great misery had been caused by the C. D. campaign and therefore advised the Congress to contest the elections and oppose every Government measure in the councils.

Ansari, Rajagopalachari and Kasturi Ranga Iyengar stood for the boycott of the councils but the council entry party was supported by Vithalbhai Patel, Hakim Ajmal Khan, C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru. But the orthodox party triumphed at Gaya and declared for the boycott of councils, schools and colleges.

The triumph of no-changers was short-lived. During the two years of the C. D. there had been complete communal harmony. But now in 1923



Dr. RASH BEHARI GHOSE
1908 (Madras)

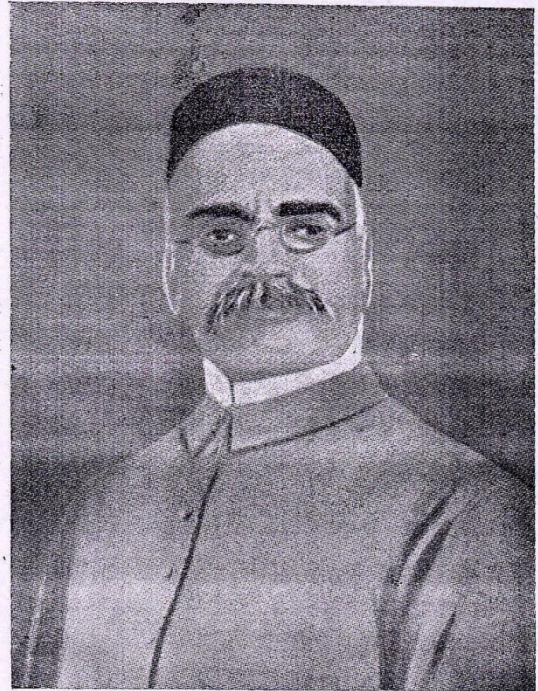
February 1938.

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there were communal conflicts in the Punjab and Bengal. The Khilafat agitation practically ceased when the Turkish Sultan was deposed and Turkey became a republic. The repression in the country went on unabated. The Flag Satyagraha at Nagpur became an All-India problem until in July it was entirely successful. The no-changers carried on a constructive programme throughout the country and C. R. Das finding much opposition to the council entry resigned the Presidentship of the Congress and the work was carried on under Dr. Ansari's chairmanship.

In the special session of the Congress held at Delhi under the Presidentship of Abul Kalam Azad, the pro-council party emerged triumphant and the Congress suspended all propaganda against council entry. The Cocanada Congress however affirmed the principle of boycott and appealed to the country to carry on the constructive work as adopted at Bardoli.

In the Punjab the Gurudwara Bill was opposed by the Akalis. The abdication of the Maharaja of Nabha, the prohibition against the reading of "Akand Pant" and the wearing of "Kirpans" roused the Sikhs to offer Satyagraha. Dr. Kitchlew and Gidwani were arrested. Finally the whole

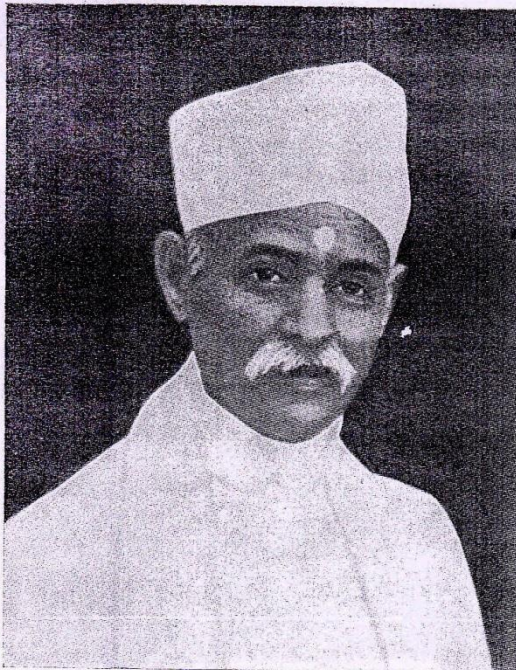


PANDIT BISHAN NARAYAN DHAR
1911 (Calcutta)

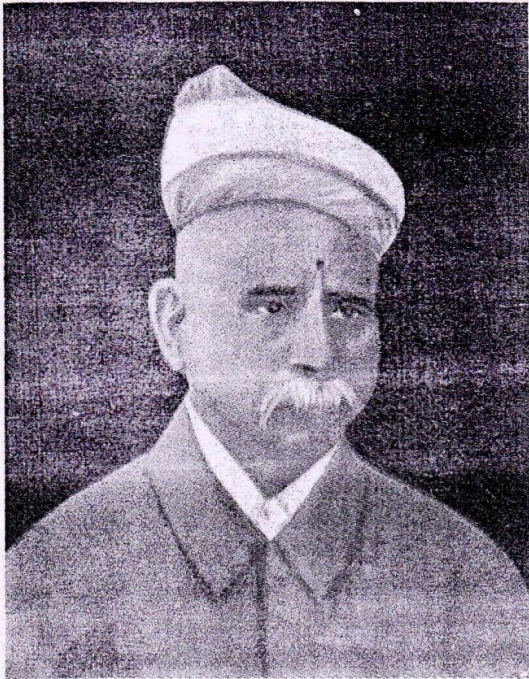
question was settled by an act of the Khalsa for the control of the Gurdwaras.

Gandhiji was languishing in prison and in January 1924 he was seriously ill and underwent an operation for appendicitis. He was unconditionally released on 5th February and went to recoup his health at Juhu. Meanwhile the Swarajist party was strongly represented in the legislative bodies and in the Legislative Assembly Motilal Nehru demanded the summoning of a Round Table Conference to consider a scheme of a full responsible Government in India. But Sir Malcolm Hailey said that the demand for Dominion Status was highly inconsistent with the Government of India Act.

Therefore the Assembly refused supplies by throwing out the demand for grants. The A.I.C.C. imposed upon all members of elected Congress organisations the qualifications of spinning 2000 yards of yarn per month. The boycott of foreign cloth, law courts, schools and colleges, titles and legislatures subject to Cocanada resolution was re-affirmed. The year witnessed an outbreak of terrorism in Bengal and communal fights at



PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA
1909 (Lahore) 1918 (Delhi)



RAO BAHADUR MUDHOLKAR
1912 (Bankipore)

Delhi, Nagpur, Lucknow, and Allahabad. To bring about communal unity Gandhiji undertook a three weeks' fast and at last a National Panchayat laid down the fundamental rights regarding religious liberty. Gandhiji now entirely surrendered to C. R. Das. The yarn franchise was affirmed but he suspended Non-cooperation in favour of the Swarajya Party.

As the President of the Belgaum Congress, Gandhiji had to face a stern opposition. All the boycotts except on foreign cloth were lifted. The events of 1925 were concerned chiefly with the councils. Under Motilal's lead the Swarajists gave up "constant, continuous and uniform obstruction" but considered each question on its merits. C. R. Das was prepared to co-operate real responsibility was transferred to the people. He believed in the good intentions of Birkenhead. He condemned violence and demanded Swaraj in the fullest sense in the near future.

But unfortunately to the country he passed away on 16th June and Sen Gupta succeeded him as the dictator of Bengal. Many Swarajists finding that Gandhiji yielded more and more now

opposed the spinning franchise and wanted to make Congress purely a political body. Motilal had become a member of the Indian Sandhurst Committee. Even Sir Basil Blackett congratulated Motilal and Patel on their spirit of co-operation. This complete surrender was further accentuated by resolutions of the A.I.C.C. in September 1935, divesting Khaddar of all political significance and making the yarn franchise an alternative to the four anna membership.

The Swarajists under the dominant lead of Motilal completely captured the Congress. Thus there came about a startling change. Gandhiji to avoid a split in the Congress ranks had almost completely surrendered to Motilal. The Swarajists now captured the local bodies to push the constructive programme through those bodies. Sen Gupta in Calcutta, Vallabhai Patel in Ahmedabad, Rajendra Prasad in Patna, Vithalbai in Bombay and Jawaharlal Nehru in Allahabad became the Mayors of the Corporations.

But even among the Swarajists there was a conflict between one party led by N. C. Kelkar, E. Raghavendra Rao, M. R. Jayakar and Dr. Moonje who stood for the acceptance of ministry



NAWAB SYED MAHOMED
1913 (Karachi)

February 1938.

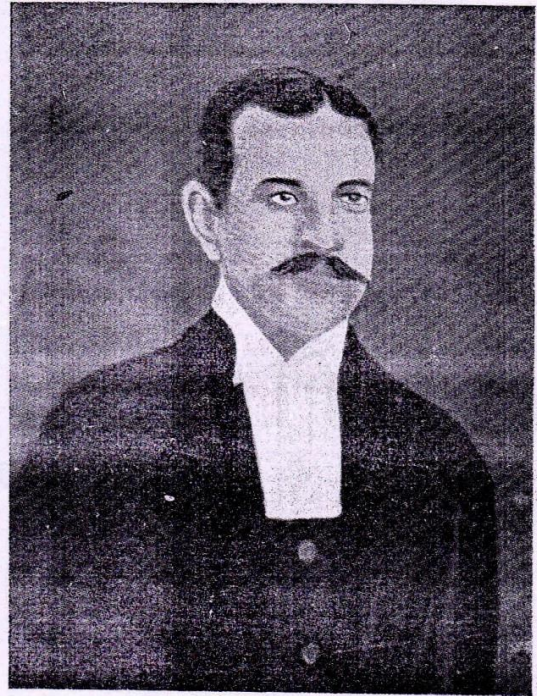
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and another party led by Motilal who was determined to crush like an egg-shell the revolt of Kelkar and Jayakar. Kelkar accused Motilal of going back on Amritsar decision by accepting a seat on the Sandhurst Committee, and Kelkar, Jayakar and Moonjee resigned their membership of the legislature.

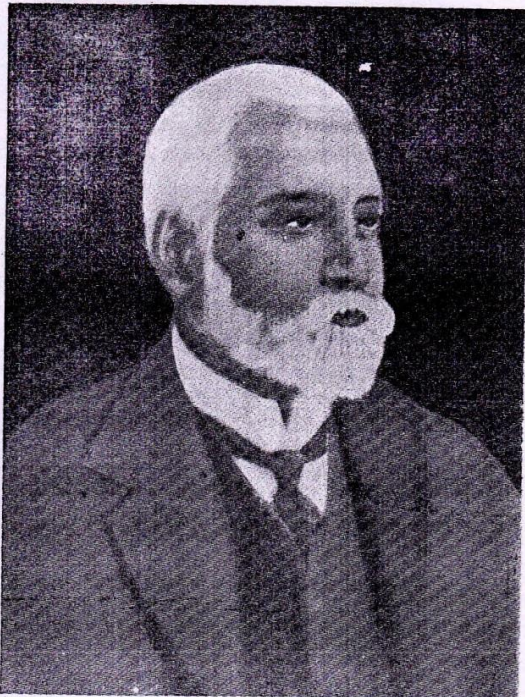
In the Cawnpore Congress Motilal declared that he was prepared to co-operate if necessary to advance the national cause and obstruct if necessary for the same cause. In the same year the rebellion of Seetharam Raju in the Gudem Agency, who for three years had resisted the Government was suppressed and Seetharam Raju was said to have been captured and shot.

There were also communal riots in Delhi, Calcutta and Allahabad. The country appeared tired of the obstructive tactics and was in favour of responsive co-operation. The Responsivists came close to the Independents and Nationalists, and in April the Indian National Party was formed to establish "Swaraj of the Dominion type by all peaceful and legitimate means".

Motilal regarded this as a revolt against the Swarajists and the Swarajists and Responsivists



SIR SATYENDRA PRASSANA SINHA
1915 (Bombay)



HON. BHUPENDRA NATH BASU
1914 (Madras)

were always at loggerheads. The Responsivists held that the reforms should be worked for all that they were worth. Moreover, the differences became more accentuated because of the Hindu-Muslim problem. In Bengal also Sarat Chandra Bose protested against the methods of Sen Gupta. There were communal riots at Calcutta and other places. Motilal was opposed by Lajpat Rai, who resigned from the Congress Party in the Assembly and became a Responsivist. In the General Election in November 1926 the Congress candidates were again successful and in the Gauhati Congress there was open warfare between co-operation and Non-cooperation.

There was a further cause for tension when Swami Shraddananda was murdered by a Muslim fanatic. Srinivasa Aiyangar presiding over the Gauhati Congress plainly condemned the acceptance of office and the Congress resolved to oppose the formation of Ministries until a satisfactory response was made by the Government to the National demand. The Responsivists had definitely drifted from the Congress fold. The Swarajists in the election of 1926 fared very badly in the United Provinces. But in the Central Assembly the Congress was well represented and



HON. AMBIKACHARAN MAZUMDAR
1916 (Lucknow)

V. J. Patel was again elected the President of the Assembly.

Kelkar and Lajpat Rai opposed Motilal for the latter's desire for power, possession and authority. Finally Lajpat Rai left for England and the Working Committee of the Congress gave a free hand to Motilal, who uncompromisingly opposed the formation of ministries. The country was once again convulsed by communal riots in Lahore, Bihar, Multan, Bareilly and Nagpur. In December 1927 Irwin was trying to secure the friendly co-operation of Indian leaders, because of the fear of General Elections in England.

The Simon Commission had been formed without any Indian members. Therefore the Madras Congress decided to boycott the Simon Commission. The Congress constitution underwent some changes and the creed of the Congress was then defined as "complete National Independence." In 1928 the country was preoccupied with the boycott of the Simon Commission. Irwin offered to form a Joint Select Committee chosen from the non-official members of the Central Legislature to convey its views to the Simon Commission. But the subordinate position assigned to

the Indian element was an affront to Indian honour.

On February 3rd when the Commission landed in Bombay Hartal was observed all over India. In Madras, Calcutta and Delhi the police came in conflict with the crowds. In Lahore Lajpat Rai was severely beaten and the cowardly assault hastened his death. "Go back Simon" was the cry throughout the length and breadth of India. The Congress summoned an All-Parties Conference to discuss a constitution "on the basis of full responsible Government".

The Nehru Committee was formed to draft the principles of a constitution before 18th July 1928. A no-tax campaign was organised in Bardoli under the leadership of Vallabhai Patel, not as a part of civil disobedience but to protest against the enhancement of the Land Revenue. The Bardoli ryots stood firm though the Bombay Governor declared that "the resources of the whole British Empire would be used to crush Bardoli". Finally a kind of court was constituted to investigate the question and there was virtually no increase of revenue at all. Thus Bardoli became an object lesson to the whole country.



DR. MRS. ANNIE BESANT
1917 (Calcutta)

February 1938.

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In August the All Parties Conference met to consider the Nehru Report and the Conference declared itself in favour of Dominion self-government but gave liberty to those parties who believed in complete independence. In the legislature Vithalbhai Patel was upholding the dignity of his office and made the Government members apologise for having tried to bring the office of presidentship into contempt. The Government suffered heavy defeat on the Reserve Bank Bill and the Public Safety Bill. The Calcutta Congress presided over by Motilal sent an ultimatum to the British Parliament that if the Nehru Constitution was not accepted on or before 31st December 1929, the Congress would organise a campaign of Non-violent Non-cooperation by advising the country to refuse taxation. Meanwhile the Congress was to carry on constructive work like picketing of liquor shops, boycotting foreign goods, stimulation of Khadi, removal of untouchability, organisation of volunteers, etc.

The All Parties Conference lost support because of the opposition of Jinnah and the Aga Khan, and thus towards the end of the year there were several parties in the country pulling different ways. In 1929 the Butler Report on the Indian



PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
1919 (Amritsar) 1928 (Calcutta)

States, the Hertzog Report on education and the Simon Commission Report were presented to the Parliament by the middle of April. In May the Conservative Government was succeeded by the Labour Government of Ramsay MacDonald. Irwin passed the Public Safety Bill as an Ordinance and everywhere repression reared its head.

Houses were searched, Congressmen were detained on suspicion. The Congress offices were raided by the police. In March the Meerut Conspiracy case against Hutchinson for spreading communistic propaganda began. The Congress Working Committee helped the defence by making a grant of Rs. 1,500.

In July the Government embarked upon a policy of ruthless repression. In Bengal Dr. Sunderland's books were banned. In the Punjab Bhagat Singh was sentenced to death for throwing a bomb in the Assembly. In Bengal Subash Chandra Bose, in Andhra Sambamurthi and several other members of the Working Committee were arrested. There were labour troubles and strikes. Propaganda in foreign countries on behalf of the Congress was carried on by establish-



SYED HASSAN IMAM
1918 Special (Bombay)



C. VIJAYA RAGHAVACHARIAR
1920 (Nagpur)

ing a students information bureau in Berlin and elsewhere in the continent. The Hindustan Seva Dal organised a National Flag Day every month. The Dal was reorganised and a new constitution was framed.

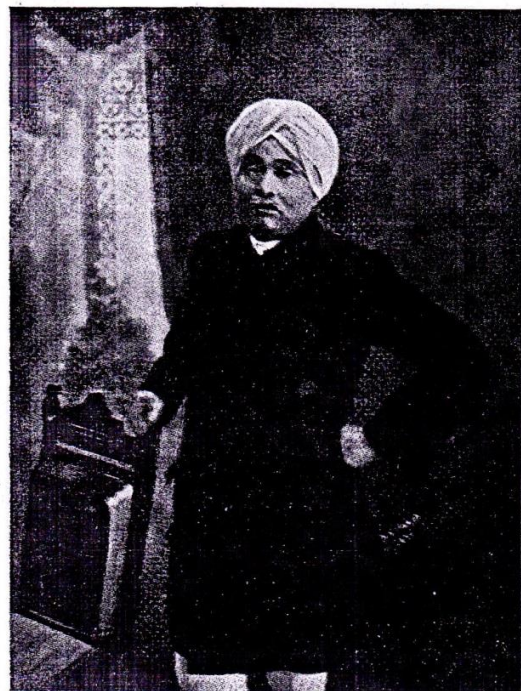
In September one Saunders of Lahore was murdered and Bhagat Singh and Jatindranath Das were implicated in it. The Lahore Congress was a historic event and Jawaharlal was chosen the President. The country had been deeply moved by the death of Jatindranath Das after a fast of 64 days to protest against the treatment given to Indian prisoners in preference to that of the Europeans. The All India Congress Committee however warned the prisoners that a hunger strike should not be resorted to except in a critical emergency.

In October Irwin announced that the goal of British policy implicit in the declaration of 1917 was "the attainment of Dominion Status". In the meeting between Gandhiji and Irwin, Gandhiji demanded an assurance that the Round Table Conference would discuss "full dominion status". But the Viceroy refused to give any definite pro-

mise and was telling the world that Dominion Status had already been in the action for over a decade. The Lahore Congress called upon all Congressmen to abstain from elections and to resign the seats in the Legislatures.

The lapse of the Nehru Report raised the communal question again and Congress declared that no future solution of the communal problem which did not fully satisfy the minorities would be acceptable to the Congress. The intimation given to the Government expired on 1st January 1920. 26th January was observed as a Purna Swaraj Day. But there was a split in the Congress on the question of election of members to the Working Committee and Srinivasa Iyengar and Subash Chandra Bose formed a new party called the Congress Democratic Party. Its object was to co-operate as far as possible with other parties in the country without prejudice to the ideal of independence.

The Viceroy stiffened the resistance of the Government by asserting that a definition of Dominion Status did not necessarily mean the attainment of it and that self-determination was out of question. Arrests were made throughout the coun-



LALA LAJPAT RAI
1920 Special (Calcutta)

February 1938.

try and in February the Working Committee initiated civil disobedience to achieve Purna Swaraj. The campaign began by giving liberty to individuals who believed in non-violence as an article of faith and soon it became a mass movement. The lawyers, students and title holders were to renounce their so-called benefits. Gandhiji pitched upon the salt question to offer Satyagraha. He sent a letter explaining his intentions through Reginald Reynolds to the Viceroy. But Irwin gave a curt reply and therefore Gandhiji on 12th of March began his pilgrimage to Dandi on foot.

It was symbolical of the revolt of 33 crores of Indians against British authority. The march roused intense feeling throughout the country. The Nation had been educated from passive resistance through Non-cooperation and civil disobedience to the spiritual level of Satyagraha. The people who had become demoralised and denationalised felt a new power surging within them. Gandhiji declared that the British rule in India had brought about moral, material, cultural and spiritual ruination of the great country, and that this system of Government had to be destroyed.



HAKIM AJMAL KHAN
1921 (Ahmedabad)

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DESHBANDHU C. R. DAS
1922 (Gaya)

On 16th April Gandhiji technically broke the salt law by picking up the salt lying on the seashore. The Government lost all balance and a reign of terror ensued all over the country. Gandhiji announced that he would raid the salt depot at Dharoon. But on the previous night he was arrested and spirited away to Yerawada. There was a protest throughout the world and a complete Hartal was observed all over India. The Viceroy called Messrs. Sapru and Setalvad to get him out of the impasse. The Liberals urged the Government to speed up the preparation for the R.T.C. Meanwhile the Working Committee expanded the scope of Civil Disobedience. Tyabji and Sarojini Devi were arrested and the police behaved so brutally even towards women that impartial observers like George Slocombe declared that it was a humiliating sight for an Englishman to see the British Government engaged in such disgraceful atrocities.

The Lathi Raj reigned throughout India. The Government unable to arrest the thousands of Volunteers had to content themselves by brutal assaults on peaceful people. Women were dragged by the hair and kicked by European sergeants.



MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD
1923 Special (Delhi)

Irwin passed numerous ordinances suspending all normal police activities. About 120 persons were killed and thousands were wounded all over the country. In Lahore, Peshawar, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta the Police particularly distinguished themselves. Karnatak, Siddapur and Ankola set up a splendid example in the no-tax campaign. In Gujarat there was a wholesale migration of people into Baroda. In the N.W.F.P. the Gharwali soldiers refused to fire upon innocent crowds and they were court-martialled and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

Meanwhile Messrs. Sapru and Jayakar had tried to negotiate with the Government but failed. Irwin replied by issuing more Ordinances. Motilal was on his death bed in Allahabad and passed away with the last sleep not in a subject country but in a free land on his lips on 27th February. Gandhiji first met the Viceroy and the conversations continued upto 3rd March. Finally the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded, on 5th March, exactly one year after the starting of the Civil Disobedience.

With the cessation of hostilities the Congress organisations were revised and the Working Com-

mittee elected Vallabhai Patel to preside over the Karachi Congress. Meanwhile Bhagat Singh had been executed and the Congress denounced this as an act of wanton vengeance deliberately flouting Nation's demand for commutation. There were serious communal riots at Cawnpore. On the day of the execution of Bhagat Singh Ganesh Chandra Vidyartha had been murdered in trying to save the Muslims. The Congress authorised Mahatma Gandhi to represent it in the R.T.C. The Congress defined the fundamental rights and duties and chalked out an economic and social programme.

On 18th April Irwin was succeeded by Willingdon. There were breaches of settlement throughout the country and Gandhiji refused to start for England until the coercive measures were withdrawn. The Working Committee reorganised the Hindustan Seva Dal, which had been doing splendid work under the guidance of Hardikar, as an affiliated body to the Congress. The Tri-colour Flag, saffron, white and green, with the spinning wheel super-imposed, was adopted as the National Flag. Once again preparations were made for the commencing of the Satyagraha. The Government promised to hold an enquiry in Bardoli and Gandhiji was persuaded to sail to London.



MAULANA MAHOMED ALI
1923 (Cocanada)

February 1938.

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Gandhiji had still the faith that Englishmen some day would do their duty towards India. But the proceedings of the R.T.C. showed clearly that the Congress and the Government had come to the parting of ways.

THE GANDHIAN ERA.

Such was the situation when Gandhiji landed in India. Willingdon was waiting to pounce upon the Congress. New Ordinances were passed and 90,000 persons courted imprisonment. Samuel Hoare declared that drastic measures were necessary because “the whole basis of Government was threatened and the Ordinances were essential if India was to be prevented from drifting into anarchy”. Gandhiji, Jawaharlal, Khan Saheb and other leaders were arrested. The Congress replied by boycotting British goods, setting up a parallel postal service, picketing liquor shops, breaking the salt laws and forest laws, refusing to pay taxes and rents and obstructing railway services.

All the Congress organisations except the A.I.C.C. had been declared as unlawful. But even under the shower of lathi blows the Congress held



MAHATMA GANDHI
1924 (Belgaum)



MRS. SAROJINI NAIDU
1925 (Cawnpore)

its annual sessions at Delhi and in Calcutta in 1932 and 1933. Meanwhile the Government had appointed the Lothian Committee to investigate the question of franchise and electoral seats. On 17th August 1932 Macdonald had announced his Communal Award giving the depressed classes not only separate electorates but also additional rights in the general electorate. Gandhiji announced that he would undertake a fast unto death if the attempt to separate the untouchables from the Hindu fold was persisted in. Ambedkar, M. C. Raja, Malaviya and other leaders met at Poona and concluded the Poona Pact giving 148 seats to the depressed classes out of the general constituencies.

On 26th September Macdonald accepted the Poona Pact and in response to Gandhiji's call temples were thrown open to the Harijans in many places and the Harijan movement gathered immense force. The Acting President of the Congress Sri M. S. Aney announced the suspension of the Civil Disobedience for six weeks. But the Government refused to negotiate with the Congress. Willingdon refused to grant an interview to Gandhiji. Therefore on 1st August 1937 Gan-



SHRINIVAS IYENGAR
1926 (Gauhati)

dhiji inaugurated individual Civil Disobedience and announced that he had disbanded Sabarmati Ashram to which he had promised never to return till Swaraj was won. He prepared to march to Ras and the Government arrested him and sentenced him to one year's imprisonment. Gandhiji undertook a fast to protest against the withdrawal of facilities and he was unconditionally released on 23rd August. But Gandhiji refused to take advantage of this and determined to refrain from aggressive Civil Disobedience during the unexpired term of his sentence upto Aug. 3, 1934. He commenced his march on foot to further the Harijan movement.

Since 1933 a section of the Congress had been urging the Congress to enter into councils and under Dr. Ansari the Swaraj Party was revised to contest elections to the Legislative Assembly, on the issues of rejecting the white paper, repealing the repressive laws, and summoning of a Constituent Assembly. A Parliamentary Board was authorised by the A.I.C.C. to carry out the afore-said work. Therefore in the Congress there were three distinct parties, the No-changers, the pro-council party and the Congress Socialists, the last

of whom held their first conference on 17th May 1934.

The Government removed its ban on Congress organisations by 12th June 1934, excepting in Bengal and N.W.F.P. and promised to release the C. D. prisoners. The Working Committee condemned the White Paper and as regards the Communal Award it neither accepted or rejected it. This solution did not commend itself to Sjt. Malaviya and Aney who formed a separate party to carry on active agitation against the Communal Award. Gandhiji announced on September 17, 1934, that he would resign from the Congress because he had come to feel that the Congress intelligentsia was tired of his methods and views.

On such fundamental questions as hand-spinning, non-violence, policy towards Native States, untouchability and growing corruption among Congress ranks there was a great divergence of views. The Bombay Congress under its President Babu Rajendra Prasad regretfully accepted Gandhiji's resignation but reiterated its faith in non-violence and changed the Constitution by making it compulsory for every Congress Committee member to wear Khadi habitually and to



DR. M. A. ANSARI
1927 (Madras)

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perform some manual labour at least six months prior to the elections. The country was again plunged into an election campaign and the Congress Nationalists and the Congress candidates were overwhelmingly victorious, the signal defeats being inflicted on Sir Shanmukam Chetti, the hero of the Ottawa Pact, Raja of Bobbili, the rallying point of reactionary forces, and C. Y. Chintamani, the pillar of Indian Liberalism. But the Congress suffered an irreparable loss by the death of Abhyankar, Sherwani and Gidwani.

In the Assembly the Congress Party led by Bhulabhai Desai attacked the Ottawa Pact as a scandalous piece of jobbery perpetuated by the Secretary of State for India and Secretary to the British Board of Trade. The Working Committee rejected the Joint-Parliamentary Report and demanded a constitution drawn up by a constituent assembly to secure the National objective of Purna Swaraj.

There were talks about Hindu Muslim unity between Rajendra Prasad and Jinnah but they ended without any tangible result. There were communal riots at Ferozabad and an earthquake at Quetta in May 1935 resulted in an immense loss



PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
1929 (Lahore) 1935 (Karachi) 1937 (Faizpur)

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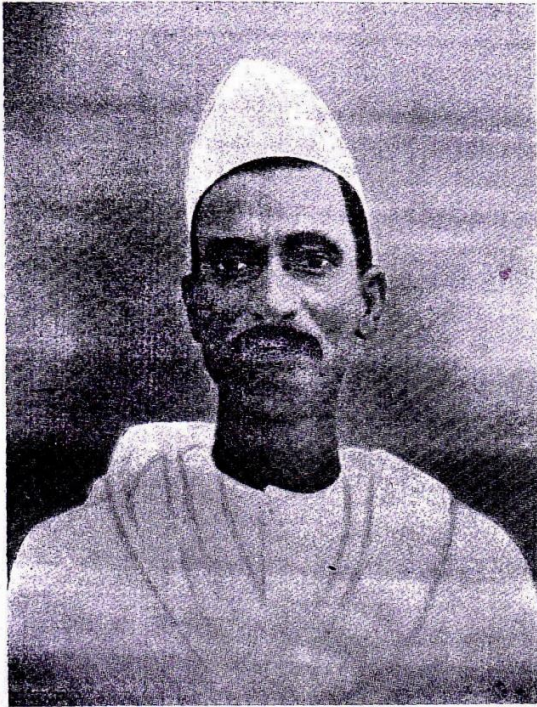


SARDAR VALLABHAI PATEL
1931 (Karachi)

of life and property. The A.I.C.C. organised relief work and collected funds for the relief of sufferers.

On the question of Indian States the A.I.C.C. declared that "the interests of the people of Indian States were as much the concern of the Indian National Congress as those of the people of British India". And in July 1935 the Working Committee also declared that "the people in the Indian States have an inherent right to Swaraj, no less than the people of British India. But the responsibility and the burden of carrying on the struggle within the States must necessarily fall on the States people themselves, the Congress having no power under the existing circumstances would exercise only a moral and friendly influence upon the States. It however assured the people of the States that the Congress would never be guilty of sacrificing their interests in order to buy the support of the Princes. The 50th Anniversary of the Congress was celebrated throughout the country with great jubilation.

The Government of India Act had received the assent of His Majesty in 1935. Now the question of the acceptance of office after the general election in 1936 became increasingly important.



BABU RAJENDRA PRASAD
1934 (Bombay)

THE AFTERMATH OF ELECTIONS.

In 1937 the Congress achieved a complete victory in the elections by utterly routing the reactionary forces and obtained the majority in seven Provincial Assemblies.

On 15th April Provincial autonomy was introduced and the Council of the Secretary of State against which the Congress had declared itself from its very inception was abolished. This has made the Secretary of State quite independent of his advisers and he is responsible now only to the Cabinet.

The Congress refused to accept office unless an assurance was given by the Government not to interfere with the day-to-day work of the ministers. Therefore "interim ministries" were formed to carry on the Government, but they were declared unconstitutional by eminent Jurists.

At long last on June 18th 1937, Neville Chamberlain declared that the powers of the Provincial Ministers would remain unfettered by the Parliament. On June 22 Lord Linlithgow declared "there

was no justification for the fear the Governors would seek occasions for the gratuitous and un-called for exercise of special responsibilities. The normal practice was resignation and thus shift the responsibility from himself. In a major issue however when the ministers refuse to resign the Governor may dismiss the ministers." Upon this assurance the Working Committee authorised the Provincial leaders to accept office.

On July 7, the Congress Ministries were formed in Madras, Bombay, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and N.W.F.P. The Ministers undertook immediately the work of the release of political prisoners, the fixing up of salaries, return of newspaper securities, rural uplift, prohibition, re-organising of local administration, and the lifting up of bans on associations.

On August 6, the prisoners in Andamans belonging to Bihar were repatriated. On August 16, the Working Committee recommended to the Congress Ministries the appointment of an expert body to deal with urgent and vital problems of national reconstruction and social planning on a provincial basis.

The Frontier Government rescinded all orders of externment on August 21, and Abdul Gaffar Khan was permitted to visit his province. In September 1937 the Provincial Assemblies put forward a demand for a Constituent Assembly.

On October 18, the Madras Government inaugurated total prohibition in Salem. It released the prisoners connected with Kothapatam Summer School Case, and several newspapers in Madras obtained a refund of their securities. The Madras Government proposes to make Hindi compulsory in the elementary stage.

In Bombay the ban on 227 Associations has been lifted and securities have been refunded to many papers. The Government have assured the public that they would safeguard the civil liberties of the people.

In the Central Provinces the ministry has expressed itself in favour of free and compulsory education and of bringing about a total prohibition at any cost.

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In the United Provinces the ministry has repealed several repressive laws, re-modelled the excise policy, and undertaken the separation of Judicial from Executive functions. To give relief to the peasantry proposals are made for the grant of hereditary rights to tenants and for the disposal of arrears of rent.

In Bihar orders have been passed for the release of political prisoners and the grievances of kisans are being redressed.

In Orissa all the Co-operative Banks have been ordered to postpone the collection of dues suspended the realisation of Taccavi loans.

In N.W.F.P. a vote of no-confidence was passed against the interim ministry and Dr. Khan Saheb accepted office in September.

In October the question of the detenus came to the fore and several detenus were released. The question has been taken up by Mahatma Gandhi, who met Sir John Anderson in November and obtained the release of 1100 detenus. All the Provinces in response to the hunger-strike of Andaman Prisoners have undertaken the task of repatriation. In November the Bombay Government gave back the lands confiscated in Karnatak and Gujarat.

At the same time Gandhiji issued a warning that liberty should not be construed as licence and the Congress would suppress every attempt to advocate violence. Therefore the Madras Government took action against Batliwala for his speech at Nellore and he was sentenced to six months imprisonment.

The question of Indian States came into prominence when K. F. Nariman persisted in addressing a meeting of the students in Bangalore and the Mysore State police opened fire resulting in the death of one person. The Working Committee which met at Calcutta in November declared that it had every sympathy with the struggle of the States people but Gandhiji expressed his opinion that the resolution was ultra vires of the declared policy of the Congress not to interfere actively with the States affairs.

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THE CONGRESS IDEALS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The inauguration of the Congress in 1885 opened a new era in Indian History. The seed sown on the fertile soil, nourished by the sacrifices of patriots, has become a sturdy tree of life and liberty, spreading its branches all over India, sheltering the sons of the Motherland and shielding them from the oppression of the foreigner and the tyranny of vested interests.

Men and women, Indian and European, the Hindu and the Parsi, the Sikh and the Muslim, the Brahmin and the Harijan have figured prominently in the role of honour.

A Nation devitalised and debased through a long period of slavery, lost to all self-respect, has been rejuvenated within half a century. For 35 years the Congress pinned its faith to co-operation but when the people asked for bread they were given a stone.

The country ceased to expect any help from outside and learnt to rely upon its help. With the advent of Mahatma Gandhi historic events began to happen not only for India but for the world. True to the instincts of Indians Gandhiji has transcended the physical and intellectual levels of passive resistance and civil disobedience and achieved the level of Satyagraha.

A new philosophy of life and service has been taught to the world and the Congress however much it might have failed to rise to this level has set a splendid example by its sufferings and achievements. Gandhiji and Nehru have risen, each in his own way, beyond the limitations of Nationalism.

The utter fearlessness, the passionate sincerity, the incorruptible purity and the calm serenity are the virtues of both. However much they may differ in their views the moral stature of the whole Nation has gained height by their immortal work.

The Congress representing 90 per cent. of the population of India is out to destroy communalism parochialism and vested interests. The history of

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the Congress shows that with the passing of years it has never become a static, stagnant body but has always led the country in the vanguard of progress.

It has its fingers on the pulse of the Nation and responds quickly to the tremors of the body politic. The uplift of the Depressed Classes, the enfranchisement of women, the protection of Indian commercial interests, and the work of communal harmony have received as much attention from the Congress as the political side of the struggle. The problems that confront it now are the wrecking of the proposed Federation, the question of States subjects and communal concord so that a truly independent India may come into existence.

Thus has come about the fruition of the long drawn struggle between the foreign Government and the people. Thus on the mighty stage of world politics a fascinating drama of Indian independence is being played. The final denouncement is imminent.

India is weak. She is a subject nation and to cast off this weakness and fear is the object of the National Congress, which under the guidance of Gandhiji, who having conquered fear in himself has taught India to conquer fear. Thus has the Congress vindicated its right to present the whole nation by rousing the people from lethargy and despair and directing the energies of the masses into corporate action for the good of all humanity.