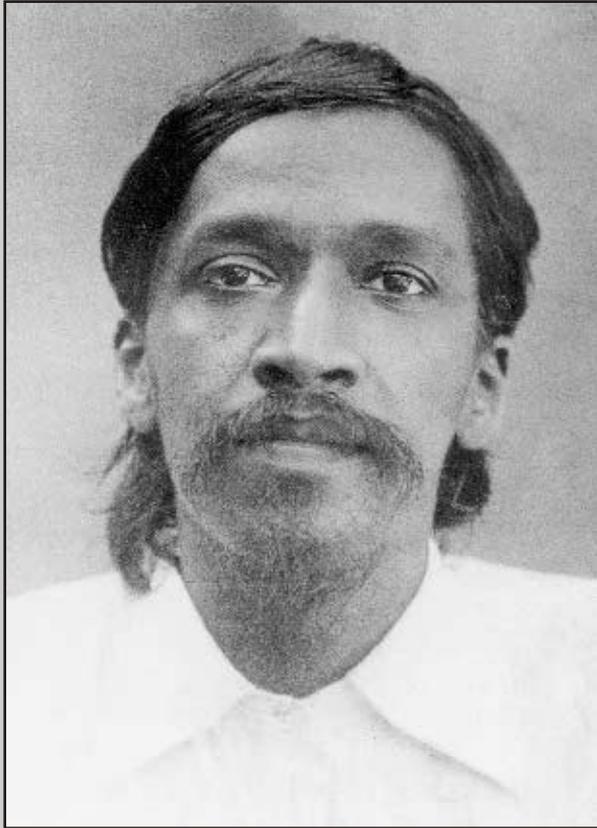


# Karmayogin



*Sri Aurobindo*

VOLUME 8  
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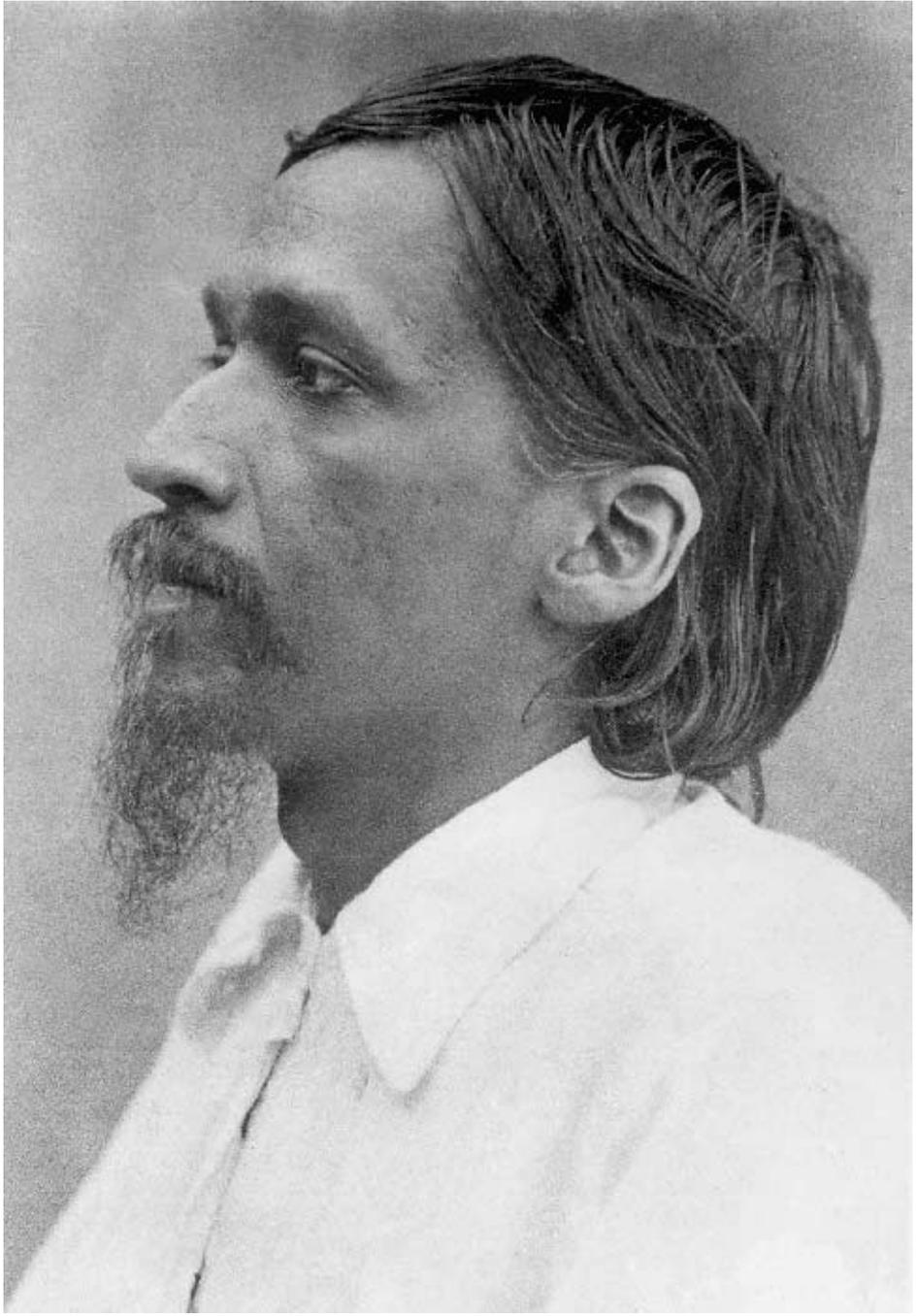
# Karmayogin

Political Writings and Speeches

1909 – 1910



Sri Aurobindo in the Alipur Jail, 1909



Sri Aurobindo in the Alipur Jail, 1909

## Publisher's Note

Sri Aurobindo launched the *Karmayogin*, "A Weekly Review of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.," on 19 June 1909, six weeks after his release from jail on conclusion of the Alipore Bomb Trial. Between then and February 1910, when he left Calcutta, he edited this journal, writing most of its contents himself. In addition to articles on political and related matters, the *Karmayogin* contained essays on philosophy, yoga, education, art and literature, as well as translations and poetry. The political articles are published in this volume, the other items are listed at the end of the *Karmayogin* issue they appeared in. A table at the end of the volume shows where these other items are published in THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.

Sri Aurobindo delivered a number of speeches between May and October 1909. Texts of some of them were published in the *Karmayogin* and other journals. Others were preserved only in notes jotted down by police agents. The speeches are published in this volume according to date of delivery and not of publication.

Some of the articles included in this volume were published in booklets brought out between 1918 and 1923 and later reprinted. When a revised edition of one of these booklets was published in 1937, a disciple of Sri Aurobindo's wrote a review of it that he sent to Sri Aurobindo for approval. Sri Aurobindo's response gives some idea of his attitude at that time towards his earlier writings:

Yes, I have seen it [the disciple's review], but I don't think it can be published in its present form as it prolongs the political Aurobindo of that time into the Sri Aurobindo of the present time. You even assert that I have "thoroughly" revised the book and these articles

are an index of my latest views on the burning problems of the day and there has been no change in my views in 27 years (which would surely be proof [of] a rather unprogressive mind). How do you get all that? My spiritual consciousness and knowledge at that time was as nothing to what it is now — how would the change leave my view of politics and life unmodified altogether? There has been no such thorough revision; I have left the book as it was, because it would be useless to modify what was written so long ago — the same as with *Yoga and its objects* [*The Yoga and Its Objects*]. Anyway the review would almost amount to a proclamation of my present political views — while on the contrary I have been careful to pronounce nothing — no views whatever on political questions for the last I don't know how many years.

The bulk of the contents of the present volume was first published in book-form in 1972 as *Karmayogin: Early Political Writings — II*, volume 2 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library. The text of the present edition, the first with the title *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910*, has been checked against the *Karmayogin* journal and the sources of the speeches and revised articles.

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## A WEEKLY REVIEW

OF

National Religion, Literature, Science,  
Philosophy, &c.,

Vol. I.

SATURDAY 26 AUGUST 1909.

No. 7.

Contributed by S. JAYAKANTH, BANGALORE

OFFICE: 14 SIAM BAZAR STREET,  
CALCUTTA.



## Uttarpara Speech

WHEN I was asked to speak to you at the annual meeting of your *sabha*, it was my intention to say a few words about the subject chosen for today, — the subject of the Hindu religion. I do not know now whether I shall fulfil that intention; for as I sat here, there came into my mind a word that I have to speak to you, a word that I have to speak to the whole of the Indian Nation. It was spoken first to myself in jail and I have come out of jail to speak it to my people.

It was more than a year ago that I came here last. When I came I was not alone; one of the mightiest prophets of Nationalism sat by my side. It was he who then came out of the seclusion to which God had sent him, so that in the silence and solitude of his cell he might hear the word that He had to say. It was he that you came in your hundreds to welcome. Now he is far away, separated from us by thousands of miles. Others whom I was accustomed to find working beside me are absent. The storm that swept over the country has scattered them far and wide. It is I this time who have spent one year in seclusion, and now that I come out I find all changed. One who always sat by my side and was associated in my work is a prisoner in Burma; another is in the north rotting in detention. I looked round when I came out, I looked round for those to whom I had been accustomed to look for counsel and inspiration. I did not find them. There was more than that. When I went to jail, the whole country was alive with the cry of *Bande Mataram*, alive with the hope of a nation, the hope of millions of men who had newly risen out of degradation. When I came out of jail I listened for that

*Delivered at Uttarpara, Bengal, on 30 May 1909. Text published in the Bengalee, an English-language newspaper of Calcutta, on 1 June; thoroughly revised by Sri Aurobindo and republished in the Karmayogin on 19 and 26 June.*

cry, but there was instead a silence. A hush had fallen on the country and men seemed bewildered; for instead of God's bright heaven full of the vision of the future that had been before us, there seemed to be overhead a leaden sky from which human thunders and lightnings rained. No man seemed to know which way to move, and from all sides came the question, "What shall we do next? What is there that we can do?" I too did not know which way to move, I too did not know what was next to be done. But one thing I knew, that as it was the Almighty Power of God which had raised that cry, that hope, so it was the same power which had sent down that silence. He who was in the shouting and the movement was also in the pause and the hush. He has sent it upon us, so that the nation might draw back for a moment and look into itself and know His will. I have not been disheartened by that silence, because I had been made familiar with silence in my prison and because I knew it was in the pause and the hush that I had myself learned this lesson through the long year of my detention. When Bipin Chandra Pal came out of jail, he came with a message, and it was an inspired message. I remember the speech he made here. It was a speech not so much political as religious in its bearing and intention. He spoke of his realisation in jail, of God within us all, of the Lord within the nation, and in his subsequent speeches also he spoke of a greater than ordinary force in the movement and a greater than ordinary purpose before it. Now I also meet you again, I also come out of jail, and again it is you of Uttarpara who are the first to welcome me, not at a political meeting but at a meeting of a society for the protection of our religion. That message which Bipin Chandra Pal received in Buxar jail, God gave to me in Alipore. That knowledge He gave to me day after day during my twelve months of imprisonment and it is that which He has commanded me to speak to you now that I have come out.

I knew I would come out. The year of detention was meant only for a year of seclusion and of training. How could anyone hold me in jail longer than was necessary for God's purpose? He had given me a word to speak and a work to do, and until that word was spoken I knew that no human power could hush me,

until that work was done no human power could stop God's instrument, however weak that instrument might be or however small. Now that I have come out, even in these few minutes, a word has been suggested to me which I had no wish to speak. The thing I had in my mind He has thrown from it and what I speak is under an impulse and a compulsion.

When I was arrested and hurried to the Lal Bazar hajat I was shaken in faith for a while, for I could not look into the heart of His intention. Therefore I faltered for a moment and cried out in my heart to Him, "What is this that has happened to me? I believed that I had a mission to work for the people of my country and until that work was done, I should have Thy protection. Why then am I here and on such a charge?" A day passed and a second day and a third, when a voice came to me from within, "Wait and see." Then I grew calm and waited. I was taken from Lal Bazar to Alipore and was placed for one month in a solitary cell apart from men. There I waited day and night for the voice of God within me, to know what He had to say to me, to learn what I had to do. In this seclusion the earliest realisation, the first lesson came to me. I remembered then that a month or more before my arrest, a call had come to me to put aside all activity, to go into seclusion and to look into myself, so that I might enter into closer communion with Him. I was weak and could not accept the call. My work was very dear to me and in the pride of my heart I thought that unless I was there, it would suffer or even fail and cease; therefore I would not leave it. It seemed to me that He spoke to me again and said, "The bonds you had not strength to break, I have broken for you, because it is not my will nor was it ever my intention that that should continue. I have another thing for you to do and it is for that I have brought you here, to teach you what you could not learn for yourself and to train you for my work." Then He placed the Gita in my hands. His strength entered into me and I was able to do the *sadhan* of the Gita. I was not only to understand intellectually but to realise what Srikrishna demanded of Arjuna and what He demands of those who aspire to do His work, to be free from repulsion and desire, to do work for Him without

the demand for fruit, to renounce self-will and become a passive and faithful instrument in His hands, to have an equal heart for high and low, friend and opponent, success and failure, yet not to do His work negligently. I realised what the Hindu religion meant. We speak often of the Hindu religion, of the Sanatana Dharma, but few of us really know what that religion is. Other religions are preponderatingly religions of faith and profession, but the Sanatana Dharma is life itself; it is a thing that has not so much to be believed as lived. This is the *dharmā* that for the salvation of humanity was cherished in the seclusion of this peninsula from of old. It is to give this religion that India is rising. She does not rise as other countries do, for self or when she is strong, to trample on the weak. She is rising to shed the eternal light entrusted to her over the world. India has always existed for humanity and not for herself and it is for humanity and not for herself that she must be great.

Therefore this was the next thing He pointed out to me, — He made me realise the central truth of the Hindu religion. He turned the hearts of my jailers to me and they spoke to the Englishman in charge of the jail, “He is suffering in his confinement; let him at least walk outside his cell for half an hour in the morning and in the evening.” So it was arranged, and it was while I was walking that His strength again entered into me. I looked at the jail that secluded me from men and it was no longer by its high walls that I was imprisoned; no, it was Vasudeva who surrounded me. I walked under the branches of the tree in front of my cell, but it was not the tree, I knew it was Vasudeva, it was Srikrishna whom I saw standing there and holding over me His shade. I looked at the bars of my cell, the very grating that did duty for a door and again I saw Vasudeva. It was Narayana who was guarding and standing sentry over me. Or I lay on the coarse blankets that were given me for a couch and felt the arms of Srikrishna around me, the arms of my Friend and Lover. This was the first use of the deeper vision He gave me. I looked at the prisoners in the jail, the thieves, the murderers, the swindlers, and as I looked at them I saw Vasudeva, it was Narayana whom I found in these darkened souls and misused bodies. Amongst

these thieves and dacoits there were many who put me to shame by their sympathy, their kindness, the humanity triumphant over such adverse circumstances. One I saw among them especially who seemed to me a saint, a peasant of my nation who did not know how to read and write, an alleged dacoit sentenced to ten years' rigorous imprisonment, one of those whom we look down upon in our Pharisaical pride of class as *chhotalok*. Once more He spoke to me and said, "Behold the people among whom I have sent you to do a little of my work. This is the nature of the nation I am raising up and the reason why I raise them."

When the case opened in the lower court and we were brought before the Magistrate I was followed by the same insight. He said to me, "When you were cast into jail, did not your heart fail and did you not cry out to me, where is Thy protection? Look now at the Magistrate, look now at the Prosecuting Counsel." I looked and it was not the Magistrate whom I saw, it was Vasudeva, it was Narayana who was sitting there on the bench. I looked at the Prosecuting Counsel and it was not the Counsel for the prosecution that I saw; it was Srikrishna who sat there, it was my Lover and Friend who sat there and smiled. "Now do you fear?" He said, "I am in all men and I overrule their actions and their words. My protection is still with you and you shall not fear. This case which is brought against you, leave it in my hands. It is not for you. It was not for the trial that I brought you here but for something else. The case itself is only a means for my work and nothing more." Afterwards when the trial opened in the Sessions Court, I began to write many instructions for my Counsel as to what was false in the evidence against me and on what points the witnesses might be cross-examined. Then something happened which I had not expected. The arrangements which had been made for my defence were suddenly changed and another Counsel stood there to defend me. He came unexpectedly, — a friend of mine, but I did not know he was coming. You have all heard the name of the man who put away from him all other thoughts and abandoned all his practice, who sat up half the night day after day for months

and broke his health to save me, — Srijut Chittaranjan Das. When I saw him, I was satisfied, but I still thought it necessary to write instructions. Then all that was put from me and I had the message from within, “This is the man who will save you from the snares put around your feet. Put aside those papers. It is not you who will instruct him. I will instruct him.” From that time I did not of myself speak a word to my Counsel about the case or give a single instruction and if ever I was asked a question, I always found that my answer did not help the case. I had left it to him and he took it entirely into his hands, with what result you know. I knew all along what He meant for me, for I heard it again and again, always I listened to the voice within: “I am guiding, therefore fear not. Turn to your own work for which I have brought you to jail and when you come out, remember never to fear, never to hesitate. Remember that it is I who am doing this, not you nor any other. Therefore whatever clouds may come, whatever dangers and sufferings, whatever difficulties, whatever impossibilities, there is nothing impossible, nothing difficult. I am in the nation and its uprising and I am Vasudeva, I am Narayana, and what I will, shall be, not what others will. What I choose to bring about, no human power can stay.”

Meanwhile He had brought me out of solitude and placed me among those who had been accused along with me. You have spoken much today of my self-sacrifice and devotion to my country. I have heard that kind of speech ever since I came out of jail, but I hear it with embarrassment, with something of pain. For I know my weakness, I am a prey to my own faults and backslidings. I was not blind to them before and when they all rose up against me in seclusion, I felt them utterly. I knew then that I the man was a mass of weakness, a faulty and imperfect instrument, strong only when a higher strength entered into me. Then I found myself among these young men and in many of them I discovered a mighty courage, a power of self-effacement in comparison with which I was simply nothing. I saw one or two who were not only superior to me in force and character, — very many were that, — but in the promise of that intellectual

ability on which I prided myself. He said to me, "This is the young generation, the new and mighty nation that is arising at my command. They are greater than yourself. What have you to fear? If you stood aside or slept, the work would still be done. If you were cast aside tomorrow, here are the young men who will take up your work and do it more mightily than you have ever done. You have only got some strength from me to speak a word to this nation which will help to raise it." This was the next thing He told me.

Then a thing happened suddenly and in a moment I was hurried away to the seclusion of a solitary cell. What happened to me during that period I am not impelled to say, but only this that day after day, He showed me His wonders and made me realise the utter truth of the Hindu religion. I had had many doubts before. I was brought up in England amongst foreign ideas and an atmosphere entirely foreign. About many things in Hinduism I had once been inclined to believe that it was all imagination; that there was much of dream in it, much that was delusion and *maya*. But now day after day I realised in the mind, I realised in the heart, I realised in the body the truths of the Hindu religion. They became living experiences to me, and things were opened to me which no material science could explain. When I first approached Him, it was not entirely in the spirit of the Bhakta, it was not entirely in the spirit of the Jnani. I came to Him long ago in Baroda some years before the Swadeshi began and I was drawn into the public field.

When I approached God at that time, I hardly had a living faith in Him. The agnostic was in me, the atheist was in me, the sceptic was in me and I was not absolutely sure that there was a God at all. I did not feel His presence. Yet something drew me to the truth of the Vedas, the truth of the Gita, the truth of the Hindu religion. I felt there must be a mighty truth somewhere in this Yoga, a mighty truth in this religion based on the Vedanta. So when I turned to the Yoga and resolved to practise it and find out if my idea was right, I did it in this spirit and with this prayer to Him, "If Thou art, then Thou knowest my heart. Thou knowest that I do not ask for Mukti, I do not ask for anything

which others ask for. I ask only for strength to uplift this nation, I ask only to be allowed to live and work for this people whom I love and to whom I pray that I may devote my life." I strove long for the realisation of Yoga and at last to some extent I had it, but in what I most desired, I was not satisfied. Then in the seclusion of the jail, of the solitary cell I asked for it again. I said, "Give me Thy *adesh*. I do not know what work to do or how to do it. Give me a message." In the communion of Yoga two messages came. The first message said, "I have given you a work and it is to help to uplift this nation. Before long the time will come when you will have to go out of jail; for it is not my will that this time either you should be convicted or that you should pass the time as others have to do, in suffering for their country. I have called you to work, and that is the *adesh* for which you have asked. I give you the *adesh* to go forth and do my work." The second message came and it said, "Something has been shown to you in this year of seclusion, something about which you had your doubts and it is the truth of the Hindu religion. It is this religion that I am raising up before the world, it is this that I have perfected and developed through the *rishis*, saints and *avatars*, and now it is going forth to do my work among the nations. I am raising up this nation to send forth my word. This is the Sanatana Dharma, this is the eternal religion which you did not really know before, but which I have now revealed to you. The agnostic and the sceptic in you have been answered, for I have given you proofs within and without you, physical and subjective, which have satisfied you. When you go forth, speak to your nation always this word that it is for the Sanatana Dharma that they arise, it is for the world and not for themselves that they arise. I am giving them freedom for the service of the world. When therefore it is said that India shall rise, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall rise. When it is said that India shall be great, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall be great. When it is said that India shall expand and extend herself, it is the Sanatana Dharma that shall expand and extend itself over the world. It is for the *dharma* and by the *dharma* that India exists. To magnify the religion means to magnify the country. I have shown you

that I am everywhere and in all men and in all things, that I am in this movement and I am not only working in those who are striving for the country but I am working also in those who oppose them and stand in their path. I am working in everybody and whatever men may think or do they can do nothing but help on my purpose. They also are doing my work; they are not my enemies but my instruments. In all your actions you are moving forward without knowing which way you move. You mean to do one thing and you do another. You aim at a result and your efforts subserve one that is different or contrary. It is Shakti that has gone forth and entered into the people. Since long ago I have been preparing this uprising and now the time has come and it is I who will lead it to its fulfilment.”

This then is what I have to say to you. The name of your society is “Society for the Protection of Religion”. Well, the protection of the religion, the protection and upraising before the world of the Hindu religion, that is the work before us. But what is the Hindu religion? What is this religion which we call Sanatana, eternal? It is the Hindu religion only because the Hindu nation has kept it, because in this peninsula it grew up in the seclusion of the sea and the Himalayas, because in this sacred and ancient land it was given as a charge to the Aryan race to preserve through the ages. But it is not circumscribed by the confines of a single country, it does not belong peculiarly and for ever to a bounded part of the world. That which we call the Hindu religion is really the eternal religion, because it is the universal religion which embraces all others. If a religion is not universal, it cannot be eternal. A narrow religion, a sectarian religion, an exclusive religion can live only for a limited time and a limited purpose. This is the one religion that can triumph over materialism by including and anticipating the discoveries of science and the speculations of philosophy. It is the one religion which impresses on mankind the closeness of God to us and embraces in its compass all the possible means by which man can approach God. It is the one religion which insists every moment on the truth which all religions acknowledge, that He is in all men and all things and that in Him we move and have

our being. It is the one religion which enables us not only to understand and believe this truth but to realise it with every part of our being. It is the one religion which shows the world what the world is, that it is the *lila* of Vasudeva. It is the one religion which shows us how we can best play our part in that *lila*, its subtlest laws and its noblest rules. It is the one religion which does not separate life in any smallest detail from religion, which knows what immortality is and has utterly removed from us the reality of death.

This is the word that has been put into my mouth to speak to you today. What I intended to speak has been put away from me, and beyond what is given to me I have nothing to say. It is only the word that is put into me that I can speak to you. That word is now finished. I spoke once before with this force in me and I said then that this movement is not a political movement and that nationalism is not politics but a religion, a creed, a faith. I say it again today, but I put it in another way. I say no longer that nationalism is a creed, a religion, a faith; I say that it is the Sanatana Dharma which for us is nationalism. This Hindu nation was born with the Sanatana Dharma, with it it moves and with it it grows. When the Sanatana Dharma declines, then the nation declines, and if the Sanatana Dharma were capable of perishing, with the Sanatana Dharma it would perish. The Sanatana Dharma, that is nationalism. This is the message that I have to speak to you.

## Beadon Square Speech – 1

**I**N SPITE of the foul weather a large number of people assembled on Sunday afternoon at Beadon Square where a big Swadeshi meeting was held under the presidency of Babu Ramananda Chatterji, Editor of the *Prabasi*. Several speakers addressed the meeting. We publish below an authorised version of Mr. Aurobindo Ghose's speech delivered at that meeting.

Sj. Aurobindo Ghose said that when in jail he had been told that the country was demoralised by the repression. He could not believe it then, because his experience of the movement had been very different. He had always found that when Swadeshi was flagging or the Boycott beginning to relax, it only needed an act of repression on the part of the authorities to give it redoubled vigour. It seemed to him then impossible that the deportations would have a different effect. When nine of the most active and devoted workers for the country had been suddenly hurried away from their homes without any fault on their part, without the Government being able to formulate a single definite charge against them, surely the Boycott instead of decreasing would grow tenfold more intense. And what after all was the repression? Some people sent to prison, some deported, a number of house-searches, a few repressive enactments, limiting the liberty of the press and the platform. This was nothing compared with the price other nations had paid for their liberty. They also would have to suffer much more than this before they could make any appreciable advance towards their goal. This was God's law; it was not the rulers who demanded the price, it was God who demanded it. It was his law that a fallen nation should not be allowed

*Delivered at Beadon Square, Calcutta, on 13 June 1909. Text published in the Bengalee on 15 June and reproduced in the Karmayogin on 19 June.*

to rise without infinite suffering and mighty effort. That was the price it had to pay for its previous lapses from national duty.

The speaker did not think that there was any real demoralisation. There might be a hesitation among the richer and more vulnerable parts of the community to hold conferences or meetings or give public expression to their views and feelings. He did not measure the strength of the movement by the number of meetings or of people present at the meetings. He measured it by the strength and indomitable obstinacy of feeling and purpose in the hearts of the people. Their first duty was to keep firm hold on their ideal and perform steadfastly the vows they had made before God and the nation. The rulers were never tired of saying that we should get self-government when we were fit. Fitness meant national capacity and strength was the basis of capacity. That was what Lord Morley really meant when he asked himself repeatedly whether this was a real uprising of the nation or a passing excitement. He meant, was it a movement with real strength in it, a movement with elemental force enough in it to resist and survive? That experiment was now being made. They must not expect substantial gains at so small a cost.

He had heard vaguely of the reforms when in prison; he had heard them ecstatically described. He was surprised to hear that description. He had been in England for fourteen years and knew something of the English people and their politics. He could not believe that England or any European people would give substantial reforms after so short an agitation and so scanty a proof of national strength. It was not the fault of the British people, it was a law of politics that they, who have, should be unwilling to yield what they have until they had fully tested the determination of the subject people and even then they would only give just as much as they could not help giving. When he came out, he found what these reforms were. The so-called introduction of the elective principle was a sham and the power given was nothing. For the rest, it was a measure arranged with a skill which did credit to the diplomacy of British statesmen so that we should lose and they gain. It

would diminish the political power of the educated class which was the brain and backbone of the nation, it would sow discord among the various communities. This was not a real reform but reaction. They would have to go much further in suffering and self-sacrifice before they could hope for anything substantial. They must hold firm in their determination and keep the Swadeshi unimpaired and by that he meant the determination to assert their national individuality in every branch of national activity.

There was one thing that might be said, how could we expand the Swadeshi if all our methods were taken out of our hands? That could easily be done by the Government. The authorities in this country had absolute and irresponsible power. It had practically been admitted by a responsible member of the Liberal Government that the liberty of no subject of the British Crown was safe in this country if the Government of India took it into its head that he was dangerous or inconvenient, if it were informed by the police who had distinguished themselves at Midnapore or by information as tainted — the perjurers, forgers, informers, approvers, for what other information could they have, circumstanced as they were by their own choice in this country, — that such and such men had been seditious or were becoming seditious or might be seditious or that their presence in their homes was dangerous to the peace of mind of the C.I.D. Against such information there was no safety even for the greatest men in the country, the purest in life, the most blameless and inoffensive in their public activity.

Then there was this sunset regulation. It appeared that we were peaceful citizens until sunset, but after sunset we turned into desperate characters, — well, he was told, even half an hour before sunset; apparently even the sun could not be entirely trusted to keep us straight. We had, it seems, stones in our pockets to throw at the police and some of us, perhaps, dangle bombs in our chaddars. How was this prohibition brought about? Merely by a little expenditure of ink in the Political Department. It would be quite easy to extend it further and prevent public meetings. It was being enforced on us that our

so-called liberties were merely Maya. We believed in them for a time and acted on the belief; then one fine morning we wake up and look around for them but they are not there. In reality they never were there; they were Maya, illusions; this was the reason why not only could we not accept reforms which did not mean real control, but some of us did not believe even in that. We doubted not only the sham control but the sham of the reforms themselves, but still control was the minimum on which all were agreed. The question remained, if all our liberties were taken away, what were we to do? Even that would not stop the movement. Christ said to the disciples who expected a material kingdom on the spot, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." To them too he might say, "The kingdom of Swaraj is within you."

Let them win and keep that kingdom of Swaraj, the sense of the national separateness and individuality, the faith in its greatness and future, the feeling of God within ourselves and in the nation, the determination to devote every thought and action to his service. Here no coercion or repression could interfere; here there was no press law or sunset regulation. And it was a law of the psychology of men and nations that the Brahman once awakened within must manifest itself without and nothing could eventually prevent that manifestation. Moreover, their methods were borrowed from England. England gave them and encouraged their use when it was inoffensive to her, but the moment they were used so as to conflict with British interests and to expand national life and strength, they were taken away. But the Indians were a nation apart; they were not dependent on these methods. They had a wonderful power of managing things without definite means. Long before the Press came into existence or telegraph wires, the nation had a means of spreading news from one end of the country to another with electrical rapidity — a Press too impalpable to be touched. They had the power of enforcing the public will without any fixed organisation, of associating without an association — without even the European refuge of a secret association. The spirit was what mattered, if the spirit were there, the movement would

find out its own channels; for after all it was the power of God manifested in the movement which would command its own means and create its own channels. They must have the firm faith that India must rise and be great and that everything that happened, every difficulty, every reverse must help and further their end. The trend was upward and the time of decline was over. The morning was at hand and once the light had shown itself, it could never be night again. The dawn would soon be complete and the sun rise over the horizon. The sun of India's destiny would rise and fill all India with its light and overflow India and overflow Asia and overflow the world. Every hour, every moment could only bring them nearer to the brightness of the day that God had decreed.

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Ourselves

**T**HE *KARMAYOGIN* comes into the field to fulfil a function which an increasing tendency in the country demands. The life of the nation which once flowed in a broad and single stream has long been severed into a number of separate meagre and shallow channels. The two main floods have followed the paths of religion and politics, but they have flowed separately. Our political activity has crept in a channel cut for it by European or Europeanised minds; it tended always to a superficial wideness, but was deficient in depth and volume. The national genius, originality, individuality poured itself into religion while our politics were imitative and unreal. Yet without a living political activity national life cannot, under modern circumstances, survive. So also there has been a stream of social life, more and more muddied and disturbed, seeking to get clearness, depth, largeness, freedom, but always failing and increasing in weakness or distraction. There was a stream too of industrial life, faint and thin, the poor survival of the old vigorous Indian artistic and industrial capacity murdered by unjust laws and an unscrupulous trade policy. All these ran in disconnected channels, sluggish, scattered and ineffectual. The tendency is now for these streams to unite again into one mighty invincible and grandiose flood. To assist that tendency, to give

voice and definiteness to the deeper aspirations now forming obscurely within the national consciousness is the chosen work of the *Karmayogin*.

There is no national life perfect or sound without the *chaturvarnya*. The life of the nation must contain within itself the life of the Brahmin, — spirituality, knowledge, learning, high and pure ethical aspiration and endeavour; the life of the Kshatriya, — manhood and strength moral and physical, the love of battle, the thirst for glory, the sense of honour, chivalry, self-devotion, generosity, grandeur of soul; the life of the Vaishya, — trade, industry, thrift, prosperity, benevolence, philanthropy; the life of the Shudra, — honesty, simplicity, labour, religious and quiet service to the nation even in the humblest position and the most insignificant kind of work. The cause of India's decline was the practical disappearance of the Kshatriya and the dwindling of the Vaishya. The whole political history of India since the tyranny of the Nandas has been an attempt to resuscitate or replace the Kshatriya. But the attempt was only partially successful. The Vaishya held his own for a long time, indeed, until the British advent by which he has almost been extinguished.

When the *chaturvarnya* disappears, there comes *varnasankara*, utter confusion of the great types which keep a nation vigorous and sound. The Kshatriya dwindled, the Vaishya dwindled, the Brahmin and Shudra were left. The inevitable tendency was for the Brahmin type to disappear and the first sign of his disappearance was utter degeneracy, the tendency to lose himself and while keeping some outward signs of the Brahmin to gravitate towards Shudrahood. In the Kaliyuga the Shudra is powerful and attracts into himself the less vigorous Brahmin, as the earth attracts purer but smaller bodies, and the Brahmatej, the spiritual force of the latter, already diminished, dwindles to nothingness. For the Satyayuga to return, we must get back the Brahmatej and make it general. For the Brahmatej is the basis of all the rest and in the Satyayuga all men have it more or less and by it the nation lives and is great.

All this is, let us say, a parable. It is more than a parable, it is a great truth. But our educated class have become so unfamiliar

with the deeper knowledge of their forefathers that it has to be translated into modern European terms before they can understand it. For it is the European ideas alone that are real to them and the great truths of Indian thought seem to them mere metaphors, allegories and mystic parables. So well has British education done its fatal denationalising work in India.

The Brahmin stands for religion, science, scholarship and the higher morality; the Kshatriya for war, politics and administration; the Vaishya for the trades, professions and industries; the Shudra for labour and service. It is only when these four great departments of human activity are all in a robust and flourishing condition that the nation is sound and great. When any of these disappear or suffer, it is bad for the body politic. And the two highest are the least easy to be spared. If they survive in full strength, they can provide themselves with the two others, but if either the Kshatriya or the Brahmin go, if either the political force or the spiritual force of a nation is lost, that nation is doomed unless it can revive or replace the missing strength. And of the two the Brahmin is the most important. He can always create the Kshatriya, spiritual force can always raise up material force to defend it. But if the Brahmin becomes the Shudra, then the lower instinct of the serf and the labourer becomes all in all, the instinct to serve and seek a living as the one supreme object of life, the instinct to accept safety as a compensation for lost greatness and inglorious ease and dependence in place of the ardours of high aspiration for the nation and the individual. When spirituality is lost all is lost. This is the fate from which we have narrowly escaped by the resurgence of the soul of India in Nationalism.

But that resurgence is not yet complete. There is the sentiment of Indianism, there is not yet the knowledge. There is a vague idea, there is no definite conception or deep insight. We have yet to know ourselves, what we were, are and may be; what we did in the past and what we are capable of doing in the future; our history and our mission. This is the first and most important work which the *Karmayogin* sets for itself, to popularise this knowledge. The Vedanta or Sufism, the temple

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or the mosque, Nanak and Kabir and Ramdas, Chaitanya or Guru Govind, Brahmin and Kayastha and Namasudra, whatever national asset we have, indigenous or acclimatised, it will seek to make known, to put in its right place and appreciate. And the second thing is how to use these assets so as to swell the sum of national life and produce the future. It is easy to appraise their relations to the past; it is more difficult to give them their place in the future. The third thing is to know the outside world and its relation to us and how to deal with it. That is the problem which we find at present the most difficult and insistent, but its solution depends on the solution of the others.

We have said that Brahmatej is the thing we need most of all and first of all. In one sense, that means the pre-eminence of religion; but after all, what the Europeans mean by religion is not Brahmatej; which is rather spirituality, the force and energy of thought and action arising from communion with or self-surrender to that within us which rules the world. In that sense we shall use it. This force and energy can be directed to any purpose God desires for us; it is sufficient to knowledge, love or service; it is good for the liberation of an individual soul, the building of a nation or the turning of a tool. It works from within, it works in the power of God, it works with superhuman energy. The re-awakening of that force in three hundred millions of men by the means which our past has placed in our hands, that is our object.

The European is proud of his success in divorcing religion from life. Religion, he says, is all very well in its place, but it has nothing to do with politics or science or commerce, which it spoils by its intrusion; it is meant only for Sundays when, if one is English, one puts on black clothes and tries to feel good, and if one is continental, one puts the rest of the week away and amuses oneself. In reality, the European has not succeeded in getting rid of religion from his life. It is coming back in Socialism, in the Anarchism of Bakunin and Tolstoy, in many other *isms*; and in whatever form it comes, it insists on engrossing the whole of life, moulding the whole of society and politics under the law of idealistic aspiration. It does not use the word God or

grasp the idea, but it sees God in humanity. What the European understood by religion, had to be got rid of and put out of life, but real religion, spirituality, idealism, altruism, self-devotion, the hunger after perfection, is the whole destiny of humanity and cannot be got rid of. After all God *does* exist and if He exists, you cannot shove Him into a corner and say: "That is your place, and, as for the world and life, it belongs to us." He pervades and returns. Every age of denial is only a preparation for a larger and more comprehensive affirmation.

The *Karmayogin* will be more of a national review than a weekly newspaper. We shall notice current events only as they evidence, help, affect or resist the growth of national life and the development of the soul of the nation. Political and social problems we shall deal with from this standpoint, seeking first their spiritual roots and inner causes and then proceeding to measures and remedies. In a similar spirit we shall deal with all sources of national strength in the past and in the present, seeking to bring them home to all comprehensions and make them applicable to our life, dynamic and not static, creative and not merely preservative. For if there is no creation, there must be disintegration; if there is no advance and victory, there must be recoil and defeat.

## The Ideal of the Karmayogin

**A** NATION is building in India today before the eyes of the world so swiftly, so palpably that all can watch the process and those who have sympathy and intuition distinguish the forces at work, the materials in use, the lines of the divine architecture. This nation is not a new race raw from the workshop of Nature or created by modern circumstances. One of the oldest races and greatest civilisations on this earth, the most indomitable in vitality, the most fecund in greatness, the deepest in life, the most wonderful in potentiality, after taking into itself numerous sources of strength from foreign strains of blood and other types of human civilisation, is now seeking to lift itself for good into an organised national unity. Formerly a congeries of kindred nations with a single life and a single culture, always by the law of this essential oneness tending to unity, always by its excess of fecundity engendering fresh diversities and divisions, it has never yet been able to overcome permanently the almost insuperable obstacles to the organisation of a continent. The time has now come when those obstacles can be overcome. The attempt which our race has been making throughout its long history, it will now make under entirely new circumstances. A keen observer would predict its success because the only important obstacles have been or are in the process of being removed. But we go farther and believe that it is sure to succeed because the freedom, unity and greatness of India have now become necessary to the world. This is the faith in which the *Karmayogin* puts its hand to the work and will persist in it, refusing to be discouraged by difficulties however immense and apparently insuperable. We believe that God is with us and in that faith we shall conquer. We believe that humanity needs us and it is the love and service of humanity, of our country, of the race, of our

religion that will purify our heart and inspire our action in the struggle.

The task we set before ourselves is not mechanical but moral and spiritual. We aim not at the alteration of a form of government but at the building up of a nation. Of that task politics is a part, but only a part. We shall devote ourselves not to politics alone, nor to social questions alone, nor to theology or philosophy or literature or science by themselves, but we include all these in one entity which we believe to be all-important, the *dharma*, the national religion which we also believe to be universal. There is a mighty law of life, a great principle of human evolution, a body of spiritual knowledge and experience of which India has always been destined to be guardian, exemplar and missionary. This is the *sanatana dharma*, the eternal religion. Under the stress of alien impacts she has largely lost hold not of the structure of that *dharma*, but of its living reality. For the religion of India is nothing if it is not lived. It has to be applied not only to life, but to the whole of life; its spirit has to enter into and mould our society, our politics, our literature, our science, our individual character, affections and aspirations. To understand the heart of this *dharma*, to experience it as a truth, to feel the high emotions to which it rises and to express and execute it in life is what we understand by Karmayoga. We believe that it is to make the *yoga* the ideal of human life that India rises today; by the *yoga* she will get the strength to realise her freedom, unity and greatness, by the *yoga* she will keep the strength to preserve it. It is a spiritual revolution we foresee and the material is only its shadow and reflex.

The European sets great store by machinery. He seeks to renovate humanity by schemes of society and systems of government; he hopes to bring about the millennium by an act of Parliament. Machinery is of great importance, but only as a working means for the spirit within, the force behind. The nineteenth century in India aspired to political emancipation, social renovation, religious vision and rebirth, but it failed because it adopted Western motives and methods, ignored the spirit, history and destiny of our race and thought that by taking over

European education, European machinery, European organisation and equipment we should reproduce in ourselves European prosperity, energy and progress. We of the twentieth century reject the aims, ideals and methods of the Anglicised nineteenth precisely because we accept its experience. We refuse to make an idol of the present; we look before and after, backward to the mighty history of our race, forward to the grandiose destiny for which that history has prepared it.

We do not believe that our political salvation can be attained by enlargement of Councils, introduction of the elective principle, colonial self-government or any other formula of European politics. We do not deny the use of some of these things as instruments, as weapons in a political struggle, but we deny their sufficiency whether as instruments or ideals and look beyond to an end which they do not serve except in a trifling degree. They might be sufficient if it were our ultimate destiny to be an outlying province of the British Empire or a dependent adjunct of European civilisation. That is a future which we do not think it worth making any sacrifice to accomplish. We believe on the other hand that India is destined to work out her own independent life and civilisation, to stand in the forefront of the world and solve the political, social, economical and moral problems which Europe has failed to solve, yet the pursuit of whose solution and the feverish passage in that pursuit from experiment to experiment, from failure to failure she calls her progress. Our means must be as great as our ends and the strength to discover and use the means so as to attain the end can only be found by seeking the eternal source of strength in ourselves.

We do not believe that by changing the machinery so as to make our society the ape of Europe we shall effect social renovation. Widow-remarriage, substitution of class for caste, adult marriage, intermarriages, interdining and the other nostrums of the social reformer are mechanical changes which, whatever their merits or demerits, cannot by themselves save the soul of the nation alive or stay the course of degradation and decline. It is the spirit alone that saves, and only by becoming great and

free in heart can we become socially and politically great and free.

We do not believe that by multiplying new sects limited within the narrower and inferior ideas of religion imported from the West or by creating organisations for the perpetuation of the mere dress and body of Hinduism we can recover our spiritual health, energy and greatness. The world moves through an indispensable interregnum of free thought and materialism to a new synthesis of religious thought and experience, a new religious world-life free from intolerance, yet full of faith and fervour, accepting all forms of religion because it has an unshakable faith in the One. The religion which embraces Science and faith, Theism, Christianity, Mahomedanism and Buddhism and yet is none of these, is that to which the World-Spirit moves. In our own, which is the most sceptical and the most believing of all, the most sceptical because it has questioned and experimented the most, the most believing because it has the deepest experience and the most varied and positive spiritual knowledge, — that wider Hinduism which is not a dogma or combination of dogmas but a law of life, which is not a social framework but the spirit of a past and future social evolution, which rejects nothing but insists on testing and experiencing everything and when tested and experienced turning it to the soul's uses, in this Hinduism we find the basis of the future world-religion. This *sanatana dharma* has many scriptures, Veda, Vedanta, Gita, Upanishad, Darshana, Purana, Tantra, nor could it reject the Bible or the Koran; but its real, most authoritative scripture is in the heart in which the Eternal has His dwelling. It is in our inner spiritual experiences that we shall find the proof and source of the world's Scriptures, the law of knowledge, love and conduct, the basis and inspiration of Karmayoga.

Our aim will therefore be to help in building up India for the sake of humanity — this is the spirit of the Nationalism which we profess and follow. We say to humanity, “The time has come when you must take the great step and rise out of a material existence into the higher, deeper and wider life towards which humanity moves. The problems which have troubled mankind

can only be solved by conquering the kingdom within, not by harnessing the forces of Nature to the service of comfort and luxury, but by mastering the forces of the intellect and the spirit, by vindicating the freedom of man within as well as without and by conquering from within external Nature. For that work the resurgence of Asia is necessary, therefore Asia rises. For that work the freedom and greatness of India is essential, therefore she claims her destined freedom and greatness, and it is to the interest of all humanity, not excluding England, that she should wholly establish her claim.”

We say to the nation, “It is God’s will that we should be ourselves and not Europe. We have sought to regain life by following the law of another being than our own. We must return and seek the sources of life and strength within ourselves. We must know our past and recover it for the purposes of our future. Our business is to realise ourselves first and to mould everything to the law of India’s eternal life and nature. It will therefore be the object of the *Karmayogin* to read the heart of our religion, our society, our philosophy, politics, literature, art, jurisprudence, science, thought, everything that was and is ours, so that we may be able to say to ourselves and our nation, ‘This is our *dharma*.’ We shall review European civilisation entirely from the standpoint of Indian thought and knowledge and seek to throw off from us the dominating stamp of the Occident; what we have to take from the West we shall take as Indians. And the *dharma* once discovered we shall strive our utmost not only to profess but to live, in our individual actions, in our social life, in our political endeavours.”

We say to the individual and especially to the young who are now arising to do India’s work, the world’s work, God’s work, “You cannot cherish these ideals, still less can you fulfil them if you subject your minds to European ideas or look at life from the material standpoint. Materially you are nothing, spiritually you are everything. It is only the Indian who can believe everything, dare everything, sacrifice everything. First therefore become Indians. Recover the patrimony of your forefathers. Recover the Aryan thought, the Aryan discipline, the Aryan character, the

Aryan life. Recover the Vedanta, the Gita, the Yoga. Recover them not only in intellect or sentiment but in your lives. Live them and you will be great and strong, mighty, invincible and fearless. Neither life nor death will have any terrors for you. Difficulty and impossibility will vanish from your vocabularies. For it is in the spirit that strength is eternal and you must win back the kingdom of yourselves, the inner Swaraj, before you can win back your outer empire. There the Mother dwells and She waits for worship that She may give strength. Believe in Her, serve Her, lose your wills in Hers, your egoism in the greater ego of the country, your separate selfishness in the service of humanity. Recover the source of all strength in yourselves and all else will be added to you, social soundness, intellectual pre-eminence, political freedom, the mastery of human thought, the hegemony of the world.”

## “Swaraj” and the Musulmans

WE EXTRACT in our columns this week the comments of Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal’s organ, *Swaraj*, on the Government’s pro-Mahomedan policy and its possible effects in the future. We are glad to see this great Nationalist again expressing his views with his usual originality and fine political insight. We do not ourselves understand the utility of such a campaign as Srijut Bipin Chandra is carrying on in England. In politics quite as much as in ordinary conduct the rule of *desh-kal-patra*, the right place, the right time and the right person, conditions the value and the effectiveness of the work. For Bipin Babu’s mission there could not be a worse place than England, a worse time than the present and a worse audience than the British people. What is the prophet of self-help and dissociation doing in England? Or what kind of message is this that he carries to the British public, “We do not welcome your favours, we reject your help and sympathy and will have no political association with you until Swaraj is ours, — and therefore I am here speaking to you and publishing my views to a British audience in London”? We can only suppose that Bipin Babu does really imagine he can produce some kind of effect worth having, moral if not substantial, upon the ruling nation, and if so what does it portend? Is Saul also among the prophets? Does Bipin too stand in the doorway of Britannia?

The first three or four issues of *Swaraj* disappointed our expectations. A sense of the unreality of his position seemed to haunt the writer and robbed his writing of the former strength and close touch with the subject. It was the old views, the familiar thought, the well-known manner, but it neither convinced, illuminated nor inspired. This month’s *Swaraj* is more confident and effective, although the thing still seems to be in the air. The passage extracted and the admirable character-sketch of Srijut

Shyamsunder Chakravarti are the best things in the issue. Bipin Babu seems to have recovered the copious vein of thought, the subtle and flexible reasoning, the just and original view of his subject which made one wait with impatience for every fresh number of *New India*. His attitude towards the Reform scheme and the Mahomedan demand for a separate electorate is the attitude which has consistently been adopted by the Nationalist party in Bengal towards the Hindu-Mahomedan question in ordinary politics. We do not fear Mahomedan opposition; so long as it is the honest Swadeshi article and not manufactured in Shillong and Simla, we welcome it as a sign of life and aspiration. We do not shun, we desire the awakening of Islam in India even if its first crude efforts are misdirected against ourselves; for all strength, all energy, all action is grist to the mill of the nation-builder. In that faith we are ready, when the time comes for us to meet in the political field, to exchange with the Musulman, just as he chooses, the firm clasp of the brother or the resolute grip of the wrestler.

That time has not yet come. There is absolutely no reason why the electoral question should create bad blood between the two communities, for if we leave aside the limited number who still hunger after loaves and fishes or nurse dead delusions, the reforms have no living interest for the Hindu. His field of energy lies elsewhere than in the enlarged pretences of British Liberalism. His business is to find out his own strength and prepare it for a great future, and the less he meddles with unreal politics and nerveless activities, the better for the nation. The Mahomedan has not progressed so far. He has to taste the sweets of political privilege and find them turn to ashes in his mouth. He has to formulate demands, rejoice at promises, fume at betrayals, until he thoroughly discovers the falsity and impossibility of his hopes. His progress is likely to be much swifter than ours has been in the past, for he gets the advantage if not of our experience, at least of the ideas now in the air and of the more bracing and stimulating atmosphere. He is more likely to demand than to crave, and his disillusionment must necessarily be the speedier. And it is then that he too will seek the strength in

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himself and touch the true springs of self-development. Our best policy is to leave the Mahomedan representatives on the councils to work out their destiny face to face with the bureaucracy, with no weightier Hindu counterpoise than the effete politicians, the time-servers and the self-seekers.

Of one thing we may be certain, that Hindu-Mahomedan unity cannot be effected by political adjustments or Congress flatteries. It must be sought deeper down, in the heart and the mind, for where the causes of disunion are, there the remedies must be sought. We shall do well in trying to solve the problem to remember that misunderstanding is the most fruitful cause of our differences, that love compels love and that strength conciliates the strong. We must strive to remove the causes of misunderstanding by a better mutual knowledge and sympathy; we must extend the unfaltering love of the patriot to our Musulman brother, remembering always that in him too Narayana dwells and to him too our Mother has given a permanent place in her bosom; but we must cease to approach him falsely or flatter out of a selfish weakness and cowardice. We believe this to be the only practical way of dealing with the difficulty. As a political question the Hindu-Mahomedan problem does not interest us at all, as a national problem it is of supreme importance. We shall make it a main part of our work to place Mahomed and Islam in a new light before our readers, to spread juster views of Mahomedan history and civilisation, to appreciate the Musulman's place in our national development and the means of harmonising his communal life with our own, not ignoring the difficulties that stand in our way but making the most of the possibilities of brotherhood and mutual understanding. Intellectual sympathy can only draw together, the sympathy of the heart can alone unite. But the one is a good preparation for the other.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Karmayoga  
The Isha Upanishad

## Jhalakati Speech

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN, delegates and people of Barisal and Bakarganj: —

I have first to express to you my personal gratitude for the kindly reception you have accorded to me. For a year I have been secluded from the fellowship and brotherly embrace of my fellow-countrymen. To me, therefore, the kindness of your welcome must awake much keener feelings than would have been the case in other circumstances. Especially is it a cause of rejoicing to me to have that welcome in Barisal. When I come to this District, when I come to this soil of Bakarganj which has been made sacred and ever memorable in the history of this country — I come to no ordinary place. When I come to Barisal, I come to a chosen temple of the Mother — I come to a sacred *pithasthan* of the national spirit — I come to the birth-place and field of work of Aswini Kumar Dutta.

It is now the fourth year since I came to Barisal first on the occasion of the Provincial Conference. Three years have passed since then — they have been years of storm and stress to the country, — they have been years during which history has been making, during which the people of India have been undergoing a process of rebirth. Many things have happened in these years, especially in the last few months. One sign of what has been happening in the past is this empty chair (*pointing to the chair upon which Aswini Kumar's photo was placed*). One aspect of these years has been a series of repressions. They have been years in which the country has had to undergo the sufferings

*Delivered at Jhalakati, Bakarganj District, Eastern Bengal and Assam, on 19 June 1909. Text published in the Bengalee on 27 June and reproduced in the Karmayogin on 3 July. Another version, taken down by police agents and reproduced in a Government of Bengal confidential file, appears in the last volume of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO.*

and sacrifices which repression involves. Barisal has had its full share of these sufferings. They had begun even before I last came among you. You had then the regulation lathi of the Police and the Gurkha visitation. After that there have been other forms of coercion. In this very town of Jhalakati you had to pay a punitive police tax. It was a punitive tax, punitive not of any offence of which you have been guilty, — for you have been guilty of none. In Barisal, there was no disturbance, no breach of the law. On the contrary, you have always been patient and self-restrained — you have always kept within the four corners of the law. What you have been punished for was your patriotism — you were punished for your Swadeshism — you were punished for your successful organisation of boycott. That tax was borne by the mahajans of Jhalakati with the readiness and uncomplaining endurance of large-hearted patriotism.

And now there have come the deportations. You have been called to endure the exile of those who have been dearest to you, who stood for all that was patriotic and noble in the district. Of the deportations Barisal has had more than its full share. Of those deported three are sons of this district. The man whose name will live for ever on the lips of his countrymen as one of the great names of the age — one of the makers of the new nation — Aswini Kumar Dutta has been taken away from you. His active and devoted lieutenant has been taken away from you. That warm-hearted patriot whom I am proud to have had the privilege of calling my personal friend — Manoranjan Guha — has been taken away from you. Why have they been exiled? What was their offence? Can anyone in Barisal name a single action — can anyone of those who have sent him into exile name definitely any single action which Aswini Kumar Dutta has committed, of which the highest and noblest man might not be proud? Can anyone name a single action of Krishna Kumar Mitra's which would be derogatory to the reputation of the highest in the land? There have indeed been charges, — vague charges, shameless charges, — made. The law under which they have been exiled requires no charge. The law under which they have been exiled has been impugned in Parliament

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as an antiquated and anomalous Regulation, utterly out of place and unfit to be used in modern times. When it was so attacked and its use by the Government of India challenged, Lord Morley, the man who rules India with absolute sway and stands or should stand to us as the incarnation of British statesmanship, made an answer which was not the answer of a statesman but of an attorney. "The law," he said, "is as good a law as any on the Statute Book." What is meant — what does Lord Morley mean — by a "good law"? In a certain sense every law is a good law which is passed by an established authority. If there were a law which made Swadeshi illegal, by which to buy a Swadeshi cloth would become a criminal action punishable by a legal tribunal — there have been such laws in the past — and if that were enacted by the Legislative Council, it would be in Lord Morley's sense of the word as good a law as any upon the Statute Book. But would it be a good law in the true sense or a travesty of law and justice? Lord Morley says it is a good law. We say it is a lawless law, — a dishonest law, — a law that is, in any real sense of the word, no law at all. For what is its substance and purpose? It provides that when you cannot bring any charge against a man which can be supported by proofs — and when you have no evidence which would stand for a moment before a court of justice, in any legal tribunal — when you have nothing against him except that his existence is inconvenient to you, then you need not advance any charge, you need not bring any evidence, you are at liberty to remove him from his home, from his friends, from his legitimate activities and intern him for the rest of his life in a jail. This is the law which is as good a law as any on the Statute Book! But what does its presence on the Statute Book mean? It means that under certain circumstances or whenever an absolute authority chooses, there is no law in the land for any subject of the British Crown — no safety for the liberty of the person.

It is under this law that nine of the most devoted workers for the country have been exiled, some of whose names are household words in India and incompatible with any imputation of evil. When the authorities were pressed in Parliament for an account of the reasons for their action they would not bring and

refused to bring any definite accusation. Once indeed under the pressure of cross-examination a charge was advanced, — wild, vague and baseless. It was said in effect that these men were instigators and paymasters of anarchy and bloodshed. What was the authority under which such a charge was made? How was it that this monstrous falsehood was allowed to proceed from the mouths of His Majesty's Ministers and pollute the atmosphere of the House of Commons? Is there a man in his senses who will believe that Aswini Kumar Dutta was the instigator and paymaster of anarchy and bloodshed or that Krishna Kumar Mitra was the instigator and paymaster of anarchy and bloodshed, — men whose names were synonymous with righteousness of action and nobility of purpose and whose whole lives were the embodiment of uprightness, candour and fair and open living before all men? We have been told that it was not only on police evidence that they were exiled. That was not what was said at the beginning. At first it was on police information that the deportations were justified and any attempt to impugn that authority was resented. But now that police information has been shown to be false and unreliable, it is said that there was other than police information to justify the action of the authorities. We know what that information must have been. I will not make any sweeping charge against a whole body of men without exception. I know that even among the police there are men who are upright and observe truth and honesty in their dealings. I have met such men and honoured them. But we know what the atmosphere of that department is, we know what the generality of police officers are and how little reliance can be placed upon them. Of the value of police information Midnapore is the standing and conclusive proof. Besides this police information what else can there have been? Obviously the information on which the police has relied in certain of these cases — the evidence of the hired perjurer and forger, of the approver who to save himself from a baseless charge makes allegations yet more unfounded against others and scatters mud on the most spotless reputations in the land. If there were any other source besides this, we know too what that must have been. There are a sprinkling of Vibhishans among us,

— men who for their own ends are willing to tell any lie that they think will please the authorities or injure their personal enemies. But if the Government in this country have upon such information believed that the lives of Aswini Kumar Dutta and Krishna Kumar Mitra are a mere mask and not the pure and spotless lives we have known, then we must indeed say, “What an amount of folly and ignorance rules at the present moment in this unhappy country.”

Well, we have had many other forms of repression besides these deportations. We have had charges of sedition, charges of dacoity and violence, brought against the young men who are the hope of our country — charges such as those which we have seen breaking down and vanishing into nothing when tested by a high and impartial tribunal. This is the nature of the repression we have been called upon to suffer. It has been so engineered by the underlings of the Government that it strikes automatically at those who are most energetic, most devoted, most self-denying in the service of the mother country. It addresses itself to the physical signs, the outward manifestations of our national life, and seeks by suppressing them to put an end to that national life and movement. But it is a strange idea, a foolish idea, which men have, indeed, always cherished under such circumstances, but which has been disproved over and over again in history, to think that a nation which has once risen, — once has been called up by the voice of God to rise, — will be stopped by mere physical repression. It has never so happened in the history of a nation, nor will it so happen in the history of India. Storm has swept over us today. I saw it come. I saw the striding of the storm-blast and the rush of the rain and as I saw it an idea came to me. What is this storm that is so mighty and sweeps with such fury upon us? And I said in my heart, “It is God who rides abroad on the wings of the hurricane, — it is the might and force of the Lord that manifested itself and His almighty hands that seized and shook the roof so violently over our heads today.” A storm like this has swept also our national life. That too was the manifestation of the Almighty. We were building an edifice to be the temple of our Mother’s worship — were rearing

her a new and fair mansion, a palace fit for her dwelling. It was then that He came down upon us. He flung Himself upon the building we had raised. He shook the roof with His mighty hands and part of the building was displaced and ruined. Why has He done this? Repression is nothing but the hammer of God that is beating us into shape so that we may be moulded into a mighty nation and an instrument for His work in the world. We are iron upon His anvil and the blows are showering upon us not to destroy but to re-create. Without suffering there can be no strength, — without sacrifice there can be no growth. It is not in vain that Aswini Kumar has been taken from his people. It is not in vain that Krishna Kumar Mitra has been taken from us and is rotting in Agra Jail. It is not in vain that all Maharashtra mourns for Tilak at Mandalay. It is He, not any other, who has taken them and His ways are not the ways of men, but He is all-wise. He knows better than we do what is needful for us. He has taken Aswini Kumar Dutta away from Barisal. Is the movement dead? Is Swadeshi dead? The rulers of the country in their scanty wisdom have thought that by lopping off the heads the movement will cease. They do not know that great as he is, Aswini Kumar Dutta is not the leader of this movement, that Tilak is not the leader, — God is the leader. They do not know that the storm that has been sweeping over the country was not sent by them, but by Him for His own great purposes. And the same strength that was manifested in the storm today and in the storm of calamity that has passed over the country — the same strength is in us.

And if they are mighty to afflict, we are mighty to endure. We are no ordinary race. We are a people ancient as our hills and rivers and we have behind us a history of manifold greatness, not surpassed by any other race. We are the descendants of those who performed tapasya and underwent unheard-of austerities for the sake of spiritual gain and of their own will submitted to all the sufferings of which humanity is capable. We are the children of those mothers who ascended with a smile the funeral pyre that they might follow their husbands to another world. We are a people to whom suffering is welcome and who

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have a spiritual strength within them, greater than any physical force. We are a people in whom God has chosen to manifest Himself more than any other at many great moments of our history. It is because God has chosen to manifest Himself and has entered into the hearts of His people that we are rising again as a nation. Therefore it matters not even if those who are greatest and most loved are taken away. I trust in God's mercy and believe that they will soon be restored to us. But even if they don't come again still the movement will not cease. It will move forward irresistibly until God's will in it is fulfilled. He fulfils His purposes inevitably and this too He will fulfil. Those who are taken from us must after all some day pass away. We are strong in their strength. We have worked in their inspiration. But in the inevitable course of nature they will pass from us and there must be others who will take their places. He has taken them away from us for a little in order that in their absence we might feel that it was not really in their strength that we were strong, in their inspiration that we worked but that a Higher Force was working in them and when they are removed, can still work in the hearts of the people. When they pass away others will arise or even if no great men stand forth to lead, still the soul of this people will be great with the force of God within and do the work. This it is that He seeks to teach us by these separations — by these calamities. The men are gone. The movement has not ceased. The National School at Jhalakati was started one month after the deportation of Aswini Kumar Dutta; that is a patent sign that the movement is not, as our rulers would ignorantly have it, got up by eloquent agitators. The movement goes on by the force of nature; it works as force of nature works and goes inevitably on, whatever obstacle comes in the way.

What is it that this movement seeks, not according to the wild chimeras born of unreasoning fear but in its real aim and purpose? What is it that we seek? We seek the fulfilment of our life as a nation. This is what the word Swaraj, which is a bug-bear and terror to the Europeans, really means. When they hear it, they are full of unreasoning terrors. They think Swaraj

is independence, it is freedom and that means that the people are going to rise against them in rebellion, that means there are bombs behind every bush, that every volunteer who gives food to his famine-stricken countrymen or nurses the cholera-stricken, is a possible rebel and dacoit. Swaraj is not the Colonial form of Government nor any form of Government. It means the fulfilment of our national life. That is what we seek, that is why God has sent us into the world to fulfil Him by fulfilling ourselves in our individual life, in the family, in the community, in the nation, in humanity. That is why He has sent us into the world and it is this fulfilment that we demand; for this fulfilment is life and to depart from it is to perish. Our object, our claim is that we shall not perish as a nation, but live as a nation. Any authority that goes against this object will dash itself against the eternal throne of justice — it will dash itself against the laws of nature which are the laws of God, and be broken to pieces.

This then is our object and by what means do we seek it? We seek it by feeling our separateness and pushing forward our individual self-fulfilment by what we call Swadeshi — Swadeshi in commerce and manufacture, in politics, in education, in law and administration, in every branch of national activity. No doubt this means independence, it means freedom; but it does not mean rebellion. There are some who fear to use the word “freedom”, but I have always used the word because it has been the *mantra* of my life to aspire towards the freedom of my nation. And when I was last in jail I clung to that *mantra*; and through the mouth of my counsel I used this word persistently. What he said for me — and it was said not only on my behalf, but on behalf of all who cherish this ideal, — was this: If to aspire to independence and preach freedom is a crime you may cast me into jail and there bind me with chains. If to preach freedom is a crime then I am a criminal and let me be punished. But freedom does not mean the use of violence — it does not mean bombs; it is the fulfilment of our separate national existence. If there is any authority mad enough to declare that Swadeshim, national education, arbitration, association for improvement of our physique, is illegal, it is not stamping out anarchism; it is

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on the contrary establishing a worse anarchism from above. It sets itself against the law of God that gives to every nation its primary rights. The judge in the Alipore case said that the aspiration after independence and the preaching of the ideal of independence was a thing no Englishman could condemn. But if you say that the aspiration after independence is a thing none can condemn and yet put down by force the only peaceful means of securing independence, you are really declaring that it is the practice of independence which you will not tolerate. Because a few have gone mad and broken the law you have chosen to brand a whole people, to condemn a nation and to suppress a whole national movement. With that we have nothing to do. We have no voice in the government of our country; and the laws and their administration are things in which you don't allow us to have any concern. But one thing is in our own power; — our courage and devotion are in our power, our sacrifice, our suffering are in our power. That you cannot take away from us, and so long as you cannot take that from us you can do nothing. Your repression cannot for ever continue, for it will bring anarchy into the country. You will not be able to continue your administration if this repression remains permanent. Your government will become disorganised; the trade you are using such means to save will languish and capital be frightened from the country.

We have therefore only to suffer. We have only to be strong and enduring. All this machinery of coercion, all this repression, will then be in vain. That is the only virtue that is needed. We shall never lose our fortitude, our courage, our endurance. There are some who think that by lowering our heads the country will escape repression. That is not my opinion. It is by looking the storm in the face and meeting it with a high courage, fortitude and endurance that the nation can be saved. It is that which the Mother demands from us, — which God demands from us. He sent the storm yesterday and it carried the roof away. He sent it today with greater violence and it seized the roof to remove it. But today the roof remained. This is what He demands of us. — “I have sent my storms upon you, so that you may feel and

train your strength. If you have suffered by them, if something has been broken, it does not matter, so long as you learn the lesson that it is for strength I make you suffer and always for strength.” What did the volunteers do today when they flung themselves in crowds on the roof and braved the fury of the hurricane and by main strength held down the roof over their heads? That is the lesson that all must learn and especially the young men of Bengal and India. The storm may come down on us again and with greater violence. Then remember this, brave its fury, feel your strength, train your strength in the struggle with the violence of the wind, and by that strength hold down the roof over the temple of the Mother.

## Bakarganj Speech

I HAVE spent the earlier part of my life in a foreign country from my very childhood, and even of the time which I have spent in India, the greater part of it has been spent by me on the other side of India where my mother tongue is not known, and therefore although I have learned the language like a foreigner and I am able to understand it and write in it, I am unable, I have not the hardihood, to get up and deliver a speech in Bengali.

The repression and the reforms are the two sides of the political situation that the authorities in this country and in England present to us today. That policy has been initiated by one of the chief statesmen of England, one famous for his liberal views and professions, one from whom at the inception of his career as Secretary of State for India much had been expected. Lord Morley stands at the head of the administration in India, clad with legal and absolute power; he is far away from us like the gods in heaven, and we do not see him. And just as we do not see the gods in heaven but are obliged to imagine them in a figure, so we are compelled to imagine Lord Morley in a sort of figure, and the figure in which he presents himself to us is rather a peculiar one. Just as our gods sometimes carry weapons in their hands and sometimes they carry in one hand the *khadga* and in another hand the *varabhaya*, so Lord Morley presents himself to us with a *khadga* in one hand and the *varabhaya* in another, and he invites us to consider him in this image. From the beginning there has been this double aspect in him. He has, so to speak, spoken in two voices from the beginning. One voice at the beginning said “sympathy”, while the other voice

*Delivered at Bakarganj, Eastern Bengal and Assam, on 23 June 1909. Text noted down by police agents and reproduced in a Government of Bengal confidential file.*

said “settled fact”; one voice speaks of reforms and elective representation, and the other voice speaks of the necessity of preserving absolute government in India to all time. First of all he has given you, with a great flourish it has been announced that he was going to give, and he has given, a non-official majority in the Legislative Council; he has given an elective system, he has given to a certain extent the power of voting in the Council, voting on Government measures. On the face of it these seem very large concessions; it seems that a very substantial measure of self-government has been given; that is the tone in which the English papers have been writing today; they say that this reform is a great constitutional change and that it opens a new era in India. But when we examine them carefully, it somehow comes to seem that these reforms of Lord Morley are, like his professions of Liberalism and Radicalism, more for show than for use.

This system which Lord Morley has given us is marred by two very serious defects. One of them is this very fact that the elected members will be in the minority, the nominated non-officials and the officials being in the majority; and the second is that an entirely non-democratic principle has been adopted in this elective system, the principle of one community being specially represented.

The Government of India is faced today by a fact which they cannot overlook, a fact which is by no means pleasant to the vested interests which they represent, but at the same time a fact which cannot be ignored, and that is, that the people of India have awakened, are more and more awakening, that they have developed a real political life, and that the demands they make are demands which can no longer be safely left out of the question. There is the problem before the Government, “What to do with this new state of things?” There were two courses open to them — one of frank repression and the other course was the course of frank conciliation, either to stamp out this new life in the people or to recognise it; to recognise it as an inevitable force which must have its way, however gradually. The Government were unable to accept either of these alternative policies. They

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have tried to mix them, and in trying to mix them they have adopted the principle of pressing down the movement with one hand and with the other hand trying to circumvent it. "You demand a popular assembly, you demand self-government. Well, we give you a measure of self-government, an enlarged and important Legislative Council, but in giving we try so to arrange the forces that the nation instead of being stronger may be weaker. Your strength is in the educated classes, your strength is more in the Hindu element in the nation than in the Mohammedan element, because they have not as yet awakened as the Hindu element has awakened. Well, let us remember our ancient policy of divide and rule, let us depress the forces which make for strength and raise up the force which is as yet weak and set up one force against the other, so that it may never be possible for us to be faced in the Legislative Council by a united majority representing the Indian people and demanding things which we are determined never to give."

Obviously when two forces stand against each other equally determined in two opposite directions, the people can only effect their aim by pressure upon the Government. That is a known fact everywhere, which every political system recognises, for which every political system has to provide. In every reasonable system of government there is always some provision made for the pressure of the people upon the Government to make itself felt. If no such provision is made, then the condition of that country is bound to be unsound, then there are bound to be elements of danger and unrest which no amount of coercion can remove, because the attempt to remove them by coercion is an attempt to destroy the laws of nature, and the laws of nature refuse to be destroyed and conducted. We have no means to make the pressure of the people felt upon the Government. The only means which we have discovered, the only means which we can use without bringing on a violent conflict, without leading to breaches of the law on both sides and bringing things to the arbitrament of physical force, have been the means which we call passive resistance and specially the means of the boycott. Therefore just as we have said that the boycott is a settled fact

because the Partition of Bengal is not rescinded and it shall remain so until it is rescinded, so we must say that the boycott must remain a settled fact because we are allowed no real control over the Government.

For the time the Government have succeeded in separating two of the largest communities in India; they have succeeded in drawing away the Mohammedans because of their want of education and enlightenment and of political experience which allows them to be led away by promises that are meant for the ear, by promises of concessions which the Government cannot give without destroying their own ends. For a time until the Mohammedans by bitter experience see the falseness of their hopes and the falseness of the political means which they are being induced to adopt, until then it will be difficult for the two communities to draw together and to stand united for the realisation of their common interest.

These are times of great change, times when old landmarks are being upset, when submerged forces are rising, and just as we deal promptly or linger over the solution of these problems, our progress will be rapid or slow, sound or broken. The educated class in India leads, but it must never allow itself to be isolated. It has done great things; it has commenced a mighty work, but it cannot accomplish these things, it cannot carry that work to completion by its own united efforts. The hostile force has recognised that this educated class is the backbone of India and their whole effort is directed towards isolating it. We must refuse to be isolated, we must recognise where our difficulties are, what it is that stands in the way of our becoming a nation and set ourselves immediately to the solution of that problem.

The problem is put to us one by one, to each nation one by one, and here in Bengal it is being put to us, and He has driven it home. He has made it perfectly clear by the events of the last few years. He has shown us the possibility of strength within us, and then He has shown us where the danger, the weakness lies. He is pointing out to us how it is that we may become strong. On us it lies, on the educated class in Bengal, because Bengal leads, and what Bengal does today the rest of India will do tomorrow;

it specially lies upon us, the educated class in Bengal, to answer the question which God has put to us, and according as we answer, on it depends how this movement will progress, what route it will take, and whether it will lead to a swift and sudden salvation or whether, after so many centuries of tribulation and suffering, there is still a long period of tribulation and suffering before us. God has put the question to us, and with us entirely it lies to answer.

## Khulna Speech

**G**ENTLEMEN, today I will speak a few words on the Gita. The main object of that philosophy is found in the Vedanta, which is the basis of Hindu thought and life, and according to the Vedanta, life is dominated by *maya* or *avidya*. We are driven into action because we are ignorant of our true selves, of the true nature of the world. We identify ourselves with our bodies, our desires, our sorrows, and not our spirits. We lose ourselves in our happiness, griefs and pleasures.

By these motives we are driven into action. This life is a chain of bondage which keeps us revolving. We are surrounded on all sides by forces which we cannot control. As man has a perpetual desire for freedom, he is driven by forces he cannot control. Under the influence of these forces within or without, action takes place. The object of Hindu philosophy is to make man no longer a slave, but to escape from bondage and to make human beings free. Hindu philosophy tries to go into the root of things. What is the real beginning of *maya*? . . . Whatever we may try, from the nature of the world we cannot escape from bondage. There is a knowledge, by attaining which we can become free.

In the Gita we find that Srikrishna unites the Vedanta philosophy with the philosophy of Sankhya. Modern science denies that man has a soul. Science considers only the laws of nature. It regards nature as material, and man as merely a product of nature. It says man is a creation of natural forces. All his actions are results of fixed laws, and he has no freedom. According to the Sankhya, man has a soul and is essentially the Purusha

*Delivered at Khulna, Bengal, on 25 June 1909. Noted down by police agents and reproduced in a Government of Bengal confidential file. A note preceding the report of the speech says that "about three-fourths of it have been taken down". The text needed emendation in many places.*

and not matter. The spirit does not act. The soul is calm and motionless. Prakriti is always shifting and changing, and under her influence all actions take place. Prakriti acts.

Man can only free himself by recognising that he is the Purusha. Srikrishna adopts this theory of Sankhya in the Gita, and he also adopts the philosophy of Vedanta. He says that man has an immortal soul, but there is also a universal soul. Man is merely part of God. He is merely a part of something that is eternal, infinite, omniscient and omnipotent. This eternal power is what really exists, and in all that we see, hear, feel, it is He alone who exists. It is He alone whom we feel and see. Parameshwara builds up this world by His *maya*. He is the master of the great illusion which we call *maya*. This He made to express Himself, the One. All these things around us are transitory. Within us is that which cannot change, which is eternally free and happy. If man feels himself miserable, it is because he in his ignorance allows himself to be dominated by egoism (*ahankara*). He thinks that he is all. He does not realise that God is the master of this *lila*. He thinks that it is I who act, I who am the lord of my body, and because he thinks so, he is bound by his action. By these forces he is driven from birth to birth. The great illusion is that this body which he inhabits is himself; next he identifies himself with the mind and thinks it is I who think, see and feel. In reality, according to the Gita, God is within the heart of every creature.

The second thing you have to recognise is that you are only a part of Him, who is eternal, omniscient and omnipotent.

His first answer to Arjuna is that the feeling which has come upon him is not the pure feeling. It is a feeling of egoism. Still Arjuna does not understand how that can be.

How can it be my *dharma* to kill my own brothers and relations? How can it be to slaughter my nation and house? Srikrishna answers according to the spirit of Hindu ideas. He says that it is your *dharma*, because you are a Kshatriya. This is a *dharma* of a particular kind. The duty of the Kshatriya is not the same as that of the Brahmin, and that of the Shudra is not equal to that of the Kshatriya. If a Shudra adopts the *dharma*

of a Brahmin, he brings about the confusion of all laws and leads to the destruction and not to the betterment of mankind. It is nature which teaches you your own *dharma*. This is your *dharma*. If you shrink from upholding the cause of virtue, truth and justice, out of a feeling which is inconsistent, you are guilty, you bring in confusion, you encourage yourself to give up your duty.

Still Arjuna is not satisfied. Srikrishna goes still deeper. He says that the whole of our life is determined by *maya* which is of three kinds — *sattwa*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. Their nature is this. *Sattwa* leads to knowledge, *rajas* leads to action, and *tamas* leads to inaction and ignorance. These are the qualities of nature which govern the world. The *swabhava* which leads you to work is determined by the three *gunas*. Action is determined by *swabhava*. All action leads to bondage and is full of defects. What you call virtue or virtues, they have defects in themselves. The virtue of Brahmins is a great virtue. You shall not kill. This is what *ahinsa* means. If the virtue of *ahinsa* comes to the Kshatriya, if you say I will not kill, there is no one to protect the country. The happiness of the people will be broken down. Injustice and lawlessness will reign. The virtue becomes a source of misery, and you become instrumental in bringing misery and conflict to the people. Your duty to your family seems to conflict with your duty to society, that of society to the nation, and that of the nation to mankind. How shall we follow the path which leads to salvation? It is difficult to say what is right and what is wrong. How to decide it then? There is one way: do action in *yoga*, and then you rise above ignorance, and sin cannot touch you, and you rise above all that hampers you and binds you.

What is *yoga*? Not a certain process. When we think of *yoga*, we think of a man who shuts himself up in a cave and subjects himself to certain practices. He frees himself from all bondage. But Srikrishna uses *yoga* in a different sense. He says: Do action in *yoga*. The first element is *samata*. *Samata* means you shall look with equal eyes upon happiness and misfortune, praise and blame, honour and dishonour, and success and failure. You shall regard none of these, but with a calm and unshaken mind

you should proceed with the work which you are given to do, unshaken by the praise or censure of the world. The man who has this *samata* has no friends and no enemies. He looks upon all with equal feelings, because he has knowledge, because he has looked into himself, then out into the world. He finds himself everywhere and all in himself. He finds himself in all because God is in all. Whether he looks at the high or low, he sees no difference and sees that in every creature there is Narayana. He sees that he is only an *ansha* of one who is in every particle of matter. If there be any differences, they are only temporary and outward. He is only that through which Vasudeva carries on his *lila*. He is not anxious to know what will happen tomorrow, because the action is not guided by laws. The man who has communion with God has no reason to be guided by laws, because he knows God is alone and all. He is not troubled by the fruits of his action. "You have the right to action, to work, but not to the fruit. Work and leave the result to me. Those men whom you shrink from slaying are already slain. These men would all perish. Therefore the fruit is already obtained beforehand by me. Your anxiety for the result is ignorance." The destiny of the world is fixed. When a man has to do anything he must know that the fruits are with God. Man is to do what God wills.

*Yoga* means freedom from *dwandwa*. The Yogin is free from the bondage of pleasure and pain, of anger and hatred and attachment, of liking and disliking, because he looks with equal eyes on all. He does not shrink from misfortune or misery, happiness or unhappiness. He rises above the bondage of the body, because no man can give him pleasure or pain, because he has his own source of strength, of delight and happiness. This is the freedom which the Gita says the *yoga* gives, the freedom which we ordinarily mean by *mukti*. This is the freedom which the Gita promises. He says if you act in *yoga*, you rise above grief and pain, even above all things. You are free from fear or sin, because you do not act for yourself. You do not act because you will get pleasure, but for the sake of God; that is how you are to reach *yoga*. If you wish to be happy, you must give up all your works to God. You must do all your work for His

sake, and therefore sin does not touch you. It is only because of selfishness that sin touches you. If you realise that Narayana is in all, it follows that you lose the smaller, the individual limited self. You look to wider things. You see yourself in the family, in the community, race, humanity, and all things in the world. You forget yourself altogether. You work for the race and others, for mankind. It is not God's work when you follow after your selfishness. The Gita says: "Your welfare is God's business." If you work for Him you have no fear, because God stretches out His hand of mercy to you. It is to that which the *yoga* leads. The teaching of the Gita, if it is followed, delivers you from all possibility of sin, of sorrow. He says: "Take refuge in me. I shall free you from all evil. Do everything as a sacrifice to me." That is the goal towards which you move. The name of Hari will free you from all evil.

This is the way in which Srikrishna has solved the problem put by Arjuna. Arjuna says: "It is my duty to fight for justice, it is my duty as a Kshatriya not to turn from Dharmayuddha, but I am perplexed, because the consequences will be so terrible. The people I am to slay are dear to me. How can I kill them?" Krishna says: "There is no doubt an apparent conflict of duties, but that is the nature of life. Life is itself a problem, a very entangled thread, which it is impossible to undo. But it is I who do all these things, I who am leading you to the fulfilment of your duties. Leave it to me. If you do your duty, it is a thing which I am bringing about. You are not doing it from selfishness. It is a thing necessary for my purpose. It is a thing which is decreed, already done, but it is now to be effected in the material world. Whatever happens, it happens for the best. I now give you my knowledge, the key to *yoga*. I remove the veil of ignorance from you. I give you the meaning of *yoga*." In the Gita Srikrishna gives certain rules by which a man may hold communion with God.

The Gita says that man is not a bundle of outward cares and griefs, of things that do not last. Man is a garment which is put off from time to time, but there is within us something which is omniscient and eternal and cannot be drowned.

Srikrishna gave Arjuna the *divya chakshu*, with which he saw the Vishwarupa. He now sees Vasudeva everywhere. He sees within him things that cannot be seen by the mysteries of science. With this knowledge comes to him that force.

How can I act, yet be free from bondage? The Gita says that the man who has knowledge has to do exactly what other men do. He has to live as a man in his family, race and nation. But there is a difference which is internal and not external. By the internal difference he acts in communion with God; others act in pursuance of their desires. He knows by experience how a man can act when he is free from desire. This force of action is the force of God Himself. He is not troubled by the result of action; he gets eternal bliss.

This is the whole teaching of the Gita. It is *yoga* which gives utter perfection in action. The man who works for God is not shaken by doubts.

The teaching of the Gita is a teaching for life, and not a teaching for the life of a closet. It is a teaching which means perfection of action. It makes man great. It gives him the utter strength, the utter bliss which is the goal of life in the world.

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Message of India

The ground gained by the Vedantic propaganda in the West, may be measured by the growing insight in the occasional utterances of well-informed and intellectual Europeans on the subject. A certain Mrs. Leighton Cleather speaking to the Oriental circle of the Lyceum Club in London on the message of India has indicated the mission of India with great justness and insight. We need not follow Mrs. Cleather into her dissertation on the Kshatriyas, whom for some mysterious reason she insists on calling the Red Rajputs, but it is true that the first knowledge of Vedantic truth and the Rajayoga was the possession of the Kshatriyas till Janaka, Ajatashatru and others gave it to the Brahmins. But the real issues of this historical fact are inevitably missed by the lecturer. She is on a surer ground when she continues, "India's message to the world today she considered to be the realisation of the life beyond material forms. The East has taken for granted the reality of the invisible and has no fear. The recognition of the soul in ourselves and others leads to the recognition of the universal soul and the great word of the Upanishads: 'This soul which is the self of all that is, this is the real, this the self, that thou art.' Modern civilisation has lost sight of

the fundamental law of self-sacrifice as conditioning man's evolution."

We have here, very briefly put, the triple message of India, psychical, spiritual and moral. India believes in and has the key to a psychical world within man and without him which is the source and basis of the material. This it is which Europe is beginning dimly to discover. She has caught glimpses of the world beyond the gates, her hands are fumbling for the key but she has not yet found it. Immortality proved and admitted, it becomes easier to believe in God. The spiritual message is that the universal self is one and that our souls are not only brothers, not only of one substance and nature, but live in and move towards an essential oneness. It follows that Love is the highest law and that to which evolution must move. Ananda, joy and delight, are the object of the *lila* and the fulfilment of love is the height of joy and delight. Self-sacrifice is therefore the fundamental law. Sacrifice, says the Gita, is the law by which the Father of all in the beginning conditioned the world, and all ethics, all conduct, all life is a sacrifice willed or unconscious. The beginning of ethical knowledge is to realise this and make the conscious sacrifice of one's own individual desires. It is an inferior and semi-savage morality which gives up only to gain and makes selfishness the basis of ethics. To give up one's small individual self and find the larger self in others, in the nation, in humanity, in God, that is the law of Vedanta. That is India's message. Only she must not be content with sending it, she must rise up and live it before all the world so that it may be proved a possible law of conduct both for men and nations.

### **Lord Honest John**

On the converse side a passage from Mr. Algernon Cecil's "Six Oxford Thinkers" is instructive. He dwells on the self-contradictory and ironic close of John Morley's life. "He the philosophic Liberal, the ardent advocate of Home Rule, the persistent foe of war and coercion, is closing his fine record of public service with a coronet on his head as the ruler of India,

of the child of Clive and Warren Hastings, of the creature of strife and fraud; as one might say, a benevolent despot in an absolute constitution imposed and administered by an alien race." We in India are sure of the despotism but have some doubts about the benevolence. Nor can we accept the phrase, absolute constitution, as anything but an oxymoron, a "witty folly", a happy and ironical contradiction in terms. But for the rest the implied criticism is just.

### **The Failure of Europe**

Mr. Cecil sees in this ending of Honest John as Lord Morley the failure of Liberalism; and it must be remembered that the failure of Liberalism means the abandonment of the gospel of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity as a thing unlivable, and that again means the moral bankruptcy of Europe. "Liberalism in any intelligible sense cannot last another generation. In a score of years the strange adventure on which the nations of Europe embarked in 1789 will be concluded, and we shall revert, doubtless with many and formidable changes, to an earlier type. The principles of unchecked individual liberty and unrestricted competition have, to use the ancient phrase, been tried in the balance and found wanting. The golden dreams which so lately cheated the anxious eyes of men have tarnished with time. Their splendour has proved illusive and they have gone the way of other philosophies down a road upon which there is no returning. The old aristocrats have been swept away and some malicious spirit has given us new ones bathed in the most material sort of golden splendour. And Misery, Vice and Discontent stalk among the drudges of society much as they did before." Mr. Cecil like most Europeans sees that European liberalism has failed but like most Europeans utterly misses the real reason of the failure. The principles of 1789 were not false, but they were falsely stated and selfishly executed. Europe had not the spiritual strength, nor the moral force to carry them out. She was too selfish, too short-sighted, too materialistic and ignorant. She deserved to fail and could not but

fail. It is left for Asia and especially for India to reconstruct the world.

### **British Fears**

The genesis of the Imperial Press Conference is to be found in that feeling of insecurity which is driving England to seek allies on the Continent and gather round her the children of her loins beyond the seas. During the better part of the nineteenth century after her triumph over Napoleon and her amazing expansion in India, she felt too strong to need extraneous assistance. Mistress of the seas, enormously wealthy, monopolist almost of the world's commerce, she followed on the Continent a policy of splendid isolation broken only by the ill-starred alliance with the third Napoleon. She fought for her own hand everywhere and felt strong enough to conquer. Her Colonies she regarded only as a nuisance. They were a moral asset, probably, but hardly a material. They assisted her in no way, they excluded her commerce by tariffs, they took her protection without payment and yet exacted internal independence with an inordinate and querulous jealousy of her interference and unwillingness to allow even the slightest iota of British control to mar the perfection of their autonomy. But a change has come over the spirit of her dream. Mighty powers have arisen in the world, young, ardent, ambitious, rapidly expanding, magnificently equipped, moving with the sureness and swiftness of material forces towards empire and aggrandisement. Their armies are gigantic forces against which England's would be as helpless as a boy in the hands of a Titan. Their wealth increases. They are beating England out of the chosen fields of her commercial expansion, and it is only by bringing out all the reserves of her old energy that she can just keep a first place; worst of all, their navies grow and if they cannot keep pace with hers in numbers, equal it in efficiency. On the other hand India, her passive source of wealth, strength and prestige, is struggling in her turn to exclude British commerce and assert autonomy without British control. England is uneasy; she cannot slumber at night for thinking of

her precarious future. To her excited imagination German airships fill the skies and the myriad tramp of the Teuton is heard already marching on London, while huge conspiracies spring up like mushrooms in India and evade the eager grasp of the Police with a diabolical skill which leaves behind only arrests and persecution of innocent men, hard judicial comments, a discredited C.I.D. and a desperate weeping *Englishman*. One can no longer recognise the strong, stolid, practical, invincible Britisher in the emotional, hysterical, excitable, panic-stricken race dancing to the tune of its newly liberated imagination.

### **The Journalistic War Council**

It is not surprising under such circumstances that leading Englishmen should call a Press Conference and turn it into a War Council full of such themes as military conscription and naval expansion and always looking out of the corner of its eye at Imperial Federation. The aid and backing of the Colonies has now become a necessity to British imagination. England seeks an American alliance and hungers after the unity of the Anglo-Saxon world, but there are hostile elements in America which militate against that dream. Parting with her old friends of the Triple Alliance she embraces France, her ancient and traditional enemy; she courts her bug-bear Russia and many of her publicists are ready to excuse and condone the most savage, merciless and inhuman system of tyranny in the world provided she gets a friend in need. But these are uncertain and transitory supports, while the Colonies are bound by ties of blood and interest. The objective of the Press Conference is therefore the Colonies, the union of the English throughout the Empire. And although Srijiit Surendranath has been led to the gathering in gilded fetters and is “the most picturesque figure” in the Conference, that is all he is, a picture, even if a speaking picture, — nothing else. For the rest it is Anglo-India that has been called to the great journalistic War Council, not India. The real India has no place there. We wish Srijiit Surendranath could have realised it. It might have prevented him from indulging in rhetorical hyperboles about

“the wise and conciliatory policy of Lord Morley” — forgetful of the nine deportees, forgetful of the many good and true men in jail for Swadeshi, forgetful of Midnapore and all it typifies.

### **Forgotten Eventualities**

It is strange that British statesmanship should be blind to certain possibilities which will follow from their new Colonial policy. Among the first results of the new idea has been the federation of Australia and the federation of South Africa. The former event is not of such importance to the world as the latter. The referendum in Natal is indeed an event of the first significance, but what it portends is the rise of a new and vigorous nation, perhaps a new empire in South Africa, — certainly not the consolidation of the British Empire. Great organisms like these tend inevitably to separate existence. The one thing that stands in the way is the present inability of these organisms to defend their separate existence. Australia lies under the outstretched sword of Japan to say nothing of the subtler, less apparent but more ominous menace of Germany. Canada is kept to England by the contiguity of a powerful, well-organised and expanding foreign State. South Africa on the other hand is occupied by a strong military race with a stubborn love of independence in its very blood. In the last war it has become aware of its supreme military capacity but also of its inability to hold its freedom without a navy. Yet the main cry of England now is that the Colonies should organise military and naval defence in order to lighten the burden of England and help her in her wars! They are not satisfied with the contribution of a Dreadnought. They want an Australian navy, a South African navy. Surely, God has sealed up the eyes and wits of these Imperialistic statesmen. They have eyes but they cannot see; they have minds but they are allowed only to misuse them.

### **National Vitality**

Nothing is stranger than the difference presented by Europe and Asia in the matter of national vitality. European nations seem

to have a brief date, a life-term vigorous but soon exhausted; Asiatic races persist and survive. It was not so in old times. Not only Greece and Rome perished, Assyria, Chaldea, Phoenicia are also written in the book of the Dead. But the difference now seems well-established. France is a visibly dying nation, Spain seems to have lost the power of revival, Italy and Greece have been lifted up by great efforts and sacrifices but show a weak vitality, the Anglo-Saxon race is beginning everywhere to recede and dwindle. On the other hand in Asia life pulsates victoriously. Japan has risen at one bound to the first rank of nations; China untouched by her calamities renovates her huge national life. The effect on India of an accumulation of almost all the conditions which bring about national death, has been a new lease of life and a great dynamic impulse. Of the Mahomedan races, not a single one is decadent. Persia rises from her weakness full of youthful enthusiasm and courage though not yet of capacity. Arabia in her deserts surges with life. Egypt after her calamities is undergoing new birth; as far as Morocco the stir of life is seen. And today Turkey, the sick man, has suddenly risen up vigorous and whole. What is the source of this difference? Is it not in this that Asia has developed her spirituality and Europe has turned from it? Europe has always tended to live more in matter and in the body than within; and matter when not inert is always changing; the body is bound to perish. The high pressure at which Europe lives only tends to disintegrate the body more rapidly when the spiritual sources within are not resorted to for stability.

## The Awakening Soul of India

**N**O NATIONAL awakening is really vital and enduring which confines itself to a single field. It is when the soul awakens that a nation is really alive, and the life will then manifest itself in all the manifold forms of activity in which man seeks to express the strength and the delight of the expansive spirit within. It is for *ananda* that the world exists; for joy that the Self puts Himself into the great and serious game of life; and the joy which He sees is the joy of various self-expression. For this reason it is that no two men are alike, no two nations are alike. Each has its own separate nature over and above the common nature of humanity and it is not only the common human impulses and activities but the satisfaction and development of its own separate character and capacities that a nation demands. Denied that satisfaction and development, it perishes. By two tests, therefore, the vitality of a national movement can be judged. If it is imitative, imported, artificial, then, whatever temporary success it may have, the nation is moving towards self-sterilisation and death; even so the nations of ancient Europe perished when they gave up their own individuality as the price of Roman civilisation, Roman peace, Roman prosperity. If, on the other hand, the peculiar individuality of a race stamps itself on the movement in its every part and seizes on every new development as a means of self-expression, then the nation wakes, lives and grows and whatever the revolutions and changes of political, social or intellectual forms and institutions, it is assured of its survival and aggrandisement.

The nineteenth century in India was imitative, self-forgetful, artificial. It aimed at a successful reproduction of Europe in India, forgetting the deep saying of the Gita — “Better the law of one’s own being though it be badly done than an alien *dharma* well-followed; death in one’s *dharma* is better, it is a dangerous

thing to follow the law of another's nature." For death in one's own *dharma* brings new birth, success in an alien path means only successful suicide. If we had succeeded in Europeanising ourselves we would have lost for ever our spiritual capacity, our intellectual force, our national elasticity and power of self-renovation. That tragedy has been enacted more than once in history, only the worst and most mournful example of all would have been added. Had the whole activity of the country been of the derivative and alien kind, that result would have supervened. But the life-breath of the nation still moved in the religious movements of Bengal and the Punjab, in the political aspirations of Maharashtra and in the literary activity of Bengal. Even here it was an undercurrent, the peculiar temperament and vitality of India struggling for self-preservation under a load of foreign ideas and foreign forms, and it was not till in the struggle between these two elements the balance turned in the favour of the national *dharma* that the salvation of India was assured. The resistance of the conservative element in Hinduism, tamasic, inert, ignorant, uncreative though it was, saved the country by preventing an even more rapid and thorough disintegration than actually took place and by giving respite and time for the persistent national self to emerge and find itself. It was in religion first that the soul of India awoke and triumphed. There were always indications, always great forerunners, but it was when the flower of the educated youth of Calcutta bowed down at the feet of an illiterate Hindu ascetic, a self-illuminated ecstatic and "mystic" without a single trace or touch of the alien thought or education upon him that the battle was won. The going forth of Vivekananda, marked out by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer. Afterwards when the awakening was complete a section of the nationalist movement turned in imagination to a reconstruction of the recent pre-British past in all its details. This could not be. Inertia, the refusal to expand and alter, is what our philosophy calls *tamas*, and an excess of *tamas* tends to disintegration and disappearance. Aggression

is necessary for self-preservation and when a force ceases to conquer, it ceases to live — that which remains stationary and stands merely on the defensive, that which retires into and keeps within its own *kot* or base, as the now defunct *Sandhya* used graphically to put it, is doomed to defeat, diminution and final elimination from the living things of this world. Hinduism has always been pliable and aggressive; it has thrown itself on the attacking force, carried its positions, plundered its treasures, made its own everything of value it had and ended either in wholly annexing it or driving it out by rendering its further continuation in the country purposeless and therefore impossible. Whenever it has stood on the defensive, it has contracted within narrower limits and shown temporary signs of decay.

Once the soul of the nation was awake in religion, it was only a matter of time and opportunity for it to throw itself on all spiritual and intellectual activities in the national existence and take possession of them. The outburst of anti-European feeling which followed on the Partition gave the required opportunity. Anger, vindictiveness and antipathy are not in themselves laudable feelings, but God uses them for His purposes and brings good out of evil. They drove listlessness and apathy away and replaced them by energy and a powerful emotion; and that energy and emotion were seized upon by the national self and turned to the uses of the future. The anger against Europeans, the vengeful turning upon their commerce and its productions, the antipathy to everything associated with them engendered a powerful stream of tendency turning away from the immediate Anglicised past, and the spirit which had already declared itself in our religious life entered in by this broad doorway into politics, and substituted a positive powerful yearning towards the national past, a still more mighty and dynamic yearning towards a truly national future. The Indian spirit has not yet conquered the whole field of our politics in actuality, but it is there victoriously in sentiment; the rest is a matter of time, and everything which is now happening in politics, is helping to prepare for its true and potent expression. The future is now assured. Religion and politics, the two most effective and vital

expressions of the nation's self having been nationalised, the rest will follow in due course. The needs of our religious and political life are now vital and real forces and it is these needs which will reconstruct our society, recreate and remould our industrial and commercial life and found a new and victorious art, literature, science and philosophy which will be not European but Indian.

The impulse is already working in Bengali art and literature. The need of self-expression for the national spirit in politics suddenly brought back Bengali literature to its essential and eternal self and it was in our recent national songs that this self-realisation came. The lyric and the lyrical spirit, the spirit of simple, direct and poignant expression, of deep, passionate, straightforward emotion, of a frank and exalted enthusiasm, the dominant note of love and Bhakti of a mingled sweetness and strength, the potent intellect dominated by the self-illuminated heart, a mystical exaltation of feeling and spiritual insight expressing itself with a plain concreteness and practicality — this is the soul of Bengal. All our literature, in order to be wholly alive, must start from this base and whatever variations it may indulge in, never lose touch with it. In Bengal, again, the national spirit is seeking to satisfy itself in art and, for the first time since the decline of the Moguls, a new school of national art is developing itself, the school of which Abanindranath Tagore is the founder and master. It is still troubled by the foreign though Asiatic influence from which its master started, and has something of an exotic appearance, but the development and self-emancipation of the national self from this temporary domination can already be watched and followed. There again, it is the spirit of Bengal that expresses itself. The attempt to express in form and limit something of that which is formless and illimitable is the attempt of Indian art. The Greeks, aiming at a smaller and more easily attainable end, achieved a more perfect success. Their instinct for physical form was greater than ours, our instinct for psychic shape and colour was superior. Our future art must solve the problem of expressing the soul in the object, the great Indian aim, while achieving anew the triumphant combination of perfect interpretative form and colour. No Indian has so strong

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an instinct for form as the Bengali. In addition to the innate Vedantism of all Indian races, he has an all-powerful impulse towards delicacy, grace and strength, and it is these qualities to which the new school of art has instinctively turned in its first inception. Unable to find a perfect model in the scanty relics of old Indian art, it was only natural that it should turn to Japan for help, for delicacy and grace are there triumphant. But Japan has not the secret of expressing the deepest soul in the object, it has not the aim. And the Bengali spirit means more than the union of delicacy, grace and strength; it has the lyrical mystic impulse; it has the passion for clarity and concreteness and as in our literature, so in our art we see these tendencies emerging — an emotion of beauty, a nameless sweetness and spirituality pervading the clear line and form. Here too it is the free spirit of the nation beginning to emancipate itself from the foreign limitations and shackles.

No department of our life can escape this great regenerating and reconstructing force. There is not the slightest doubt that our society will have to undergo a reconstruction which may amount to revolution, but it will not be for Europeanisation as the average reformer blindly hopes, but for a greater and more perfect realisation of the national spirit in society. Not individual selfishness and mutually consuming struggle but love and the binding of individuals into a single inseparable life is the national impulse. It sought to fulfil itself in the past by the bond of blood in the joint family, by the bond of a partial communism in the village system, by the bond of birth and a corporate sense of honour in the caste. It may seek a more perfect and spiritual bond in the future. In commerce also so long as we follow the European spirit and European model, the individual competitive selfishness, the bond of mere interest in the joint-stock company or that worst and most dangerous development of co-operative Capitalism, the giant octopus-like Trust and Syndicate, we shall never succeed in rebuilding a healthy industrial life. It is not these bonds which can weld Indians together. India moves to a deeper and greater life than the world has yet imagined possible and it is when she has found the secret of expressing herself

in these various activities that her industrial and social life will become strong and expansive.

Nationalism has been hitherto largely a revolt against the tendency to shape ourselves into the mould of Europe; but it must also be on its guard against any tendency to cling to every detail that has been Indian. That has not been the spirit of Hinduism in the past, there is no reason why it should be so in the future. In all life there are three elements, the fixed and permanent spirit, the developing yet constant soul and the brittle changeable body. The spirit we cannot change, we can only obscure or lose; the soul must not be rashly meddled with, must neither be tortured into a shape alien to it, nor obstructed in its free expansion; and the body must be used as a means, not over-cherished as a thing valuable for its own sake. We will sacrifice no ancient form to an unreasoning love of change, we will keep none which the national spirit desires to replace by one that is a still better and truer expression of the undying soul of the nation.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Man — Slave or Free?  
The Kena Upanishad

## The Right of Association

**M**Y FRIEND Pandit Gispati Kavyatirtha has somewhat shirked today his duty as it was set down for him in the programme and left it to me. I hope you will not mind if I depart a little from the suggestion he has made to me. I would like, instead of assuming the role of a preacher and telling you your duties which you know well enough yourselves, to take, if you will allow me, a somewhat wider subject, not unconnected with it but of a wider range. In addressing you today I wish to say a few words about the general right of association especially as we have practised and are trying to practise it in India today. I choose this subject for two reasons, first, because it is germane to the nature of the meeting we are holding, and secondly, because we have seen arbitrary hands laid upon that right of association which is everywhere cherished as a sign and safeguard of liberty and means of development of a common life.

There are three rights which are particularly cherished by free nations. In a nation the sovereign powers of Government may be enjoyed by the few or the many, but there are three things to which the people in European countries cling, which they persistently claim and after which, if they have them not, they always aspire. These are first, the right of a free Press, secondly, the right of free public meeting, and thirdly, the right of association. There is a particular reason why they cling to these three as inherent rights which they claim as sacred and with which authority has no right to interfere. The right of free speech ensures to the people the power which is the greatest

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means for self-development, and that is the power of spreading the idea. According to our philosophy it is the idea which is building up the world. It is the idea which expresses itself in matter and takes to itself bodies. This is true also in the life of humanity; it is true in politics, in the progress and life of a nation. It is the idea which shapes material institutions. It is the idea which builds up and destroys administrations and Governments. Therefore the idea is a mighty force, even when it has no physical power behind it, even when it is not equipped with means, even when it has not organised itself in institutions and associations. Even then the idea moves freely abroad through the minds of thousands of men and becomes a mighty force. It is a power which by the very fact of being impalpable assumes all the greater potency and produces all the more stupendous results. Therefore the right of free speech is cherished because it gives the idea free movement, it gives the nation that power which ensures its future development, which ensures success in any struggle for national life, however stripped it may be of means and instruments. It is enough that the idea is there and that the idea lives and circulates. Then the idea materialises itself, finds means and instruments, conquers all obstacles and goes on developing until it is expressed and established in permanent and victorious forms.

This right of free speech takes the form first of a free Press. It is the Press which on its paper wings carries the idea abroad from city to city, from province to province until a whole continent is bound together by the links of one common aspiration. The right of public meeting brings men together. That is another force. They meet together on a common ground, moved by a common impulse, and as they stand or sit together in their thousands, the force of the idea within moves them by the magnetism of crowds. It moves from one to another till the hidden shakti, the mighty force within, stirred by the words thrown out from the platform travels from heart to heart and masses of men are not only moved by a common feeling and common aspiration, but by the force of that magnetism prepared to act and fulfil the idea. Then comes the right of association, the third of these popular rights.

Given the common aspiration, common idea, common enthusiasm and common wish to act, it gives the instrument which binds men to strive towards the common object by common and associated actions; the bonds of brotherhood grow, energy increases, the idea begins to materialise itself to work in practical affairs and that which was yesterday merely an idea, merely a word thrown out by the eloquence of the orator, becomes a question of practical politics. It becomes work for it begins to work and fulfil itself. Therefore the people prize these rights, consider them a valuable asset, cling to and cherish and will not easily sacrifice them. Therefore they resent the arbitrary interference which takes from them what they consider indispensable for the preparation of national life.

Association is the mightiest thing in humanity; it is the instrument by which humanity moves, it is the means by which it grows, it is the power by which it progresses towards its final development. There are three ideas which are of supreme moment to human life and have become the watchwords of humanity. Three words have the power of remoulding nations and Governments, liberty, equality and fraternity. These words cast forth into being from the great stir and movement of the eighteenth century continue to act on men because they point to the ultimate goal towards which human evolution ever moves. This liberty to which we progress is liberation out of a state of bondage. We move from a state of bondage to an original liberty. This is what our own religion teaches. This is what our own philosophy suggests as the goal towards which we move, *mukti* or *moksha*. We are bound in the beginning by a lapse from pre-existent freedom, we strive to shake off the bonds, we move forward and forward until we have achieved the ultimate emancipation, that utter freedom of the soul, of the body, of the whole man, that utter freedom from all bondage towards which humanity is always aspiring. We in India have found a mighty freedom within ourselves, our brother-men in Europe have worked towards freedom without. We have been moving on parallel lines towards the same end. They have found out the way to external freedom. We have found out the way to internal

freedom. We meet and give to each other what we have gained. We have learned from them to aspire after external as they will learn from us to aspire after internal freedom.

Equality is the second term in the triple gospel. It is a thing which mankind has never accomplished. From inequality and through inequality we move, but it is to equality. Our religion, our philosophy set equality forward as the essential condition of emancipation. All religions send us this message in a different form but it is one message. Christianity says we are all brothers, children of one God. Mohammedanism says we are the subjects and servants of one Allah, we are all equal in the sight of God. Hinduism says there is one without a second. In the high and the low, in the Brahmin and the Shudra, in the saint and the sinner, there is one Narayana, one God and he is the soul of all men. Not until you have realised Him, known Narayana in all, and the Brahmin and the Shudra, the high and the low, the saint and the sinner are equal in your eyes, then and not until then you have knowledge, you have freedom, until then you are bound and ignorant. The equality which Europe has got is external political equality. She is now trying to achieve social equality. Nowadays their hard-earned political liberty is beginning to pall a little upon the people of Europe because they have found it does not give perfect well-being or happiness and it is barren of the sweetness of brotherhood. There is not fraternity in this liberty. It is merely a political liberty. They have not either the liberty within or the full equality or the fraternity. So they are turning a little from what they have and they say increasingly, "Let us have equality, let us have the second term of the gospel towards which we strive." Therefore socialism is growing in Europe. Europe is now trying to achieve external equality as the second term of the gospel of mankind, the universal ideal. I have said that equality is an ideal even with us but we have not tried to achieve it without. Still we have learned from them to strive after political equality and in return for what they have given us we shall lead them to the secret of the equality within.

Again there is fraternity. It is the last term of the gospel. It is the most difficult to achieve, still it is a thing towards which

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all religions call and human aspirations rise. There is discord in life, but mankind yearns for peace and love. This is the reason why the gospels which preach brotherhood spread quickly and excite passionate attachment. This was the reason of the rapid spread of Christianity. This was the reason of Buddhism's rapid spread in this country and throughout Asia. This is the essence of humanitarianism, the modern gospel of love for mankind. None of us have achieved our ideals, but human society has always attempted an imperfect and limited fulfilment of them. It is the nature, the *dharma* of humanity that it should be unwilling to stand alone. Every man seeks the brotherhood of his fellow and we can only live by fraternity with others. Through all its differences and discords humanity is striving to become one.

In India in the ancient times we had many kinds of association, for our life was much more complex and developed than it became afterwards. We had our political associations, we had our commercial associations, our educational, our religious associations. As in Europe, so in India men united together for many interests and worked in association for common ideals. But by the inroads of invasion and calamity our life became broken and disintegrated. Still, though we lost much, we had our characteristic forms in which we strove to achieve that ideal of association and unity. In our society we had organised a common village life. It was a one and single village life in which every man felt himself to be something, a part of a single organism. We had the joint family by which we tried to establish the principle of association in our family life. We have not in our social developments followed the path which Europe has followed. We have never tended to break into scattered units. The principle of association, the attempt to organise brotherhood was dominant in our life. We had the organisation of caste of which nowadays we hear such bitter complaints. It had no doubt many and possibly inherent defects, but it was an attempt, however imperfect, to base society upon the principle of association, the principle of closely organising a common life founded on common ideas, common feelings, common tendencies, a common moral discipline and sense of corporate honour. Then we had an institution

which in its form was peculiar to India, which helped to bind men together in close brotherhood who had a common guru or the initiation into a common religious fraternity. All these we had. Then the impact of Europe came upon us and one by one these institutions began to be broken. Our village life is a thing of the past. The village has lost its community, it has lost its ideals, it has lost that mutual cordiality and binding together by an intimate common life which held it up and made its life sweet and wholesome. Everywhere we see in the village moral deterioration and material decay. Our joint family has been broken. We are scattering into broken units and brother no longer looks upon brother. There is no longer the bond of love which once held us together, because the old ties and habit of association are being broken up. Our caste has lost its reality. The life has gone from within it and it is no longer an institution which helps towards unity, a common life or any kind of brotherhood. For once the idea is broken, the ideal within which is the principle of life is impaired, the form breaks up and nothing can keep it together. Therefore we find all these things perishing.

Well, we have been losing these things which were part of our associated life. But on the other hand we looked at the civilised nations of the West who are rushing upon us and breaking our society to pieces, and we saw that in those nations there were other centres of association, other means of uniting together. However imperfectly we began to seize upon them and try to use them, our life in the nineteenth century was a weak and feeble life. It had no ideals, no mighty impulses behind to drive or uplift it. It was bewildered and broken by the forces that came upon it; it did not know how to move and in what direction to move. It tried to take whatever it could from the life of the rulers. It strove to take their political associations and develop that principle of association. But our political associations had a feeble life bound together only by a few common interests which by ineffective means they tried to establish or protect. Political association among us led to very little action, for it was an association which looked mainly to others for help and did not look to the sources of strength within. These and other kinds of associations

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which we then tried to form tended mainly in one direction. They were institutions for the exchange of thought, associations for the spread of knowledge, by which we instinctively but imperfectly tried to encourage and express the growing idea that was within us. This was the one real value of most of our political associations. Then there came the flood of national life, the mighty awakening which appeared first in Bengal. The principle of association began to take a new form, it began to assume a new life. It no longer remained a feeble instrument for the expression of the growing idea within us, it began to become an instrument indeed. It began to become a power. How did this new kind of association grow and to what objects did it address itself? The movement was not planned by any human brain, it was not foreseen by any human foresight. It came of itself, it came as a flood comes, as a storm comes. There had been slow preparations which we did not institute or understand. These preparations were mainly among the young men, the rising generation, the hope of India. There the spirit first awoke. At first it was not what we would call an association; it was only a temporary union of young men for a temporary cause. They called themselves by a name which has since become terrible to many of our friends of the Anglo-Indian Press. They called themselves volunteers. For what did they volunteer? They volunteered for service to the representatives of the nation who came together to deliberate for the good of the people. This is how it first came, as an idea of service, the idea of service to those who worked for the motherland. Out of that grew the idea of service to the Mother. That was the first stage and the root from which it grew into our political life. Then there was another stream which rose elsewhere and joined the first. Our Anglo-Indian brothers to whom we owe so much and in so many ways, did us this service also that they always scoffed at us as weaklings, men who were doomed to perpetual slavery and had always been a race of slaves because the people of Bengal had no martial gift, because they are not physically strong, because whoever chooses to strike them can strike and expect no blow in return. Therefore they were unfit for self-government, therefore they must remain slaves for ever.

Our Anglo-Indian friends do not proclaim that theory now. They have changed their tone. For the spirit of the nation could bear the perpetual reproach no longer, the awakening Brahman within our young men could bear it no longer. Associations grew up for physical exercise and the art of self-defence and grew into those Samitis which you have seen flourishing and recently suppressed. We were determined to wash the blemish away. If this was the blemish, to be weak, if this was the source of our degradation we determined to remove it. We said, "In spite of our physical weakness we have a strength within us which will remove our defects. We will be a race of brave and strong men. And that we may be so, we will establish everywhere these associations for physical exercise." That, one would think, was an innocent object and had nothing in it which anyone could look upon with suspicion. In fact we never thought that we should be looked upon with suspicion. It is the Europeans who have trumpeted physical culture as a most valuable national asset, the thing in which the English-speaking nations have pre-eminently excelled and which was the cause of their success and energy. That was the second seed of association.

There was a third seed and it was the thing for which our hearts yearned, the impulse towards brotherhood. A new kind of association came into being. That was the association which stood by labour and service and self-sacrifice, whose object of existence was to help the poor and nurse the sick. That was the flowering out of the Hindu religion. That was what Swami Vivekananda preached. That was what Aswini Kumar Dutta strove to bring into organised existence. That was what the Ramakrishna Mission, the Little Brothers of the Poor at Barisal tried to effect. This was the third way in which the new association established itself, the third seed of union, the third stream of tendency seeking fulfilment. All these streams of tendency came together, they united themselves and have been in their broad united purifying current the glory of our national life for the last three years. These Samitis of young men by labour, by toil for the country, worship of the motherland held themselves together and spread the habit of association and the

growth of brotherhood over the land. That is their spirit and ideal and that the way in which these associations have been established.

These are the associations which have now been crushed out of existence under a charge which cannot be and has not been maintained, a charge which has been disproved over and over again. It is a monstrous charge. The charge is that these associations are associations of hatred and violence, associations for rebellion and dacoity. That is the charge under which these associations have been suppressed. I have come recently back from Barisal. While I was there I heard and read something of the work of the young men's association in Barisal, the association called the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti which with its network covered the whole district of Bakarganj. This association grew out of a much smaller association started by Aswini Kumar Dutta called the Little Brothers of the Poor. What was the work commenced by these Little Brothers of the Poor? When epidemic broke out, when cholera appeared in all its virulence, the young men of the Barisal Brajamohan College went out in bands. They nursed the sick, they took charge of those who had been abandoned, they took up in their arms those whom they found lying on the roadside. They were not deterred in those moments by the prejudice of caste or by the difference of creed. The orthodox Brahmin took up in his bosom and nursed the Mohammedan and the Namasudra. They did not mind the epidemic or fear to catch the contagion. They took up and nursed them as brother nurses brother and thus they rescued many from the grasp of death. Aswini Kumar Dutta is in exile. How did he establish that influence which caused him to be thought dangerous? By philanthropy, by service. While ordinary colleges under the control of the Government were mere soulless machines where they cram a few packets of useless knowledge into the brain of the student, Aswini Kumar breathed his own lofty and noble soul into the Brajamohan College and made it an engine indeed out of which men were turned, in which hearts and souls were formed. He breathed his noble qualities into the young men who grew up in the cherishing warmth and sunlight of his influence. He made

his college an institution which in the essentials of education was a model for any educational institution in the world. This is how he built up his influence among the educated class. They followed him because he had shaped their souls between his hands. It is therefore that they loved him, it is therefore that they saw no fault in him. His influence among the common people was built up by love, service and philanthropy. It was out of the seed he planted that the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti grew.

What was the work of this Samiti, the existence of which could no longer be tolerated in the interests of the peace and safety of the Empire? First of all it continued with that blessed work which the Little Brothers of the Poor had begun, nursing, serving, saving the poor, the sick and the suffering. They made it their ideal to see that there was no sick man or sick woman of however low a class or depressed a caste, of whom it could be said that they went unhelped in their sickness in the Bakarganj District. That was the first crime the association committed.

The second crime was this. These young men went from house to house seeking out the suffering and the hungry when famine broke out in the country. To those who were patiently famishing they brought succour, but they did more. There were many people who belonged to the respectable classes on whom the hand of famine was laid. They would not go for help to the relief works; they would not complain and show their misery to the world. The young men of Barisal sought out these cases and secretly, without injuring the feelings of the suffering, they gave help and saved men and women from starvation. This was the second crime of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti.

Then there was another. The social life of Bengal is full of discord and quarrels. Brother quarrels with brother and quarrels with bitter hatred. They carry their feud to the law-courts; they sin against the Mother in themselves and in others; they sow the seed of lasting enmity and hatred between their families. And beyond this there is the ruin, the impoverishment of persistent litigation. The young men of the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti said, "This should not be tolerated any more. We will settle their

differences, we will make peace between brother and brother. We will say to our people, 'If there is any dispute let us try to settle it first. If you are dissatisfied with our decision you can always go to the law-courts; but let us try first.'" They tried, and hundreds of cases were settled out of court and hundreds of these seeds of enmity and hatred were destroyed. Peace and love and brotherhood began to increase in the land. This was their third crime.

Their fourth offence is a great crime nowadays. These young men had the hardihood to organise and help the progress of Swadeshi in the land. There was no violence. By love, by persuasion, by moral pressure, by appeals to the Samaj and the interests of the country, they did this work. They helped the growth of our industries; they helped it by organising the condition for their growth, the only condition in which these infant, these feeble and languishing industries can grow, the general determination to take our own goods and not the goods of others, to give preference to our Mother and not to any stranger. In no other district of Bengal, in no other part of India was Swadeshi so well organised, so perfectly organised, so peacefully and quietly organised as in Barisal. That was the last and worst crime they committed. For these crimes they have been proclaimed, they have been forbidden to exist. This Swadesh Bandhab Samiti carried organisation to a perfection which was not realised in other districts because it is not every district which can have an Aswini Kumar Dutta or a Satis Chandra Chatterji. But the same impulse was there, the same tendencies were there. I do not know any single society of the kind in Bengal which has not made some attempt to help the people in times of famine or to bring succour to the sick and suffering or to remove quarrels and discord as well as to help the growth of Swadeshi by organising that exclusive preference to which we have given the name of boycott. These were general offences, common crimes.

But there was another thing that led to the suppression. This was an association that had that very dangerous and lethal weapon called the lathi. The use of the lathi as a means of self-defence was openly taught and acquired, and if that was not

enough there was the imagination of a very highly imaginative police which saw hidden behind the lathi the bomb. Now nobody ever saw the bombs. But the police were quite equal to the occasion; they thought there might be bombs. And what if there were not? Their imagination was quite equal to realising any bomb that could not be materialised, — in baithak-khanas and elsewhere. The police suspected that the lathi was the father of the bomb. Their procedure was simple with the simplicity of the highest detective genius. When they heard of a respectable-sized dacoity, they immediately began to reason it out. They said, “Now why are there so many dacoities in the land? Obviously the lathi fathered the bomb and the bomb fathers the dacoities. Who have lathis? The Samitis. Therefore it is proved. The Samitis are the dacoits.” Our efficient police have always shown a wonderful ability. Generally when a dacoity is committed, the police are nowhere near. They have not altered that; that golden rule still obtains. They are not to be found when the dacoity takes place. They only come up when the dacoity is long over and say, “Well, this is the work of the National volunteers.” They look round to see what is the nearest Samiti and, if they find any which has been especially active in furthering Swadeshi, they say, “Here is the Samiti.” And if there is anyone who was somewhat active in connection with the work of the Samiti, they say at once, “Well, here is the man.” And if he is a boy of any age from twelve upwards, so much the better. The man or boy is instantly arrested and put into *hajat*. After rotting there some days or weeks, the police can get no evidence and the man has to be released. That does not frighten the courageous police; they immediately arrest the next likely person belonging to the Samiti. So they go on persevering until they lose all hope of finding or creating evidence. Sometimes they persist, and members of the Samitis, sometimes mere boys, have to rot in *hajat* until the case goes up to a court of justice and the judge looks at the case and after he has patiently heard it out has to ask, “Well, but where is the evidence?”

Formerly, you may remember, those of you who have lived

in the villages, that wherever there was any man in a village who was physically strong the police wrote down his name in the black book of budmashes. He was at once put down as an undesirable. That was the theory, that a man who is physically strong must be a hooligan. Physical development was thus stamped out of our villages and the physique of our villagers began to deteriorate until this movement of Akharas and Samitis came into existence to rescue the nation from absolute physical deterioration and decay. But this was an immortal idea in the mind of our police and it successfully effected transmigration. It took this form, that these Samitis encourage physical education, they encourage lathi-play, therefore they must be the nurseries of violence and dacoity and factories of bombs. Our rulers seem to have accepted this idea of the police. So perhaps this is the crime these Samitis have committed. Nothing has been proved of all this easy theorizing. It is yet to be known when and where the bomb has been associated with the work of the Samitis in Eastern Bengal. There was indeed a great dacoity in Eastern Bengal and the theory was started that it was done by one of the Samitis, but even our able detective police were unable to prove any association in that case. They did catch hold of some young men apparently on principle. There is a confidential rule, — it is confidential but the public have come to know of it, — that “somebody must be punished for the day’s work.” That was the circular of a Lieutenant-Governor of this province and the police no doubt thought it ought to be observed faithfully. So they caught hold of some likely men and the people so charged were about to be “punished for the day’s work”; but fortunately for them a judge sat upon the High Court Bench who remembered that there was such a thing as law and another thing called evidence, things whose existence was in danger of being forgotten in this country. He applied the law, he insisted on having the evidence, and you all know the result.

These associations, then, which were the expression of our growing national life and the growing feeling of brotherhood among us, did such work as I have described, and these were

the ways, guiltless of any offence in the eyes of the law, in which they did their work. Still they have been suppressed not because they were criminal, but because their existence was inconvenient. It has always been the case that when established institutions of government were unwilling to move with the times, they have looked with suspicion upon the right of association and the right of free speech, they have discouraged the right of a free Press and the right of public meeting. By destroying these instruments they have thought to arrest the progress which they did not love. This policy has never permanently succeeded, yet it is faithfully repeated with that singular stupidity which seems natural to the human race. The sword of Damocles hangs over our Press. It is nominally free, but we never know when even that simulacrum of freedom may not be taken from it. There is a law of sedition so beautifully vague and comprehensive that no one knows when he is committing sedition and when he is not. There is a law against the preaching of violence which enables a Magistrate whenever he chooses to imagine that your article advocates violence, to seize your machine. The press is taken away and of course the case goes up to the High Court, but by that time the paper suffers so much that it becomes difficult or impossible for it to rear its head again. There is a notification by which, as I pointed out in Beadon Square the other day, a meeting becomes peaceful or criminal not according to the objects or to the behaviour of the people assembled but according as the sun is up or the sun is down. There is a law of proclamation by which our right of association can be taken from us whenever they please by a stroke of the pen. The British people have certain traditions, they have certain ways of thinking and fixed ideas of which they cannot entirely get rid. It is for that reason they have not yet passed a law entirely and expressly suppressing the freedom of the Press or the right of public meeting. But even that may come. What should we do under these circumstances? We see the sword of Damocles hanging lower and lower over our heads. Our association may be declared criminal and illegal at any moment. The executive can any moment

it pleases confiscate our press. We ourselves are liable to be arrested and harassed at any moment without evidence, "on suspicion", by an irresponsible and apparently unpunishable police. Under whatever difficulties and whatever restrictions may be put upon us, we must of course go on. But the restrictions may be greater in future. The sword is hanging lower and lower over our heads. Still we cannot stop in our work. The force within us cannot be baulked, the call cannot be denied. Whatever penalty be inflicted on us for the crime of patriotism, whatever peril we may have to face in the fulfilment of our duty to our nation, we must go on, we must carry on the country's work.

After all what is an association? An association is not a thing which cannot exist unless we have a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman and a Secretary. An association is not a thing which cannot meet unless it has its fixed meeting place. Association is a thing which depends upon the feeling and the force within us. Association means unity, association means brotherhood, association means binding together in one common work. Where there is life, where there is self-sacrifice, where there is disinterested and unselfish toil, where there are these things within us, the work cannot stop. It cannot stop even if there be one man who is at all risks prepared to carry it on. It is only after all the question of working, it is not a question of the means for work. It is simply a question of working together in common in one way or in another. It is a matter of asking each other from time to time what work there is to be performed today and what is the best way of performing it, what are the best means of helping our countrymen, what work we shall have to do tomorrow or the day after and having settled that to do it at the appointed time and in the appointed way. That is what I mean when I say that it is a question of working and not of means. It is not that these things cannot be done except by the forms which our European education has taught us to value. Whatever may be the difficulties we can go on with the work. The association that we shall have will be the association of brothers who are united heart to heart, of fellow-workers joined

hand-in-hand in a common labour, the association of those who have a common motherland. It is the association of the whole country, to which every son of India and every son of Bengal ought by the duty of his birth to belong, an association which no force can break up, the association of a unity which grows closer day by day, of an impulse that comes from on high and has drawn us together in order that we might realise brotherhood, in order that the Indian nation may be united and united not merely in the European way, not merely by the common self-interest, but united by love for the common country, united by the ideal of brotherhood, united by the feeling that we are all sons of one common Mother who is also the manifestation of God in a united humanity. That is the association which has been coming into being, and has not been destroyed, since the movement came into existence. This is the mighty association, which unites the people of West Bengal with the people of East and North Bengal and defies partition, because it embraces every son of the land, — *bhai bhai ek thain*, or brother and brother massed inseparably together. This is the ideal that is abroad and is waking more and more consciously within us. It is not merely a common self-interest. It awakens God within us and says, “You are all one, you are all brothers. There is one place in which you all meet and that is your common Mother. That is not merely the soil. That is not merely a division of land but it is a living thing. It is the Mother in whom you move and have your being. Realise God in the nation, realise God in your brother, realise God in a wide human association.” This is the ideal by which humanity is moved all over the world, the ideal which is the *dharma* of the Kaliyuga, and it is the ideal of love and service which the young men of Bengal so thoroughly realised, love and service to your brothers, love and service to your Mother and this is the association we are forming, the great association of the people of Bengal and of the whole people of India. It increases and will grow for ever in spite of all the obstacles that rise in its way. When the spirit of Aswini Kumar Dutta comes into every leader of the people and the nation becomes one great Swadesh Bandhab Samiti, then it will be accomplished.

This is for ever our national ideal and in its strength our nation will rise whatever law they make; our nation will rise and live by the force of the law of its own being. For the fiat of God has gone out to the Indian nation, "Unite, be free, be one, be great."

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Opinion and Comments

### The Highest Synthesis

In the *Bengalee's* issue of the 29th June there is a very interesting article on Nationalism and Expediency, which seems to us to call for some comment. The object of the article is to modify or water the strong wine of Nationalism by a dash of expediency. Nationalism is a faith, the writer admits; he even goes much further than we are prepared to go and claims for Nationalism that it is the highest of all syntheses. This is a conclusion we are not prepared to accept; it is, we know, the highest which European thought has arrived at so far as that thought has expressed itself in the actual life and ideals of the average European. In Positivism Europe has attempted to arrive at a higher synthesis, the synthesis of humanity; and Socialism and philosophical Anarchism, the Anarchism of Tolstoy and Spencer, have even envisaged the application of the higher intellectual synthesis to life. In India we do not recognise the nation as the highest synthesis to which we can rise. There is a higher synthesis, humanity; beyond that there is a still higher synthesis, this living, suffering, aspiring world of creatures, the synthesis of Buddhism; there is a highest of all, the synthesis of God, and that is the Hindu synthesis, the synthesis of Vedanta. With us today Nationalism is our immediate practical faith and gospel not because it is the highest possible synthesis,

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but because it must be realised in life if we are to have the chance of realising the others. We must live as a nation before we can live in humanity. It is for this reason that Nationalist thinkers have always urged the necessity of realising our separateness from other nations and living to ourselves for the present, not in order to shut out humanity, but that we may get that individual strength, unity and wholeness which will help us to live as a nation for humanity. A man must be strong and free in himself before he can live usefully for others, so must a nation. But that does not justify us in forgetting the ultimate aim of evolution. God in the nation becomes the realisation of the first moment to us because the nation is the chosen means or condition through which we rise to the higher synthesis, God in humanity, God in all creatures, God in Himself and ourself.

### Faith and Analysis

Because Nationalism is the highest synthesis, it is more than a mere faith, says the *Bengalee*, it embodies an analysis, however unconscious or even inadequate, of the actual forces and conditions of life. We do not quite understand our contemporary's philosophy. An unconscious analysis is a contradiction in terms. There may be a vague and ill-expressed weighing of things in the rough, but that is not analysis. Analysis is in its nature a deliberate intellectual process; the other is merely a perception of things separately or together but without analysis. And analysis is not inconsistent with faith, but must accompany it unless the faith is merely superstition. Every faith is to a certain extent rational, it has its own analysis and synthesis by which it seeks to establish itself intellectually; so has Nationalism. What the *Bengalee* means is apparently that our faith ought not to exceed our observation; in other words, we ought to calculate the forces for and against us and if the favourable forces are weak and the unfavourable strong, we ought to move with caution and hesitation. Now that is a very different question which has nothing to do with the philosophical aspect of Nationalism but with the policy of the moment. Our position is that Nationalism

is our faith, our *dharma*, and its realisation the duty which lies before the country at the present moment. If so, it is a thing which must be done and from which we cannot turn merely because the forces are against us. If we rely on an analysis of forces, what is it we arrive at? It was only yesterday that there was a series of articles in the *Bengalee* which sought to establish the proposition that the Hindus on whom the burden of the movement has fallen are a doomed and perishing race. The writer arrived at that conclusion by patient and exhaustive analysis. What else does analysis show us? It shows us one of the most powerful Governments in the world determined not to part with its absolute control and aided for the present by a large part of one of the chief communities in India. On the other side a people unequipped, unorganised, without means or resources, divided within itself, a considerable portion of it inert, and even in the educated class a part of it unsympathetic, afraid, insisting on caution and prudence. Shall we then turn from our work? Shall we deny God? Rationality demands that we should. And if we do not, it is simply because it would be to deny God, because we have "mere" faith, because we believe that God is within us, a spiritual force strong enough to overcome all physical obstacles, weaknesses, disabilities, that God is in the movement, that He is its leader and guides it, that we belong to the world and the future and are not a spent and dying force. This faith we hold because we understand the processes by which He works and can therefore see good in evil, light in the darkness, a preparation for victory in defeat, a new life in the apparent process of disintegration.

### **Mature Deliberation**

That the movement is from God has been apparent in its history. Our contemporary does not believe that God created and leads the movement, he thinks that Sriji Surendranath Banerji created it and leads it. Only so can we explain the extraordinary statement, "every step that has been taken in construction has been preceded by mature deliberation". Is this so? Was the Swadeshi

movement preceded by mature deliberation? Everybody knows that it was scouted by our leaders and, if it had been again proposed to them a month before it suddenly seized the country, would still have been scouted. It came as a flood comes and swept away everybody in its mighty current. Was the Boycott preceded by mature deliberation? Everybody knows how it came, advocated by obscure mofussil towns, propagated by a Calcutta vernacular newspaper, forced on leaders who shrank from it with misgivings, accepted it with tremors and even then would only have used it for a short time as a means of pressure to get the Partition reversed. Everybody knows how it spread over Bengal with the impetuosity of a cyclone. Was the National Education movement preceded by mature deliberation? It came suddenly, it came unexpectedly, unwelcome to many and still damned with a halfhearted support by the leaders of the country. This is what we mean by saying that God is in the movement and leads it. It is a greater than human force, incalculable, sudden and impetuous, which has swept over the country shattering and recreating, transforming cowards into heroes, lovers of ease into martyrs, self-seekers into self-sacrificers, changing in a few years the whole outlook, temper and character of a nation.

### The Importance of the Individual

It is not surprising that with these ideas the *Bengalee* should deprecate the call for continued courage and self-sacrifice which has been made by Srijiut Aurobindo Ghose in his speech at Jhalakati, for to that speech the article is a controversial answer. The cry for expediency resolves itself into an argument for individual prudence on the part of the leaders. "It seems to us to be a fatal idea that for the progress of the nation individuals are not necessary or that particular individuals are not more necessary than other individuals." And the writer asks whether an organ is justified in cutting itself off for the sake of the organism, and immediately answers his own question partially by saying, yes, when the interests of the organism require it. The metaphor is a false one; for the individual is not an organ, he is simply

an atom, and atoms not only can be replaced but are daily replaced, and the replacement is necessary for the continued life of the organism. In times of stress or revolution the replacement is more rapid, that is all. Whatever the importance of particular individuals, — and the importance of men like Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta or Sj. Krishna Kumar Mitra is not denied by any man in his senses and was not denied but dwelt upon by the speaker at Jhalakati, — they are not necessary, in the sense that God does not depend upon them for the execution of His purposes. Our contemporary does not expressly deny God's existence or His omnipotence or His providence, and if he accepts them, he is debarred from insisting that God cannot save India without Sj. Surendranath Banerji or Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta, that He is unable to remove them and find other instruments or that their deportation or disappearance will defer the fulfilment of His purposes to future centuries.

### **The Fatalism of Action**

Our contemporary does however seem to doubt these qualities in the Ruler of all. He holds it to be a fatal doctrine "that we are none of us necessary, that everything that is happening or can happen is for the best, that God is seeking His fulfilment in inscrutable ways, that He will Himself lead the country when our prominent men are removed from the arena." This, he says, is fatalism, and by flinging the word fatalism at Sriji Aurobindo, he thinks he has damned his position. The word fatalism means usually a resigned passivity, and certainly any leader who preached such a gospel would be injuring the country. That would be indeed a fatal doctrine. But our contemporary admits that it is a fatalism of action and not of inaction he is censuring, he blames the speaker for advocating too much action and not too little. All that the "fatalism" censured means is a firm faith in the love and wisdom of God and a belief based on past experience that as it is His purpose to raise up India, therefore everything that happens or can happen just now will tend to the fulfilment of His purpose. In other words, there is

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now an upward tendency in the nation with an immense force behind it and, in such conditions, it is part of human experience that the force makes use of every event to assist the progress of the tendency until its contribution to human development is fulfilled. That is the idea of Kala or the *Zeitgeist* working, and, put religiously, it means that God being Supreme Wisdom uses everything for His supreme purposes and out of evil cometh good. This is true of our private life as every man of spiritual insight can testify; he can name and estimate the particular good which has come out of every apparent evil in his life. The same truth applies to the life of the nation.

### God's Ways

When it is said that God's ways are inscrutable, it is simply meant that man's reason, on which the *Bengalee* lays so much stress, is not always sufficient to estimate at the time the object He has in a particular dispensation of calamity or defeat. It seems to be nothing but calamity and defeat and it is only afterwards that the light of reason looking backwards is able by the illumination of subsequent events to understand His doings. Therefore we must have faith and an invincible faith or else the calamities will be too great for our courage and endurance. Is this a false doctrine or a fatal doctrine? Will the country be injured by it or helped by it? Srijiut Aurobindo never said that God would step in to fill the place of Srijiut Aswini Dutta or others removed from the arena. His position was that God has been driving on the movement from the beginning and was always the leader when they were with us and remains the leader when they are taken from us.

### Adequate Value

The *Bengalee* insists however that individual life is quite as sacred *for its own purposes* as national life for its higher purposes, that the nation must get *adequate value* for each sacrifice that the individuals make, and that great men must protect themselves from danger because their removal at a critical moment may

mean incalculable injury. We deny that individual life is as sacred as national life; the smaller cannot be so sacred as the greater, self cannot be so sacred as others, and to say that it is quite as sacred for its own purposes is to deify selfishness. Our lives are useful only in proportion as they help others by example or action or tend to fulfil God in man. It is not true that my ease is sacred, my safety is sacred, or my self-interest is sacred. This if anything is "a fatal doctrine". We do not deny that sacrifice cannot be an end to itself; no one is so foolish as to advance any such proposition. But when the *Bengalee* argues that the individual must demand adequate value for every sacrifice he makes on the national altar, it shows a complete inability to appreciate the nature of sacrifice and the laws of politics. If we had acted in this Bania spirit, we should never have got beyond the point at which we stood four years ago. It is by unhesitating, wholehearted and princely sacrifices that nations effect their liberty. It has always been so in the past and the laws of nature have not altered and will not alter to suit the calculating prudence of individuals. A great man is valuable to the nation and he should guard himself but only so far as he can do so without demoralising his followers, ceasing from the battle or abdicating his right to leadership. He should never forget that he leads and the nation looks up to him as a fountain of steadfastness, unselfish service and courage. Expediency means national expediency, not individual expediency. Even so it must be the larger expediency which makes great sacrifices and faces great risks to secure great ends. Statesmanship is not summed up in the words prudence and caution, it has a place for strength and courage.

### **Expediency and Nationalism**

We have met the arguments of the *Bengalee* at some length because we hold the teaching in this article to be perilous in its tendencies. There is plenty of selfishness, prudence, hesitating calculation in the country, plenty of fear and demoralisation in the older generation. There is no need to take thought and labour

for increasing it. Steadfastness, courage, a calm and high spirit are what we now need, wisdom to plan and act, not prudence to abstain from action. Nationalism tempered by expediency is like the French despotism tempered by epigrams. The epigrams undermined the despotism, the expediency is likely to undermine and in some quarters is visibly undermining the Nationalism. More “incalculable injury” is likely to be done by teaching of this kind at this juncture than by the removal of any great man, however pre-eminent and inspiring his greatness.

## A Task Unaccomplished

**T**HERE is no question so vital to the future of this nation as the spirit in which we are to set about the regeneration of our national life. Either India is rising again to fulfil the function for which her past national life and development seem to have prepared her, a leader of thought and faith, a defender of spiritual truth and experience destined to correct the conclusions of materialistic Science by the higher Science of which she has the secret and in that power to influence the world's civilisation, or she is rising as a faithful pupil of Europe, a follower of methods and ideas borrowed from the West, a copyist of English politics and society. In the one case her aspiration must be great, her faith unshakable, her efforts and sacrifices such as to command the admiration of the world; in the other no such greatness of soul is needed or possible; — a cautious, slow and gradual progress involving no extraordinary effort and no unusual sacrifices is sufficient for an end so small. In the one case her destiny is to be a great nation remoulding and leading the civilisation of the world, in the other it is to be a subordinate part of the British Empire sharing in the social life, the political privileges, the intellectual ideals and attainments of the Anglo-Celtic race. These are the two ideals before us, and an ideal is not mere breath, it is a thing compelling which determines the spirit of our action and often fixes the method. No policy can be successful which does not take into view the end to be attained and the amount and nature of the effort needed to effect it. The leader of industry who enters on a commercial enterprise, first looks at the magnitude of his field and intended output and equips himself with capital and plant accordingly, and even if he cannot commence at once on the scale of his ideal he holds it in view himself, puts it before the public in issuing his prospectus and estimating the capital necessary, and

all the practical steps he takes are conceived in the light of his original aspiration and ordered towards its achievement. So it is with the political ventures of a nation. To place before himself a great object and then to shrink in the name of expediency from the expenditure and sacrifice called for in its pursuit is not prudence but ineptitude. If you will be prudent, be prudent from the beginning. Fix your object low and creep towards it. But if you fix your object in the skies, it will not do to crawl on the ground and because your eyes are sometimes lifted towards the ideal imagine you are progressing while you murmur to those behind, "Yes, yes, our ideal is in the skies because that is the place for ideals, but we are on the ground and the ground is our proper place of motion. Let us creep, let us creep." Such inconsistency will only dishearten the nation, unnerve its strength and confuse its intelligence. You must either bring down your ideal to the ground or find wings or aeroplane to lift you to the skies. There is no middle course.

We believe that this nation is one which has developed itself in the past on spiritual lines under the inspiration of a destiny which is now coming to fulfilment. The peculiar seclusion in which it was able to develop its individual temperament, knowledge and ideas; — the manner in which the streams of the world poured in upon and were absorbed by the calm ocean of Indian spiritual life, recalling the great image in the Gita, — even as the waters flow into the great tranquil and immeasurable ocean, and the ocean is not perturbed; — the persistence with which peculiar and original forms of society, religion and philosophical thought were protected from disintegration up till the destined moment; — the deferring of that disintegration until the whole world outside had arrived at the point when the great Indian ideal which these forms enshrined could embrace all that it yet needed for its perfect self-expression, and be itself embraced by an age starved by materialism and yearning for a higher knowledge; — the sudden return of India upon itself at a time when all that was peculiarly Indian seemed to wear upon it the irrevocable death-sentence passed on all things that in the human evolution are no longer needed; — the miraculous

uprising and transformation of weakness into strength brought about by that return; — all this seems to us to be not fortuitous and accidental but inevitable and preordained in the decrees of an over-ruling Providence. The rationalist looks on such beliefs and aspirations as mysticism and jargon. When confronted with the truths of Hinduism, the experience of deep thinkers and the choice spirits of the race through thousands of years, he shouts “Mysticism, mysticism!” and thinks he has conquered. To him there is order, development, progress, evolution, enlightenment in the history of Europe, but the past of India is an unsightly mass of superstition and ignorance best torn out of the book of human life. These thousands of years of our thought and aspiration are a period of the least importance to us and the true history of our progress only begins with the advent of European education! The rest is a confused nightmare or a mere barren lapse of time preparing nothing and leading to nothing. This tone is still vocal in the organs of the now declining school of the nineteenth century some of which preserve their influence in the provinces where the balance in the struggle between the past and the future has not inclined decidedly in favour of the latter. In Bengal it is still represented by an undercurrent of the old weakness and the old want of faith which struggles occasionally to establish itself by a false appearance of philosophical weight and wisdom. It cannot really believe that this is a movement with a divine force within and a mighty future before it. The only force it sees is the resentment against the Partition which in its view is enough to explain everything that has happened, the only future it envisages is reform and the reversal of the Partition. Recently, however, the gospel of Nationalism has made so much way that the organs of this school in Bengal have accepted many of its conclusions and their writings are coloured by its leading ideas. But the fundamental idea of the movement as a divine manifestation purposing to raise up the nation not only for its own fulfilment in India but for the work and service of the world and therefore sure of its fulfilment, therefore independent of individuals and superior to vicissitudes and difficulties, is one which they cannot yet grasp. It is a sentiment which has been

growing upon us as the movement progressed, but it has not yet been sufficiently put forward by the organs of Nationalism itself, partly because the old idea of separating religion from politics lingered, partly because the human aspects of the Nationalist faith had to be established before we could rise to the divine. But that divine aspect has to be established if we are to have the faith and greatness of soul which can alone help us in the tremendous developments the signs of the time portend. There is plenty of weakness still lingering in the land and we cannot allow it to take shelter under the cry of expediency and rationality and seek to kill the faith and force that has been born in the hearts of the young. The *Karmayogin* has taken its stand on the rock of religion and its first object will be to combat these reactionary tendencies and lead the nation forward into the fuller light for which the *Bande Mataram* and other organs of the new faith only prepared. The gospel of Nationalism has not yet been fully preached; its most inspiring tenets have yet to be established not only by the eloquence of the orator and inspiration of the prophet but by the arguments of the logician, the appeal to experience of the statesman and the harmonising generalisations of the scientist.

## Mr. Mackarness' Bill

WE FIND in *India* to hand by mail last week the full text of Mr. Mackarness' speech in introducing the Bill by which he proposes to amend the Regulation of 1818 and safeguard the liberties of the subject in India. We are by no means enamoured of the step which Mr. Mackarness has taken. We could have understood a proposal to abolish the regulation entirely and disclaim the necessity or permissibility of coercion in India. This would be a sound Liberal position to take, but it would not have the slightest chance of success in England and would be no more than an emphatic form of protest not expected or intended to go farther. British Liberalism is and has always been self-regarding, liberal at home, hankering after benevolent despotism and its inevitable consummation in dependencies. To ask Liberal England to give up the use of coercion in emergencies would be to ask it to contradict a deep-rooted instinct. We could have understood, again, a Bill which while leaving the Government powers of an extraordinary nature to deport the subject, under careful safeguards, in unusual and well-defined circumstances and for no more than a fixed period, would yet leave the aggrieved subject an opportunity after his release of vindicating his character and, if it appeared that he had been deported unwarrantably and without due inquiry or in spite of complete innocence, of obtaining fitting compensation. Such an act would meet both the considerations of State and the considerations of justice. It would leave the Government ample power in emergencies but would take from it the freedom to deport out of caprice, panic or unscrupulous reactionism. Deportation would then be a rare act of State necessity, not an autocratic *lettre de cachet* used to bolster up injustice or crush all opposition to the continuance of autocratic absolutism. Mr. Mackarness' Bill seems to us to leave the essence of deportation just where it was

before. The changes made are purely palliative and palliative not of the unjust, irritating and odious character of the measure but of the apparent monstrosity of deporting a man without even letting him or his friends or the world know what charge lay against him or whether any charge lay against him. It is this which gives an ultra-Russian character to the Regulation and makes the Liberal conscience queasy. The proposed changes are a salve to that conscience, not a benefit to the victim of deportation. It makes his position, if anything, worse. It is bad to be punished without any charge, it is worse to be punished on a charge which you are debarred to all time from disproving.

There are three changes which the Bill contemplates. Instead of being able to confine a man until farther orders the Viceroy has to renew his sanction every three months, a change which may have some deterrent effect on a Viceroy with a Liberal conscience but to others will mean merely a quarterly expenditure of a drop of ink and a few strokes of the pen. Another and more important change is the provision that, to qualify for deportation, "a British subject must be reasonably suspected of having been guilty of treasonable practices or of a crime punishable by law, being an act of violence or intimidation and tending to interfere with or disturb the maintenance of law and order". "That" thinks Mr. Mackarness "insures in the first place that a man must have been guilty of some definite offence. At any rate it is intended to provide for that." Unfortunately the intention is all, there is no real provision for carrying it out, except the clause that the warrant shall contain a definite statement of the character of the crime. How will this clause help the alleged intention of the Bill? It is only the character of the crime that has to be defined and, if the authorities relying on a Mazarul Haq or a Rakhal Laha frame a charge say against Srijut Surendranath Banerji of waging war or abetting or conspiring to wage war or financing unlawful assemblies and incontinently deport him, would the Liberal conscience be satisfied? Or would it be possible for the Moderate leader to meet this charge, however definite in character? It is evident that to carry out the "intention" of the Bill it would be necessary to name the specific act or acts which constitute the

offence and the time and circumstances of commission, for it is only a precise accusation that can be met. Even if the charge be precise in its terms, Mr. Mackarness' Bill provides no redress to the deportee. All that he can do is to submit a "representation" to the officials who have deported him. Those who know the ways of the bureaucrat can tell beforehand the inevitable answer to such representations, "The Government have considered your representation and see no cause to alter the conclusions they had arrived at upon sufficient and reliable information." So the deportation will stand, the charge will stand and the last condition of the deportee will be worse than his first. The only advantage the Bill will secure is the greater opportunities for effective heckling in the House of Commons if facts can be secured which throw doubt on the charge; but the Government has always the answer that its evidence is reliable and conclusive but for reasons of State policy it is not advisable to disclose either its nature or its sources, and the relics of the Liberal conscience will be satisfied. As things stand the deportations have made even some Imperialistic consciences uneasy and that advantage will be lost under the new Bill.

Mr. Mackarness has admitted that the regulations are absolutely hateful and he would prefer to propose their entire abolition if such a proposal had any chance of acceptance by a British House of Commons. His amendments will not make them less hateful, they will only make them less calmly absurd. That is a gain to the Government, not to us or to justice. The only provisions that would make deportation a reasonable though still autocratic measure of State would be to allow the Viceroy to deport a person, stating the charge against him, for a period of not more than six months and oblige the Government to provide the deportee on release with full particulars as to the nature of the information on which he was deported, so that he might seek redress against malicious slander by individuals or, if it were considered impolitic to disclose the sources of information, for wanton and arbitrary imprisonment by the authorities. The measure would still be oppressive but it would then give some chance to an aggrieved and innocent man, so

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long as a sense of justice and some tradition of independence still linger in the higher tribunals of the land. Such a measure would have been a moderate measure and would have left the essential absolutism of Government in India unchanged. But even to this the Bill does not rise. It is noticeable that the only Irish Nationalist whose name was on the Bill repudiated it as soon as he heard Mr. Mackarness' speech, on the ground that he had been under the impression that the Bill went much farther than was now stated. The other names were those of British Liberals or Conservatives. This is significant of the difference between the sympathy we may expect even from conscientious English Liberals and the real fellow-feeling of a Nationalist who has himself known what it is to live under the conditions of bureaucratic coercion. Mr. Mackarness has fought the cause of the deportees in the spirit of genuine Liberalism, but his Bill is a concession to that watery British substitute for it which is only Imperialism afraid of its convictions.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Yoga and Human Evolution  
The Katha Upanishad I.1

## Kumartuli Speech

**B**ABU Aurobindo Ghose rose amidst loud cheers and said that when he consented to attend the meeting, he never thought that he would make any speech. In fact, he was asked by the organisers of the meeting simply to be present there. He was told that it would be sufficient if he came and took his seat there. Now he found his name among the speakers. The Chairman of the meeting, whose invitation was always an order, had called upon him to speak.

He had two reasons as to why he ought not to speak. The first was that since he was again at liberty to address his countrymen he had made a good many speeches and he had exhausted everything that he had to say and he did not like to be always repeating the same thing from the platform. He was not an orator and what he spoke was only in the hope that some of the things he might say might go to the hearts of his countrymen and that he might see some effect of his speeches in their action. Merely to come again and again to the platform and the table was not a thing he liked. Therefore he preferred to see what his countrymen did.

Another reason was that unfortunately he was unable to address them in their mother language and therefore he always felt averse to inflict an English speech on a Bengali audience.

That evening he wished to speak only a few words because he owed an explanation to his friends. The form that his activities had taken after he had come from jail had disappointed a great many.

There was first a great friend of his own and India's who lived in Hare Street — (*laughter*) — and he was very much

*Delivered at Kumartuli Park, Calcutta, on 11 July 1909. Text published in the Bengalee on 13 July and reproduced in the Karmayogin on 14 August.*

disappointed by the form of his (the speaker's) activities. So great was this friend's anxiety for the Indians that that anxiety had cost him Rs. 15,000. (*A voice: "Another Rs. 7,500 as costs."*) In his anxiety to help the Indians he followed the ancient maxim that truth meant only whatever was for the good of others. Unfortunately the judge would not take that large view of the matter. And so our friend was silently suffering. (*A voice: "Passive resistance." Laughter*) His friend said that he had heard that S. J. Aurobindo Ghose had promised to devote himself to literature and religion, and it was strange that Mr. Ghose should go to Jhalakati and make speeches on Swadeshi and boycott.

He (the speaker) was devoting himself to literature and religion. He was writing as he wrote before on Swaraj and Swadeshi, and that was a form of literature. He was speaking on Swaraj and Swadeshi and that was part of his religion. (*Cheers*)

Another quarter he had disappointed was the police. (*Laughter*) He had received a message from them saying that he was opening his mouth too much. He gave an interview to a press representative and told him something mainly about the food and accommodation in the Government Hotel at Alipore. (*Laughter*) He was immediately informed that that was a great indiscretion on his part and that it would bring trouble on him. When he went to Jhalakati the attentions of the police pursued him. They told the Barisal people and the local merchants that if he (the speaker) was taken there the District Conference would be stopped. They got the answer that that was not in the people's hands, but the coming of Aurobindo Ghose was in their hands and Aurobindo Babu would come whatever the consequences to the Conference. And the Conference did take place. After his return he was again informed that he was qualifying for deportation—his fault was that he was appearing too much in public meetings. Some of the best loved workers in the country had already been deported and the first reason alleged was that they had been financing assassination and troubling the peace of the country. When the Government in Parliament were heckled out of that position, it escaped as if by accident

from one of the members that one very important reason for the deportation was that the deportees had taken part in the Swadeshi agitation. This was borne out by the suggestion he had received, and it seemed that it was by supporting the Swadeshi that they laid themselves open to deportation. Now, he had an unfortunate temper and it was that he did not like to be intimidated. Intimidation only made him persist in doing his duty more obstinately, and if he spoke today, it was partly because of that friendly suggestion.

There were other friends who were nearer to us than those he had mentioned, but they also were dissatisfied with his activities. There was, for instance, a friend in Madras (*The Indian Patriot*) who invited him to give up politics and become a Sannyasi. This anxiety for his spiritual welfare somewhat surprised him at the time, but he was yet more surprised by the persistence of his friend's anxiety. One reason for suggesting inactivity to him was that he was imperilling his safety. That was a very singular reason to put before a public man for shirking his duty.

Another reason for his Madras friend's advice was that he (the speaker) was speaking against the reforms. It appeared that he (the speaker) was guilty of a great error in throwing a doubt on the reality of the reforms. Whenever any offer was made to the country by the officials, it was a habit of his to look at it a little closely. It was a part of English politeness, and also a principle of their commerce that when a present was given or an article sold it was put in a very beautiful case and its appearance made very attractive. But his long residence in England had led him to know that there were a kind of goods, called Brummagem goods, and that was a synonym for shoddy. He looked into the reforms and they seemed to him to belong to that class. Then there was another point. He was a little jealous of gifts from that quarter because the interests of the people and the officials were not the same. The position was such that if reforms gave any increase and enlargement of the people's rights or rather a beginning in that direction — for at present the people had no real right or share in the government — any beginning of the kind meant a shrinking of bureaucratic powers. It was not likely

that the officials would readily give up any power to which they cling. Therefore when reform was offered he always asked himself how far that was a real beginning of self-government or how far it was something given to them to draw their attention from their real path to salvation. It seemed to him that the reforms give them not the slightest real share in the government of the country, but instead they would merely throw an apple of fresh discord among them. They would only be a cause of fresh strife and want of unity. Those who are led away by the reforms would not only diminish the powers of this country but lead others into the wrong path.

Only two or three days ago, his fears were confirmed. Certain utterances had come from one from whom they were least expected—one who had served and made sacrifices for the country. He said that those who spread the gospel of Swaraj were madmen outside the lunatic asylum and those who preached passive resistance as a means of gaining Swaraj were liars who did not speak out their real thoughts to save their skin; he invited the country to denounce them as enemies of the country and of its progress and justified all that the Government had done by saying that the only attitude the Government could take was stern and heartless repression.

Well, if it were true that only fear made them take to passive resistance, if they flinched now from the boycott because some had been deported, if they ceased to proclaim the ideal of Swaraj, if they ceased to preach the boycott, then only it would be true that they had adopted an ideal that they could not reach and proclaimed means of reaching it in which they did not believe, because they were anxious to save their skin.

He had heard many warnings recently that those who persisted in public agitation would be deported. For himself, and he was not a model of courage, residence for the best part of a year in a solitary cell had been an experience which took away all the terrors of deportation. (*Cheers*) If he had ever had any fears, the kindness of the authorities in giving him that experience had cured him of them. (*Laughter*) He had found that with the ideal of Swaraj to uphold and the *mantra* of “Bande Mataram” in the

heart, there was nothing so very terrible in jail or deportation. That was the first thing he would like to impress on them as the result of his experience. Imprisonment in a righteous cause was not so terrible as it seemed, suffering was not so difficult to bear as our anticipations made it out. The prize to which they aspired was the greatest to which a nation could aspire and if a price was asked of them, they ought not to shrink from paying it.

He was not afraid of deportations and imprisonment but he was afraid of the hand which patted them on the back and the voice that soothed. The mixed policy of repression and kindness was the thing he feared most. The whip was still there uplifted though it was not just now falling upon them, but the other hand was held out to stroke the head and soothe. This offer of conciliation in one hand and the pressure of repression in the other might have the effect of slackening their efforts and bewildering their intelligence. They must not forget that nine of their most devoted workers were rotting in British jails under the name of deportation. What was the meaning of conciliation when men like Aswini Kumar Dutta, Krishna Kumar Mitra and others were taken away from them and not restored? What kind of conciliation was this which was offered us while this great wrong remained unremedied? Who could trust such a conciliation?

Let them not forget what they had set out to do when they declared the boycott. They had determined to undo the Partition of Bengal. The Partition still remained. So long as that remained, should they listen to the soothing voice? Should they give up the boycott or slacken the boycott? They had determined to revive the industries of their country. They had determined to save their countrymen from chronic starvation, but that had not yet been accomplished. Should they leave the boycott or slacken the boycott while it remained unaccomplished? Would the reforms save the country from that chronic starvation? When famine came the Government opened relief works as soon as its local officials could bring themselves to acknowledge that there was a famine in the land. That saved a number of lives, but it did not save us from the misery, the mortality, the thousands of

ruined homes. That did not strike at the root of the chronic starvation and famine; Swadeshi and boycott alone could strike at the root. So long as the exploitation of the country by foreign trade remained, would they injure their country by giving up or slackening the boycott? Would they be faithful to the country if under such circumstances they were ready to listen to the soothing voice? If they did that, it would be because they could not bear the sufferings and pay the price of raising up their country and they would prove themselves unworthy of the freedom to which they aspired. The time was a critical one and when the question was once more put to them they must always be ready to answer.

The 7th of August was very near. It was the birthday of the boycott, the birthday of the new spirit in India.

It was not much they had to do. Only once more to utter the sacred *mantra* of “Bande Mataram”, once more to declare that India was not lifeless, that Bengal was faithful to the vow she had made. He waited to see what would happen on that date in Bengal, whether they would attend in their hundreds or in their thousands or in their tens of thousands. It was Bengal on which the burden of the struggle fell because she first had preached the Gospel and she first had had the courage to bear suffering for the Gospel. Therefore God had given them the privilege to bear the greater part of the suffering. By so doing He had shown a great love towards Bengal. The fate of India was with the Bengalis. As they answered the question put to them, the future would be determined. It was not the first time the question had been put or the last time it would be put, for it was not the crisis of a moment but a protracted struggle. The question was with them always and every moment their responsibility for answering it in the right sense remained with them. But especially on such a day as the 7th of August the responsibility was great. He waited to see what would be the answer to the question.

But even if the response were less than he expected, even if the demoralisation he had heard of were real and there were a shrinkage in the numbers that attended, that would not discourage him.

So long as in this country there were a few who had the courage of their faith, so long as there were even a few who were ready to proclaim their faith and live it, there was no fear for the ultimate triumph of the faithful.

It is described in the Christian Bible how the cult of the true faith was almost extinguished by persecution and all Israel turned from Jehovah to foreign idols, and even the chief prophet of the faith thought himself alone and hid his head. God called to him to go forth and strive with the priests of Baal. "Always," He said, "in the nation I have chosen there are some who confess me and now too in this nation there are seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So always in this Bengal which God had chosen there would always be several thousands who would be true to the faith and never bow the knee to false gods. If the voices that proclaimed it were silenced, if the organisers were taken away, others would rise in their place; if those were taken, still others would come, if few, yet faithful. Some would always be left who would not be afraid to utter the name of their Mother. Some would still preserve the faith and preach the Gospel; theirs was the blood of Raktabij. (*Laughter and cheers*) For their action sprang from no passing or material interest but from something that was imperishable and perennial. It was something which the fire could not burn and the sword could not kill, the winds of repression could not wither and all the waters could not drown. For all that there was a great importance in the nation's response on the 7th of August. On our action now it depended whether salvation came swiftly or were put off and the struggle and suffering prolonged for decades.

On their fidelity to Swadeshi, to boycott, to passive resistance rested the hope of a peaceful and spiritual salvation. On that it depended whether India would give the example unprecedented in history of a revolution worked out by moral force and peaceful pressure. For on the 7th August the strength of the nation would be measured, not the numerical strength, but the moral strength which was greater than anything physical. He appealed to the audience to see that no one of the thousands assembled remained absent on that day.

They must remember that it was a day of worship and consecration, when the Mother looked upon her assembled children. She would ask on this 7th of August how many were faithful to her and whether after her centuries of affliction she had still years of suffering to endure, or by the love and strength of her children might expect the approaching hour of her felicity. If they were unfaithful now let them remember to whom they would be unfaithful, — to themselves, to their vows, to the future of their country, to God, to their Mother.

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## Facts and Opinions

### An Unequal Fight

Our controversy with the *Bengalee* is like a conflict between denizens of two different elements. Not only has our contemporary the advantage of prompt reply, but he has such a giant's gulp for formulas, such a magnificent and victorious method of dealing with great fundamental questions in a few sentences, such a generous faculty for clouding a definite point with sounding generalisations that he leaves us weak and gasping for breath. However in our own feeble way we shall try to deal with the several points he has raised. Their importance must be our excuse for the length of our reply. One great difficulty in our way is that our contemporary for the convenience of his argument chooses to attribute to us the most ridiculous opinions born out of his own prolific brain and generous facility in reading whatever he chooses into other people's minds. He thinks, for instance, that by seeing a special manifestation of Divine Power and Grace in a particular movement we mean to shut God out from all others. This is a fair sample of the "inconsistencies" which the *Bengalee* is always finding in his own brain and projecting into ours. If we have to guard ourselves at every point against such gratuitous misconceptions, argument becomes impossible. Neither space nor patience will allow of it.

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## God and His Universe

The *Bengalee* takes as its fundamental position that God is Absolute, Eternal and Universal in all movements and not limited to any particular. Very true, but a vague statement of abstract truth like this leads nowhere beyond itself. What are the concrete implications in this generalisation? God is not only the Absolute, Eternal and Universal in His own essence, but He manifests in the relative, transient and particular. The Absolute is an aspect of Him necessary for philosophical completeness; but if He were only Absolute, then this phenomenal world would be only Maya, God *akarta* and all action purely illusory. If He were only Eternal we might regard this world as something not full of Him, but a separate creation which may or may not be subject to His immediate action. It is because He is the Universal that the clarified vision sees Him in every being and every activity. As the Absolute He stands behind every relative, as the Eternal He supports every transient and assures the permanence of the sum of phenomena; as the Universal He manifests Himself in every particular.

## The Scientific Position

Still, there is the question, how does He manifest Himself? There is a school which holds that He has once for all manifested Himself in certain eternal and universal laws and has no other connection with the universe. This was the attitude definitely taken by the *Indian Social Reformer* when it ridiculed S. J. Aurobindo Ghose's Uttarpara speech. God does not speak to men through their inner selves in Yoga or otherwise, there is no way of communion between Him and humanity, there is no special action of His power or grace anywhere. He speaks to men only through His laws; in other words, He does not speak to them at all. He does not act personally, He acts through His laws; in other words, He does not act at all, His laws act. This is an intelligible position and it contains the whole real quarrel

between Science and Religion. Science does not as yet recognise God. Taking its stand on the material senses and logical argument from external phenomena it demands proof before it will admit His existence. It sees plenty of proof of Shakti, of Prakriti, of Nature; it sees none of the Purusha or any room for His existence. If He exists at all, it must be as an Impersonal Being immanent in but different from Force and Energy and Himself inactive; but even of this there is no proof. Religion holds that God is not only impersonal but personal, not only Purusha but Prakriti, not only Being but Shakti; He is all. For the proof of its position Religion appeals to something higher than logic or the senses, to spiritual experience and the direct knowledge drawn from the secret discipline it has developed in most parts of the world.

### **Force Universal or Individual**

It is not clear whether our contemporary recognises any personality in its Universal God or only recognises Him in all movements as natural Law. We hold that He manifests Himself in particulars not as Law, which is only a generalisation of the methods by which He acts, but as Shakti working for the Purusha. He puts Himself as force, energy, motive-power into every particular. It is perfectly true that every particular contains Him, but there are differences in the force of His manifestation. This is obvious in individuals. The strength of every particular individual is the strength of God and not his own, because every particular strength is merely a part of the universal force and it is really the universal force and not the individual strength that is acting. But in living beings, when consciousness has become separate, the individual is allowed to suppose himself to be strong in his own strength. He is not really so. God gave the strength and He can take it away. He gave it power to act and He can baffle its action of the fruits the individual sought and turn it to quite other results. This is so common an experience that we do not see how any man with the power of introspection can deny it. Only at ordinary times, when things seem to be

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moving according to our calculations, we forget it, but on certain occasions He manifests Himself with such force either in events or in our own actions that unless we are blinded by egoism or by infatuation we are compelled to perceive the universality of the force that is acting and the insignificance of the individual. So also there are particular movements in particular epochs in which the Divine Force manifests itself with supreme power shattering all human calculations, making a mock of the prudence of the careful statesman and the scheming politician, falsifying the prognostications of the scientific analyser and advancing with a vehemence and velocity which is obviously the manifestation of a higher than human force. The intellectual man afterwards tries to trace the reasons for the movement and lay bare the forces that made it possible, but at the time he is utterly at fault, his wisdom is falsified at every step and his science serves him not. These are the times when we say God is in the movement, He is its leader and it must fulfil itself however impossible it may be for man to see the means by which it will succeed.

### Faith and Deliberation

The next point is the question of mature deliberation. The *Bengalee* here tries to avoid confession of its error by altering the meaning of language. The mature deliberation of which it spoke applies only to particular acts and, even then, it was not one man or a dozen but the whole self-conscious part of the country which took part in these mature deliberations. The facts do not square with this modified assertion. The majority even of the particular steps taken in pursuance of the ideas which swept over the country were not taken in pursuance of mature deliberation but were the result in some men of a faith which defied deliberation and in others of a yielding to the necessity of the movement. The National Council of Education came into existence because S. Subodh Chandra Mallik planked down a lakh of rupees and was followed by the zamindar of Gauripur, an act of faith, because the Rangpur schoolboys and their guardians refused to go back on their action in leaving the Government

school and established a school of their own, also an act of faith, and because some leading men of the country recognised that something must be done on the spot to prevent the honour of the nation being tarnished by abandonment of this heroic forlorn hope while others thought it a good opportunity to materialise their educational crotchets. Was this mature deliberation or a compound of faith, idealism and risky experiment? The Boycott came into existence because of the wrath of the people against the Partition and the vehement advocacy of a Calcutta paper which, supported by this general wrath, bore down the hesitations of the thinkers, the politicians and the economists. Almost every step towards Swadeshi, every National school established was an act of faith in the permanence of the movement, a faith not justified by previous experience. These were acts of boldness, often of rashness, not of mature deliberation. Mature deliberation implies that having consulted the lessons of past experience and weighed the probabilities of the future and the possibilities of the present, we take the step which seems most prudent and likely to bring about sure results. The Bombay mill-owners deliberated maturely when they said, "This movement born of a moment's indignation will pass like the rest; go to, let us raise our prices and make hay while the sun shines." The leaders deliberated maturely when they said, "The rush towards National Education will not last and if encouraged it will mean the destruction of private institutions and the payment of a double tax for education." So they stopped the students' strike, withheld their moral support and by this mature deliberation put, like the Bombay mill-owners, almost insuperable obstacles in the way of the movement. It was the unconsciously prepared forces in the country that made their way in spite of and not because of the mature deliberation. It was a minority convinced of the principles of self-help and passive resistance, full of faith, careless of obstacles, believing in the force of ideas, and not the whole self-conscious portion of the country, which mainly contributed, by its eloquence, logic, consistency, self-sacrifice and the impact of its energy on the maturely-deliberating majority, to the permanence of the movement. These are the facts.

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As for the conclusion from them we never made the absurd statement evolved out of the *Bengalee's* imagination that God is everywhere except in the conscious and deliberate activities of men. What we say and hold to is that the Divine force manifests itself specially when it effects mighty and irresistible movements which even the ignorance and egoism of man is obliged to recognise as exceeding and baffling his limited wisdom and his limited strength.

### Our "Inconsistencies"

A third point is the proposition that out of evil cometh good and that everything that happens or can happen is for the best. Here our contemporary finds an inconsistency, for did we not say that *just now* everything works for the upraising of India because there is an upward trend which all forces assist. "Curiously enough," he says, "the writer thinks the two propositions identical." Curiously enough, we do. We say that just now India is being raised up and everything tends to God's purpose in raising her up, even calamity, even evil, even error. He uses them for His purpose and out of evil bringeth good. We said "just now", because it is not true that God has always raised up India and always there has been an upward trend; sometimes He has cast her down, sometimes there has been a downward trend. Even that was for the good of India and the world as we shall take occasion to show. Where then is the limitation or the inconsistency? The limitation in the phrase "just now" applies to the upward trend, to the particular instance and not to the principle that out of evil cometh good, which is universal and absolute.

### Good out of Evil

It is strange to find a philosopher like our contemporary parading in this twentieth century the ancient and hollow platitude that such a doctrine, however true, ought not to be applied to individual conduct because it will abrogate morality and personal responsibility. This is a strange answer, too, to an argument

which simply sought to confirm the faith and endurance of our people in calamity by the belief that our confidence in our future was not mistaken and that these calamities were necessary for God's high purpose. The evil we spoke of was not moral evil, but misfortune and calamity. But we do not shrink from the doctrine that sin also is turned to His purposes and, so far as that goes, we do not see how such a doctrine abrogates morality. The wisdom and love of God in turning our evil into His good does not absolve us of our moral responsibility. Our contemporary shows this want of connection between the two positions himself when he asks whether one should not in that case play the traitor in order to assist the progress of the tendency. The gibe shows up the absurdity not of our faith but of his argument. Our selfish or sinful acts, our persistence in ignorance or perversity are for the best in this obvious sense that God makes out of them excellent material for the work He is about, which always tends to the good of humanity. The persecution of Christianity by the powers of the ancient world was utterly evil, but it was for the best; without it there could not have been that noble reaction of sublime and exalted suffering which finally permeated the human mind with the impulse of sacrifice for high ideals, and by introducing a mental soil fit for the growth of altruism sowed the seeds of love, sweetness and humanity in that hard selfish lust-ridden European world. The *Bengalee* no doubt would have counselled the Christian martyrs not to be so rash and unreasoning but to demand from God a balance of profit and loss for each individual sacrifice and only after mature deliberation decide whether to obey the voice of God in their conscience or offer flowers to Venus and divine homage to Nero.

### Loss of Courage

But the question of self-sacrifice needs separate handling and we have not the space to deal with it in this issue as its importance deserves. The *Bengalee* counters our suggestion about the superfluity of prudence and the instinct of self-preservation at the present moment by the assertion that there is an excess

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of unreasoning rashness. That is a question of standpoint and vocabulary. But when the *Bengalee* goes on to say that when evil results ensue from their imprudence the rash and unreasoning lose heart and become unbelievers, we have a right to ask to whom the allusion is directed. In the young, the forward, the men stigmatised by the *Bengalee* as rash and unreasoning we find no loss of courage or faith but only a hesitation on what lines to proceed now that the old means have been broken by repressive laws. Among the older men we do indeed find a spirit of depression for which we blame those who in the face of the repressions drew in their horns out of mature deliberation and allowed silence and inactivity to fall on the country. But these were never men of faith. We who believe in God's dispensations have not lost heart, we have not become unbelievers. Our cry is as loud as before for Swaraj and Swadeshi; our hearts beat as high.

### **Intuitive Reason**

However there is hope for our contemporary. He has admitted in his idea of rationality the place of the intuitive reason, and it is precisely the intuitive reason, speaking oftenest in the present stage of human development through the inspiration that wells up from the heart, which is the basis of faith and exceeds the limits of the logical intellect. For this is the highest form of faith when the intuitive reason speaks to the heart, captures the emotions and is supported by reflection. This is the faith that moves mountains and there is nothing higher and more powerful except the yet deeper inner knowledge.

## Exit Bibhishan

**M**R. GOPAL Krishna Gokhale has for long been the veiled prophet of Bombay. His course was so ambiguous, his sympathies so divided and self-contradictory that some have not hesitated to call him a masked Extremist. He has played with Boycott, "that criminal agitation"; he has gone so far in passive resistance as to advocate refusal of the payment of taxes. Eloquent spokesman of the people in the Legislative Council, luminous and ineffective debater scattering his periods in vain in that august void, he has been at once the admired of the people and the spoilt darling of the *Times of India*, the trusted counsellor of John Morley and a leader of the party of Colonial self-government. For some time the victim of his own false step during the troubles in Poona he was distrusted by the people, favoured by the authorities, some of whom are said to have canvassed for him in the electoral fight between him and Mr. Tilak. The charge of cowardice which he now hurls against his opponents was fixed on his own forehead by popular resentment. So difficult was his position that he refrained for some years from speech on the platform of the Congress. But his star triumphed. His own opponents held out to him the hand of amity and re-established him in the universal confidence of the people. Gifted, though barren of creative originality, a shrewd critic, a splendid debater, a good economist and statistician, with the halo of self-sacrifice for the country over his forehead enringed with the more mundane halo of Legislative Councillorship, petted by the Government, loved by the people, he enjoyed a position almost unique in recent political life. He was not indeed a prophet honoured in his own country and black looks and black words were thrown at him by those who distrusted him, but throughout the rest of India his name stood high and defied assailants.

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In his recent speech at Poona the veiled prophet has unveiled himself. The leader of the people in this strange and attractive double figure is under sentence of elimination and the budding Indian Finance Minister has spoken. The speech has caused confusion and searchings of the heart among the eager patriots of the Bengal Moderate school, rejoicing in the ranks of Anglo-India. The *Bengalee* labours to defend the popular cause without injuring the popular leader, the *Statesman* rejoices and holds up the speech even as Lord Morley held up the certificate to him as the Saviour of India for the confusion of rebels in Parliament and outside it. Covered by a reprobation of the London murders it is a sweeping, a damning philippic against the work of the last four years and a call to the country to recede to the position occupied by us previous to 1905. It is a forcible justification of repression and a call to Government and people to crush the lovers and preachers of independence. The time at which it comes lends it incalculable significance. The Morleyan policy of crushing the new spirit and rallying the Moderates has now received publicly the imprimatur of the leading Moderate of western India and that which was suspected by some, prophesied by others at the time of the Surat Congress, the alliance of Bombay Moderatism with officialdom against the new Nationalism, an alliance prepared by the Surat sitting, cemented by subsequent events, confirmed by the Madras Convention, is now unmasked and publicly ratified.

The most odious part of the Poona speech is that in which Mr. Gokhale justifies Government repression and attempts to establish by argument what Mr. Norton failed to establish by evidence, the theory that Nationalism and Terrorism are essentially one and under the cloak of passive resistance, Nationalism is a conspiracy to wage war against the King. This proposition he seeks to establish by implication with that skill of the debater for which he is justly famous. By taking the London murders as the subject-matter for the exordium of a speech directed against the forward party he introduces the element of prejudice from the very outset. After reviewing past political activities he takes up the clue he had thus skilfully thrown down and pursues it.

In his view, the ideal of independence was the beginning of all evil. The ideal of independence is an insane ideal; the men who hold it even as an ultimate goal, Tilak, Chidambaram, Aswini Kumar, Manoranjan, Bipin Chandra, Aurobindo, are madmen outside the lunatic asylum. Not only is it an insane ideal, it is a criminal ideal. "It should be plain to the weakest understanding that *towards the idea of independence the Government could adopt only one attitude, that of stern and relentless repression*, for these ideas *were bound to lead to violence* and as a matter of fact they had, *as they could all see*, resulted in violence." Farther, in order to leave no loophole of escape for his political opponents, he proceeds to assert that they were well aware of this truth and preached the gospel of independence knowing that it was a gospel of violence and "physical conflict with the Government". We again quote the words of the reported speech. "Some of their friends were in the habit of saying that their plan was to achieve independence by merely peaceful means, by a general resort to passive resistance. The speaker felt bound to say that such talk was ridiculous nonsense and *was a mere cloak used by these men to save their own skins*." In other words we are charged with having contemplated violence such as we all see, *viz.*, the murders in London and the assassinations in Bengal, as inevitable effects of our propaganda, and physical conflict with the Government, in other words rebellion, as the only possible means of achieving independence. We are charged with preaching this gospel of violence and rebellion while publicly professing passive resistance, with the sole motive of cowardly anxiety for our personal safety. The accusation is emphatic, sweeping, and allows of no exception. All the men of the Nationalist party revered by the people are included in the anathema, branded as lunatics and cowards, and the country is called upon to denounce them as corruptors and perturbers of youth and the enemies of progress and the best interests of the people.

Mr. Gokhale stops short of finding fault with European countries for being free and clinging to their freedom. He is good enough not to uphold subjection as the best thing possible for a

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nation, and we must be grateful to him for stopping short of the gospel of the *Englishman* whose abusive style he has borrowed. But man is progressive and it may be that Mr. Gokhale before he finishes his prosperous career, will reach the Hare Street beatitudes. At present he adopts the philosophy of his ally and teacher, Lord Morley, and wraps himself in the Canadian fur coat. The love of independence may be a virtue in Europe, it is crime and lunacy in India. Acquiescence in subjection is weakness and unmanliness in non-Indians, in this favoured country it is the only path to salvation. In the West the apostles of liberty have been prophets when they succeeded, martyrs when they failed; in this country they are corruptors and perturbers of youth, enemies of progress and their country. Mendicancy, euphoniously named co-operation, can bring about colonial self-government in India *although* there is no precedent in history, but passive resistance, although, when most imperfectly applied and hampered by terrorism from above and below, it gave the seed of free institutions to Russia, cannot bring about independence in India even if it be applied thoroughly and combined with self-help, *because* there is no precedent in history. As has often been pointed out by Nationalist writers, both mendicancy and self-help plus passive resistance are new methods in history; both are therefore experiments; but while mendicancy is an isolated experiment which has been fully tried, failed thoroughly and fallen into discredit, self-help and passive resistance are methods to which modern nations are more and more turning, but they have been as yet tried only slightly and locally. It must be admitted that in India, so tried, their only result so far has been the Morley reforms. But was it not Mr. Gokhale who to defend mendicancy declared that the book of history was not closed and why should not a new chapter be written? But the book is only open to the sacred hands of the Bombay Moderate; to the Nationalist it seems to be closed. But according to Mr. Gokhale we ought in any case to acquiesce because England has not done so badly in India as she might have done. His argument is kin to the Anglo-Indian logic which calls upon us to be contented and loyal because England is not Russia and repression here is never so savage as

repression there; as if a serf were asked to be contented with serfdom because his master is kind or else his whip does not lacerate so fiercely as the other master's next door. Mr. Gokhale cannot be ignorant that our ideal of independence has nothing to do with the badness or goodness of the present Government in its own kind. We object to the present system because it is a bureaucracy, always the most narrow and unprogressive kind of Government, because it is composed of aliens, not Indians, and subject to alien control, and most essentially because it is based on a foreign will imposed from outside and not on the free choice and organic development of the nation.

We might go on to expose the other inconsistencies and sophistries of Mr. Gokhale's speech. We might well challenge the strangeness of a sweeping and general charge of cowardice against the nation's leaders proceeding from the "broken reed" of Poona. But we are more concerned with the significance of his attitude than with the hollowness of his arguments. Lord Morley the other day quoted Mr. Gokhale's eulogium of the Asquith Government, saviours of India from chaos, as a sufficient answer to the critics of deportation. There was some indignation against Lord Morley for his disingenuousness in suppressing Mr. Gokhale's condemnation of the deportations; but it now appears that the British statesman did not make the mistake of quoting Mr. Gokhale without being sure of the thoroughness of the latter's support. As if in answer to the critics of Lord Morley Mr. Gokhale hastens to justify the deportations by his emphatic approval of stern and relentless repression as the only possible attitude for the Government towards the ideal of independence even when its achievement is sought through peaceful means. Mr. Gokhale's phrase is bold and thorough; it includes every possible weapon of which the Government may avail itself in the future and every possible use of the weapons which it holds at present. On the strength of Mr. Gokhale's panegyric Lord Morley mocked at Mr. Mackarness and his supporters as more Indian than the Indians. We may well quote him again and apply the same ridicule, the ridicule of the autocrat, to Mr. Beachcroft, the Alipur judge, who acquitted an avowed apostle of the ideal of

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independence. Mr. Gokhale, at least, has become more English than the English. A British judge, certainly not in sympathy with Indian unrest, expressly admits the possibility of peaceful passive resistance and the blamelessness of the ideal of independence. A leader of Indian Liberalism denounces that ideal as necessarily insane and criminal and the advocates of passive resistance as lunatics and hypocritical cowards, and calls for the denunciation of them as enemies of their country and their removal by stern and relentless repression. Such are the ironies born of co-operation. It is well that we should know who are our enemies even if they be of our own household. Till now many of us regarded Mr. Gokhale as a brother with whom we had our own private differences, but he has himself by calling for the official sword to exterminate us removed that error. He publishes himself now as the righteous Bibhishan who, with the Sugrives, Angads and Hanumans of Madras and Allahabad, has gone to join the Avatar of Radical absolutism in the India Office, and ourselves as the Rakshasa to be destroyed by this new Holy Alliance. Even this formidable conjunction does not alarm us. At any rate Bibhishan has gone out of Lanka, and Bibhishans are always more dangerous there than in the camp of the adversary.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Yoga and Hypnotism  
Two Pictures

## College Square Speech – 1

**I** THANK you for the kindly welcome that you have accorded to me. The time fixed by the law for the breaking up of the meeting is also at hand, and I am afraid I have disappointed one or two speakers by getting up so soon. But there is just one word that has to be spoken today.

Recently a speech has been made in the Bengal Legislative Council by the Lieutenant-Governor of this province, a speech which I think is one of the most unfortunate and most amazing that have ever been delivered by a ruler in his position. The occasion of the speech was a reference to certain murders that have recently been committed in London. Those murders have been committed by a young man with whom there has been no proof that any other man in India or in England is connected, no proof that any conspiracy has been behind him. Not only so but the Police in London have declared that so far as their evidence goes they find that the murder was dictated by personal and not political motives. That crime is still the subject of a trial which has not been closed. Was this the time, — was this the occasion for the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal to rise from his seat in the Legislative Council and practically associate the whole country with and make the whole country responsible for the crime of a single isolated youth in London? Not only so, but the Lieutenant-Governor, in referring to the crime, said that there had been plenty of denunciations in this country but those denunciations did not go far. And he wanted from us one thing more and that was co-operation. He wants co-operation from the whole community. He further saddled his request with the threat that if this co-operation were not

*Delivered at College Square, Calcutta, on 18 July 1909. Text published in the Bengalee on 20 July and reproduced in the Karmayogin on 24 July.*

obtained, steps would have to be taken in which there would be no room for nice discrimination between the innocent and the guilty.

The murders that have been committed in Bengal have been sufficiently proved by the failure of case after case to be the acts of isolated individuals. There has been only a single instance which is still *sub judice*, and even if it were fully established, it would only prove that the crime was done in one case by a small group of men. Under such circumstances what is the co-operation that the L.-G. demands from us? He will not be satisfied if we denounce and dissociate ourselves from the crime. He wants co-operation. It is at least desirable that he should name and describe the co-operation he insists on before he carries out the remarkable threat with which he has sought to enforce his demand. There has been much talk recently, in a wider sense, of co-operation. Now, gentlemen, we are a people who demand self-government. We have a government in which we are not at all associated and over which we have no control. What is the co-operation a government of this kind can really demand from us? It can only demand from us obedience to the law, co-operation in keeping the law and observing peace and order. What further co-operation can they expect from us? Even in the matter which the L.-G. has mentioned, we are at a loss to see how a people circumstanced like ourselves can help him.

Still I have a proposal to make. I think there is only one way by which these unfortunate occurrences can be stopped. The ruler of Bengal in his speech spoke in approval of a certain speech made by Mr. Gokhale at Poona recently. In that speech Mr. Gokhale declared that the ideal of independence was an ideal which no sane man could hold. He said that it was impossible to achieve independence by peaceful means and the people who advocate the peaceful methods of passive resistance are men who, out of cowardice, do not speak out the thought that is in their heart. That idea of Mr. Gokhale's has been contradicted beforehand by the Sessions Judge of Alipore and even an Anglo-Indian paper was obliged to say that Mr. Gokhale's justification

of the repressions on the ground that stern and relentless repression was the only possible attitude the Government could adopt towards the ideal of independence was absurd because the ideals and the thoughts of a nation could not be punished. This was a very dangerous teaching which Mr. Gokhale introduced into his speech, that the ideal of independence — whether we call it Swaraj or autonomy or Colonial Self-Government, because these two things in a country circumstanced like India meant in practice the same (*loud applause*), — cannot be achieved by peaceful means. Mr. Gokhale knows or ought to know that this ideal which he decries is deeply-rooted in the minds of thousands of people and cannot be driven out. He has told the ardent hearts which cherish this ideal of independence and are determined to strive towards it that their ideal can only be achieved by violent means. If any doctrine can be dangerous, if any teacher can be said to have uttered words dangerous to the peace of the country, it is Mr. Gokhale himself. (*Loud cheers*) We have told the people that there is a peaceful means of achieving independence in whatever form we aspire to it. We have said that by self-help, by passive resistance we can achieve it. We have told the young men of our country, “Build up your own industries, build up your own schools and colleges, settle your own disputes. You are always told that you are not fit for self-government. Show by example that you are fit to govern yourselves, show it by developing self-government through self-help and not by depending upon others.”

There is a second limb to that policy and it is passive resistance. Passive resistance means two things. It means first that in certain matters we shall not co-operate with the Government of this country until it gives us what we consider our rights. Secondly, if we are persecuted, if the plough of repression is passed over us, we shall meet it not by violence, but by suffering, by passive resistance, by lawful means. We have not said to our young men, “when you are repressed, retaliate;” we have said, “suffer.” Now we are told that by doing so we are encouragers of sedition and anarchism. We have been told by Anglo-Indian papers that by speaking in Beadon Square and other places on

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patriotism and the duty of suffering we encourage sedition. We are told that in preaching passive resistance we are encouraging the people to violate law and order and are fostering violence and rebellion. The contrary is the truth. We are showing the people of this country in passive resistance the only way in which they can satisfy their legitimate aspiration without breaking the law and without resorting to violence. This is the only way we can find to co-operate in maintaining peace and order.

The co-operation we expect from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and from the Government of this country in return is that they will respect the primary rights of the people of this country, they will respect the right of public meeting and the right of a free press and the right of free association. If they co-operate so far then we can assure them that this movement will advance on peaceful lines and the thing which troubles them will cease for ever. But the L.-G. says that measures will be passed which will observe no nice discrimination between the innocent and the guilty. A more cynical statement has seldom issued from a ruler in the position of Sir Edward Baker. If the threat is carried out, who will be the gainers? I do not deny that it may for a time stop our public activities. It may force the school of peaceful self-development and passive resistance to desist for a while from its activities at least in their present form. But who will gain by it? Not the Government, neither Mr. Gokhale and his school of passive co-operation. It is the very terrorists, the very anarchists, whom you wish to put down, who will gain by it. It will remove from the people their one hope, but it will give the terrorists a fresh incentive and it will teach the violent hearts, the undisciplined and ardent minds a very dangerous lesson that there is no peaceful way to the fulfilment of their aspirations and the consequence will be such as one trembles to contemplate. I trust the threat will never be carried out. I trust that the Government will be ruled by wise counsels and consider the matter more carefully. There are ominous signs and it seems as if measures were about to be passed which will put an end to the right of public meeting and the public expression of our feelings. But I trust that wiser counsels will yet prevail.

The Government should remember that it stands dissociated from the people by its very constitution. If it wants co-operation it cannot get the co-operation which is simply another name for passive obedience. That is the doctrine which is being taught today, the doctrine of the divine right of officials and the obligation on the people of passive obedience. That is a doctrine which no modern nation can accept. No modern nation can accept the extinction of its legitimate and natural hopes. Co-operation can only be given if the Government which is now alien becomes our own, if the people have a share in it, not merely in name, not merely by the right of talk in the legislative council, not merely by apparent concessions, but by getting some measure of control in the matter of legislation, in the expenditure of the taxes they are called on to pay for the maintenance of the administration, if, in short, they can be given some starting-point from which in future the Government of the country can be developed into a Government of the people. That is the only condition upon which the co-operation, of which we hear so much nowadays, can be given. Without it co-operation is a satire, it is a parody. It is the co-operation in which one side acts and the other side merely says "yes" which is demanded of us. We cannot give our sanction to such co-operation. So long as even that little of substantial self-government is not conceded to us, we have no choice but to cleave firmly to passive resistance as the only peaceful path to the realisation of our legitimate aspirations. We cannot sacrifice our country. We cannot give up the ideal that is dear to our heart. We cannot sacrifice our Mother. If you take away our primary rights all that is left for us is passive resistance and peacefully to suffer, peacefully to refuse the parody of co-operation which we are asked to give.

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Indiscretions of Sir Edward

The speech of Sir Edward Baker in the Bengal Council last week was one of those indiscretions which statesmen occasionally commit and invariably repent, but which live in their results long after the immediate occasion has been forgotten. The speech is a mass of indiscretions from beginning to end. Its first error was to rise to the bait of Mr. Madhusudan Das' grotesquely violent speech on the London murders and assume a political significance in the act of the young man Dhingra. The theory of a conspiracy behind this act is, we believe, generally rejected in England. It is not supported by a scrap of evidence and is repudiated by the London police, a much more skilful detective body than any we have in India and, needless to say, much more reliable in the matter of scrupulousness and integrity. It is the opinion of the London police that the act was dictated by personal resentment and not by political motives. It is not enough to urge in answer that the young man who committed this ruthless act himself alleges political motives. His family insist that he is a sort of neurotic maniac, and it is a matter of common knowledge that natures so disturbed often catch at tendencies in the air to give a fictitious dignity and sensational interest to actions really dictated by the exaggerated feelings common to

these nervous disorders. Madanlal Dhingra evidently considered that Sir William Curzon-Wyllie was his personal enemy trying to alienate his family and interfere with his personal freedom and dignity. To an ordinary man these ideas would not have occurred or, if they had occurred, would not have excited homicidal feelings. But in disturbed minds such exaggerated emotions and their resultant acts are only too common. Unless and until something fresh transpires, no one has a right to assume that the murder was a political assassination, much less the overt act of a political conspiracy. Anglo-Indian papers of the virulent type whose utterances are distorted by fear and hatred of Indian aspirations, may assume that of which there is no proof,— nothing better can be expected of them. But for the ruler of a province not only to make the assumption publicly but to base upon it a threat of an unprecedented character against a whole nation is an indiscretion which passes measure.

### **The Demand for Co-operation**

The second crying indiscretion in Sir Edward's speech is the extraordinary demand for co-operation which he makes upon the people of this country. It is natural that a Government should desire co-operation on the part of the people and under normal circumstances it is not necessary to ask for it; it is spontaneously given. The circumstances in India are not normal. When a Government expects co-operation, it is because it either represents the nation or is in the habit of consulting its wishes. The Government in India does not represent the nation, and in Bengal at least it has distinctly set itself against its wishes. It has driven the Partition through against the most passionate and universal agitation the country has ever witnessed. It has set itself to baffle the Swadeshi-Boycott agitation. It has adopted against that movement all but the ultimate measures of repression. Nine deportations including in their scope several of the most respected and blameless leaders of the people stand to their debit account unredressed. Even in giving the new reforms, inconclusive and in some of their circumstances detrimental to

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the best interests of the country, it has been anxious to let it be known that it is not yielding to the wishes of the people but acting on its own autocratic motion. Against such a system and principle of administration the people of this country have no remedy except the refusal of co-operation and even that has been done only within the smallest limits possible. Under such circumstances it is indeed a grotesque attitude for the ruler of Bengal to get up from his seat in the Council and not only request co-operation but demand it on pain of indiscriminate penalties such as only an autocratic government can inflict on the people under its control, and this with the full understanding that none of the grievances of the people are to be redressed. The meaning of co-operation is not passive obedience, it implies that the Government shall rule according to the wishes of the people and the people work in unison with the Government for the maintenance of their common interests. By advancing the demand in the way he has advanced it, Sir Edward Baker has made the position of his Government worse and not better.

### **What Co-operation?**

The delusion under which the Government labours that the Terrorist activities have a great organisation at their back, is the source of its most fatal mistakes. Everyone who knows anything of this country is aware that this theory is a fabrication. If it were a fact, the conspiracy would by this time have been exposed and destroyed. The assassinations have in all instances, except the yet doubtful Maniktola conspiracy now under judicial consideration, been the act of isolated individuals, and even in the Maniktola instance, if we accept the finding of the Sessions Court, it has been shown by judicial investigation that the group of young men was small and so secret in their operations that only a few even of those who lived in their headquarters knew anything of the contemplated terrorism. Under such circumstances we fail to see either any justification for so passionate a call for co-operation or any possibility of an answer from the public. All that the public can do is to express disapprobation of

the methods used by these isolated youths. It cannot turn itself into a huge Criminal Investigation Department to ferret out the half-dozen men here and there who possibly contemplate assassination and leave its other occupations and duties after the pattern of the police who in many quarters are so busy with suppressing fancied Swadeshi outrages that real outrage and dacoity go unpunished. We do not suppose that Sir Edward Baker himself would make such a demand, but if he has any other co-operation in view it would be well if he would define it before he proceeds with his strenuous proposal to strike out right and left at the innocent and the guilty without discrimination. On the other hand the Anglo-Indian papers are at no loss for the definite method of co-operation which they demand from the country on peril of "stern and relentless repression". They demand that we shall cease to practise or to preach patriotism and patriotic self-sacrifice and submit unconditionally to the eternally unalterable absolutism which is the only system of government Lord Morley will tolerate in India. That demand has only to be mentioned to be scouted.

### **Sir Edward's Menace**

The final indiscretion of Sir Edward Baker was also the worst. We do not think we have ever heard before of an official in Sir Edward's responsible position uttering such a menace as issued from the head of this province on an occasion and in a place where his responsibility should have been specially remembered. We have heard of autocrats threatening contumacious opponents with condign punishment, but even an autocrat of the fiercest and most absolute kind does not threaten the people with the punishment of the innocent. The thing is done habitually — in Russia; it has been done recently in Bengal; but it is always on the supposition that the man punished is guilty. Even in the deportations the Government has been eager to impress the world with the idea that although it is unable to face a court of justice with the "information, not evidence" which is its excuse, it had ample grounds for its belief in the

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guilt of the deportees. Sir Edward Baker is the first ruler to declare with cynical openness that if he is not gratified in his demands, he will not care whether he strikes the innocent or the guilty. By doing so he has dealt an almost fatal blow at the prestige of the Government. If this novel principle of administration is applied, in what will the Government that terrorises from above be superior to the dynamiter who terrorises from below? Will not this be the negation of all law, justice and government? Does it not mean the reign of lawless force and that worst consummation of all, Anarchy from above struggling with Anarchy from below? The Government which denies the first principle of settled society, not only sanctions but introduces anarchy. It is thus that established authority creates violent revolutions. They abolish by persecution all the forces, leaders, advocates of peaceful and rapid progress and by their own will set themselves face to face with an enemy who cannot so be abolished. Terrorism thrives on administrative violence and injustice; that is the only atmosphere in which it can thrive and grow. It sometimes follows the example of indiscriminate violence from above; it sometimes, though very rarely, sets it from below. But the power above which follows the example from below is on the way to committing suicide. It has consented to the abrogation of the one principle which is the life-breath of settled governments.

### **The Personal Result**

Sir Edward Baker came into office with the reputation of a liberal ruler anxious to appease unrest. Till now he has maintained it in spite of the ominous pronouncement he made, when introducing measures of repression, about the insufficiency of the weapons with which the Government was arming itself. But by his latest pronouncement, contradicting as it does the first principles not only of Liberalism but of all wise Conservatism all over the world, he has gone far to justify those who were doubtful of his genuine sympathy with the people. Probably he did not himself realise what a wound he was giving to his own reputation and

with it to his chances of carrying any portion of the people with him.

### **A One-sided Proposal**

A writer in the *Indian World* has been holding out the olive branch to the advanced Nationalist party and inviting them into the fold of the body which now calls itself the Congress. The terms of this desirable conciliation seem to us a little peculiar. The Nationalists are to give up all their contentions and in return the Bombay coterie may graciously give up their personal dislike of working with the Nationalist leaders. This is gracious but a little unconvincing. The only difficulty the mediator sees in the way is the constitutional point raised by a section of the Moderates against the arbitrary action of the Committee of the Convention in passing a constitution and forcing it on the delegates without submission to freely elected delegates sitting in a session of the Congress itself. The mediator proposes to get round the objection by the Bombay coterie agreeing to pass the Constitution en bloc through the Congress provided an undertaking is given by the Nationalists that they will accept bodily the whole of the Constitution and make no opposition to any of its provisions! A very remarkable proviso! The writer assumes that the Nationalists have accepted the Constitution bodily and are willing to sign the creed. We think he is in error in his assumptions. The Nationalists are not likely to give any undertaking which will abrogate their constitutional right to make their own proposals about the Constitution at the beginning or to suggest amendments to it hereafter. They will sign no creed, as it is against their principles to make the Congress a sectional body and they refuse to bind themselves to regard colonial self-government as the ultimate goal of our national development. Whatever resolutions are passed by a properly constituted Congress they will accept as the temporary opinion of the majority while reserving the right, which all minorities reserve, of preaching their own convictions. They refuse to regard the Madras Convention or the contemplated Lahore Convention as a sitting of the Congress or

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its resolutions as the will of the country. The position taken, that the Bombay coterie are in possession of the Congress and it is theirs to admit the Nationalists or not at their pleasure is one we cannot recognise. If there is to be a united Congress it must resume its life at the point where the Calcutta session broke off. All that has happened in between is a time of interregnum.

### The Only Remedy

The attempt to reunite the parties on such lines is foredoomed to failure. Nor is it likely that even if the Nationalists were entirely accommodating there would be any chance of union. The attitude of Mr. Gokhale is conclusive on this point. Not only has he definitely separated himself and his school from the advocates of Swaraj and passive resistance but he has denounced them as enemies of the country and handed them over to the “stern and relentless repression” of the authorities. The *Tribune* calls on Bengal to give up the boycott on the ground that it is no longer sanctioned by the “Congress” as it chooses to call a body which even the whole of the Moderate party were unable to join. The only remedy for the situation is for those who desire unity to rebuild the National Assembly from the bottom on the basis of provincial unity and abstention from any mutilated body Moderate or Nationalist, however august the name under which it masks its unrepresentative character, so long as it professes to speak for the nation and yet refuses to admit freely its elected representatives.

### The *Bengalee* and Ourselves

The *Bengalee* has answered our facts and opinions with its facts and comments. Unfortunately we find in our contemporary’s answer all comment and no fact. For the most part he is busy trying to prove that we were really inconsistent and contradictory, or, if he misunderstood us, it was due to our uninstructed use of language. In the first place we did not expressly say that we saw God in everything and only specially in special movements. Of

course we did not. As we pointed out we could not be always guarding ourselves against gratuitous misconceptions, and the omnipresence of God is such an obvious fact that it has not to be expressly stated. It is curious that our contemporary's powerful intelligence seems still unable to grasp the point about leadership. If the movement were the result of human calculation or guided by human calculation, or even if every constructive step were the result of mature deliberation, there would be no point in insisting that the movement was created and led (we beg pardon, we mean specially created and led,) by God and not by human wisdom. We pointed out that none of these statements could be advanced in the face of the facts, and our contemporary has not been able to meet our arguments; he has simply restated his previous unsupported assumption. Secondly, we were unfortunate enough to use in one place the word "His" where our contemporary thinks we should have used the word "that". With all submission we think our language was perfectly clear. We said His purpose and we meant His purpose, the purpose of raising up India. Then again we were unfortunate enough to indulge in an ironical repetition of our contemporary's phrase "mere" faith, within commas inverted and our contemporary with portentous seriousness insists on taking this as our own epithet and seriously meant. We have pointed out that in our idea of faith it includes the logical analysing reason, it includes experience and exceeds it. It exceeds logical reason because it uses the higher intuitive reason; it exceeds experience because experience often gives the balance of its support to one conclusion where faith using intuition inclines to the opposite conclusion.

### **God and Man**

Our contemporary does not understand why we wrote of God and the universal force or why we insisted on the special manifestation of the Divine Force as opposed to its veiled workings through human egoism. We did so because we had to oppose the excess of that very egoism. We have not risen to the heights of Monism from which he scoffs benignly at our dualism. It

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may be the final truth that there is nothing but God, but for the purposes of life we have to recognise that there is a dualism in the underlying unity. It profits nothing to say, for instance, "The Divine Force wrote two columns of Facts and Comments the other day in the *Bengalee*." God reveals Himself not only in the individual where He is veiled by ignorance and egoism, but in Himself. When the *Bengalee* sees no alternative to man's self-conscious action except unconscious action, it is under the influence of European materialism which sees only conscious creatures in an unconscious inanimate Nature. The Divine Force is not unconscious but conscious and intelligent and to see Him as a conscious power only in men is to deny Him altogether. When again our contemporary uses a misapplication of the truth of Adwaita to justify the deifying of his own reason, he is encouraging practical atheism while taking the divine name in vain. God manifests Himself in everything, He manifests Himself in our reason, therefore let us forget God and rely on our own human calculations. That is the train of argument. What is the use of relying on God? let us look to our own safety. What is the use of being brave in the hour of peril? If our leader goes, the movement stops. *Mam anusmara yudhya cha*, is the motto of the Karmayogin. God manifests Himself in the individual partially, but He stands behind the progress of the world wholly. We are bound to use our own intellects, we cannot help it if we would, but we must remember that it is a limited intellect and be prepared for the failure of our schemes and plans, for calamity, for defeat, without making these things an excuse for abandoning His work, laying our principles on the shelf or sending out a cry to discourage steadfastness and self-sacrifice. Our plans may fail, God's purpose cannot. That is why we laid so much stress on the fact that this has been a movement which, as the man in the street would say, has led itself, in which individuals have been instruments and not the real shapers and leaders. We have faith and we believe in the great rule of life in the Gita, "Remember me and fight." We believe in the mighty word of assurance to the bhakta, *Macchittah sarvadurgani matprasadat tarishyasi*, "If thou reposest thy heart and mind in Me by My grace thou shalt

pass safe through all difficulties and dangers.” We believe that the Yoga of the Gita will play a large part in the uplifting of the nation, and this attitude is the first condition of the Yoga of the Gita. When anybody tries to discourage our people in this attitude, we are bound to enter the lists against him. We recognise that to argue with those who have only opinions but no realisation is a hopeless task, since it is only by entering into communion with the Infinite and seeing the Divine Force in all that one can be intellectually sure of its conscious action. But at least we can try to remove the philosophical delusions and confusions which mislead men from the right path and veil European materialism under generalities drawn from Vedanta.

### Ourselves

In our third issue we wrote, “On account of the inconvenience of the printing press there has been some irregularity in the publication of the second and the third issues of the paper. With a view to remove this difficulty we are making better arrangements for printing the paper. The next issue of *Karmayogin* will be published on Saturday the 17th instant instead of on Saturday the 10th.” The publication of the next issue was, consequently, delayed. We are glad to be in a position to inform our readers that better arrangements have been made, and henceforth the *Karmayogin* will be regularly published, and our readers will be able to detect an improvement in the get-up of the paper. The unusual and unexpected demand for the paper necessitates the reprinting of the back numbers. We shall be glad to know the issue or issues each subscriber would want. We would take this opportunity of saying that we have no connection with the Bengali *Karmayogin* to be published from Uttarpara. It is an independent paper with which we have no connection. The conductors of the paper have only our permission to publish Bengali translations of articles appearing in the *Karmayogin*.

## The Doctrine of Sacrifice

**T**HE GENIUS of self-sacrifice is not common to all nations and to all individuals; it is rare and precious, it is the flowering of mankind's ethical growth, the evidence of our gradual rise from the self-regarding animal to the selfless divinity. A man capable of self-sacrifice, whatever his other sins, has left the animal behind him; he has the stuff in him of a future and higher humanity. A nation capable of a national act of self-sacrifice ensures its future.

Self-sacrifice involuntary or veiled by forms of selfishness is, however, the condition of our existence. It has been a gradual growth in humanity. The first sacrifices are always selfish — they involve the sacrifice of others for one's own advancement. The first step forward is taken by the instinct of animal love in the mother who is ready to sacrifice her life for the young, by the instinct of protection in the male who is ready to sacrifice his life for his mate. The growth of this instinct is the sign of an enlargement in the conception of the self. So long as there is identification of self only with one's own body and its desires, the state of the *jiva* is unprogressive and animal. It is only when the self enlarges to include the mate and the children that advancement becomes possible. This is the first human state, but the animal lingers in it in the view of the wife and children as chattels and possessions meant for one's own pleasure, strength, dignity, comfort. The family even so viewed becomes the basis of civilisation, because it makes social life possible. But the real development of the god in man does not begin until the family becomes so much dearer than the life of the body that a man is ready to sacrifice himself for it and give up his ease or even his life for its welfare or its protection. To give up one's ease for the family, that is a state which most men have attained; to give up one's life for the honour of the wife or the safety of the

home is an act of a higher nature of which man is capable in individuals, in classes, but not in the mass. Beyond the family comes the community and the next step in the enlargement of the self is when the identification with the self in the body and the self in the family gives way to the identification with the self in the community. To recognise that the community has a larger claim on a man than his family is the first condition of the advance to the social condition. It corresponds to the growth of the tribe out of the patriarchal family and to the perfection of those communal institutions of which our village community was a type. Here again, to be always prepared to sacrifice the family interest to the larger interest of the community must be the first condition of communal life and to give one's life for the safety of the community, the act of divinity which marks the consummation of the enlarging self in the communal idea. The next enlargement is to the self in the nation. The evolution of the nation is the growth which is most important now to humanity, because human selfishness, family selfishness, class selfishness having still deep roots in the past must learn to efface themselves in the larger national self in order that the God in humanity may grow. Therefore it is that Nationalism is the *dharma* of the age, and God reveals himself to us in our common Mother. The first attempts to form a nationality were the Greek city, the Semitic or Mongolian monarchy, the Celtic clan, the Aryan *kula* or *jati*. It was the mixture of all these ideas which went to the formation of the mediaeval nation and evolved the modern peoples. Here again, it is the readiness to sacrifice self-interest, family interest, class interest to the larger national interest which is the condition of humanity's fulfilment in the nation and to die for its welfare or safety is the supreme act of self-consummation in the larger national ego. There is a yet higher fulfilment for which only a few individuals have shown themselves ready, the enlargement of the self to include all humanity. A step forward has been taken in this direction by the self-immolation of a few to humanitarian ideals, but to sacrifice the interests of the nation to the larger interest of humanity is an act of which humanity in the mass is not yet capable. God prepares, but He does not hasten the

ripening of the fruit before its season. A time will come when this also will be possible, but the time is not yet. Nor would it be well for humanity if it came before the other and lesser identification were complete; for that would necessitate retrogression in order to secure the step which has been omitted. The advance of humanity is a steady progress and there is no great gain in rushing positions far ahead, while important points in the rear are uncaptured.

The national ego may easily mean nothing more than collective selfishness. I may be ready to sacrifice money and ease for the country in order to secure my wealth, fame or position and property which depend upon her security and greatness. I may be ready to sacrifice these and more for her because of the safety of the home and the hearth which her safety ensures. I may be ready to sacrifice much for her because her greatness, wealth, ease mean the greatness, wealth, ease of my community or my class. Or I may be ready to sacrifice everything to secure her greatness because of my pride in her and my desire to see my nation dominant and imperial. All these are forms of selfishness pursuing man into the wider life which is meant to assist in liberating him from selfishness. The curse of capitalism, the curse of Imperialism which afflict modern nations are due to this insistence. It is the source of that pride, insolence and injustice which affect a nation in its prosperity and by that fatal progression which the Greeks with their acute sense for these things so clearly demarcated, it leads from prosperity to insolence and outrage and from insolence and outrage to that *ate*, that blind infatuation, which is God's instrument for the destruction of men and nations. There is only one remedy for this pursuing evil and it is to regard the nation as a necessary unit but no more in a common humanity.

There are two stages in the life of a nation, first, when it is forming itself or new-forming itself, secondly, when it is formed, organised and powerful. The first is the stage when Nationalism makes rightly its greatest demands on the individual, in the second it should abate its demands and, having satisfied, should preserve itself in Cosmopolitanism somewhat as the individual

preserves itself in the family, the family in the class, the class in the nation, not destroying itself needlessly but recognising a larger interest. In the struggles of a subject nation to realise its separate existence, the larger interest can only be viewed in prospect and as a higher inspiration to a broadminded and generous patriotism. No sacrifice of the nation to the larger interest is possible, for the nation must exist before it can sacrifice its interests for a higher good.

We are at present in the first or formative stage, and in this stage the demand of Nationalism is imperative. It is only by the sacrifices of the individual, the family and the class to the supreme object of building up the nation that under such adverse circumstances Nationalism can secure the first conditions for its existence. Every act of the new Nationalism has been a call for suffering and self-sacrifice. Swadeshi was such a call, arbitration was such a call, national education was such a call, above all, passive resistance was such a call. None of these things can be secured except by a general readiness to sacrifice the individual and the family to the interests of the nation. Nowadays a new call is visibly forming, the call on the higher classes to sacrifice their privileges and prejudices, as the Japanese Samurai did, for the raising up of the lower. The spread of a general spirit of ungrudging self-sacrifice is the indispensable prelude to the creation of the Indian nation. This truth is not only evident from the very nature of the movement we have initiated, but it is borne out by the tests of history and experience to which we have been recently asked to refer in each individual case before the act of sacrifice is decided. It is by the appeal to history and experience that the Nationalist party has convinced the intellect, just as by its inspiring ideals and readiness to suffer, it has carried with it the heart of the nation. The demand that we should in every individual case go into a review of the whole question is excessive and impossible. It is enough if we are generally convinced of the utility and necessity of sacrifice and feel the individual call. It must be remembered that we cannot argue from the condition of a people formed, free and prospering to that of a people subject, struggling and miserable. In the first case the individual is not

called to frequent acts of self-sacrifice, but only to those regularly demanded by the nation and to a general readiness for especial sacrifice in case of necessity, but in the second the necessity is a constant quantity. Nor is it a sound principle to demand in such circumstances an adequate value for every individual act of courage and self-denial. It would indeed be singular for the individuals of a subject nation asked for the price of their liberty to say to the Dispenser of Karma, "You shall give me so much in return for every individual sacrifice and we must know your terms beforehand. We will not trust you to the extent of a single pice worth of result for our sufferings." Not by such men or such a spirit have subject nations been delivered.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Greatness of the Individual

# KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW

of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

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## Facts and Opinions

### **The Spirit in Asia**

A spirit moves abroad in the world today upsetting kingdoms and raising up new principalities and powers the workings of which are marked by a swiftness and ubiquity new in history. In place of the slow developments and uncertain results of the past we have a quickness and thoroughness which destroy in an hour and remould in a decade. It is noteworthy that these rapid motions are mostly discernible in Asiatic peoples.

### **The Persian Revolution**

The Persian Revolution has settled with a swiftness and decisiveness second only to the movement of Turkey the constitutional struggle in Iran between a reactionary Shah and a rejuvenated, eager and ardent nation. The weak and unstable promise-breaker at Teheran has fallen, mourned by a sympathetic Anglo-India but by no one else in the world. Since the late Shah under the pressure of passive resistance yielded a constitution to his people, the young Nationalism of Persia has been attempting to force or persuade his son to keep the oaths with which he started his reign. Some deeds of blood on both sides, some sharp encounters have attended the process

but the price paid has been comparatively small. Like other Asiatic States in a similar process of transformation Persia has rejected the theoretic charms of a republic; she has set up a prince who is young enough to be trained to the habits of a constitutional monarch before he takes up the authority of kingship. In this we see the political wisdom, self-restraint and instinct for the right thing to be done which is natural to ancient nations who, though they have grown young again, are not raw and violent peoples new to political thought and experiment.

### Persia's Difficulties

A great and difficult task lies before the newly-risen nation. No other people is so difficultly circumstanced as the Persians. Weak in herself, long a stranger to good government, military strength and discipline, financial soundness and internal efficiency, Persia has to evolve all these under the instant menace from north and south of two of the greatest European empires. The threat of Russia to act herself if the new government does not instantly guarantee security on its borders, a threat made on the morrow of a violent *coup d'état* and before there has been time for the Regency to cope with any of the immediate difficulties surrounding it, is typical of the kind of peril which this proximity is likely to produce. Self-restraint and patience towards these doubtful friends and unbounded energy and decision within are the only qualities by which the statesmen of Persia can surmount the difficulties in their path and satisfy the claims posterity makes upon them. The internal reorganisation of Persia and the swift development of military strength are the first needs. Till then Persia must bear and forbear.

### The New Men in Persia

It is worthy of notice that Sipahidar and Sardar Assad, the Bakhtyari leader, who have effected this revolution, are men

who in their youth have studied in Europe. They should know the springs of European politics and thoroughly understand the way in which European Powers have to be dealt with as well as the necessities and conditions of internal reorganisation. The problem for all Asiatic peoples is the preservation of their national individuality and existence while equipping themselves with the weapons of the modern struggle for survival. A deep study of European politics, a strong feeling for Asiatic institutions and ideals, a selfless patriotism and immense faith, courage and self-restraint are the qualities essential to their leaders in these critical times. It is reassuring to find Persians high in praise of the self-denying and lofty character of the new Regent. In the absence of a patriotic King like the Mikado such a man alone can form the centre of national reconstruction.

### **Madanlal Dhingra**

Madanlal Dhingra pays the inevitable and foreseen penalty of his crime. We have no wish whatever to load the memory of this unfortunate young man with curses and denunciations. Rather we hope that in his last moments he will be able to look back in a calm spirit on his act and with a mind enlightened by the near approach of death prepare his soul for the great transit. No man but he can say what were the real motives for his deed. If personal resentment and exaggerated emotions were the cause of his crime, a realisation of the true nature of the offence may yet help the soul in its future career. If on the other hand a random patriotism was at its back, we have little hope that reflection will induce him to change his views. Minds imbued with these ideas are the despair of the statesman and the political thinker. They follow their bent with a remorseless firmness which defies alike the arrows of the reasoner and the terrors of a violent death. He must in that case go forth to reap the fruits in other bodies and new circumstances. Here his country remains behind to bear the consequences of his act.

### Press Garbage in England

It is at least gratifying to find that the theory of conspiracy is exploded except in the minds of Anglo-Indian papers and perhaps of a few Anglo-Indian statesmen and officials. Not a single circumstance has justified the wild suspicions and wilder inventions which journals like the *Daily Mail* and *Daily Express* poured thick upon the world in the first few days that followed the occurrence. These strange fictions are still travelling to us by mail. The most extraordinary of them is perhaps that launched by a certain gentleman who is bold enough to give his name, upon the *World*. It seems that long ago the redoubtable Krishnavarma in a moment of benign and expansive frankness selected this gentleman and revealed to him the details of a gigantic plot he has been elaborating for the last eight years with a view to the murder wholesale and retail of Anglo-Indian officials. If the story were true, Krishnavarma's confidant ought certainly to have been put in the dock as an accessory before the crime on the ground of criminal concealment. These romances sound ridiculous enough now that we read them three weeks afterwards when the excitement of the hour has passed, but the harm this kind of journalism can do was sufficiently proved at the time of the Chinese disturbances and the trouble which preceded the Boer War. That these daily voidings of impudent falsehood and fabrication should be eagerly swallowed by thousands shows the rapid deterioration of British dignity and sobriety.

### Shyamji Krishnavarma

The exaggerated view of Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma as an arch conspirator of malign subtlety and power who has long been inculcating terrorist opinions among young men and building up a secret society, is one which none can accept who has any knowledge of this gentleman's past career. Mr. Shyamji Krishnavarma is an earnest, vehement and outspoken idealist passionately attached to his own views and intolerant of all

who oppose them. He first went to England to breathe the atmosphere of a free country where he could speak as well as think as he chose. He was then a strong constitutionalist and his chief intellectual preoccupations were Herbert Spencer, Home Rule and the position of the Native States. When the new movement flooded India it carried Mr. Krishnavarma forward with it. He became an ardent Nationalist, a confirmed passive resister with an idealistic aversion to violent methods and a strong conviction that, whatever might be the case with other countries, India would neither need nor resort to them. His conversion to Terrorism is quite recent and has astonished most those who knew him best. We know that S. J. Bipin Pal went to England with the confident expectation of finding full sympathy and co-operation from the editor of the *Indian Sociologist*. The quarrel between the two resulting from the change in Mr. Krishnavarma's views is a matter of public knowledge. We refuse therefore to believe that Mr. Krishnavarma has been a plotter of assassination and secret disseminator of Terrorism or that the India House is a centre for the propagation and fulfilment of the ideas he has himself ventilated in the *Times*.

### Nervous Anglo-India

Time was when Srijut Surendranath Banerji was held by nervous Anglo-India to be the crowned King of an insurgent Bengal, a very pestilent fellow flooding the country with sedition and rebellion. The whirligig of Time brings round with it strange revenges and at this moment Srijut Surendranath is returning to India acclaimed by English Conservatives as a pillar of the British Empire, India's representative with a mighty organisation behind him pledged to loyalty, co-operation and the support of Morleyan reform. After Surendranath, Srijut Bipin Chandra Pal, reputed editor of *Bande Mataram* and author of the great Madras speeches, loomed as the arch-plotter of revolution and the chief danger to the Empire. The same Bipin Chandra is now a peaceful and unsuspected journalist and lecturer in London acquitted, we hope, of all wish to be the Ravana destined to

shake the British Kailas. But Anglo-India needs a bogeyman and by a few letters to the *Times* Mr. Krishnavarma has leaped into that eminent but unenviable position. Who knows? In another year or two even he may be considered a harmless if inconvenient idealist. What is it, one wonders, that has turned the firm, phlegmatic Briton into a nervous quaking old woman in love with imaginative terrors? Is it democracy? Is it the new sensationalist Press run by Harmsworth and Company? The phenomenon is inexplicable, but it is to be feared it is going to be permanent.

### **The Recoil of Karma**

There is a general law that Karma rebounds upon the doer. Associated in Hindu philosophy mainly with the individual and the theory of rebirth, this truth has also been recognised as equally applicable on other lines to the present life and to the destiny of nations. The Karma of the British people in India has been of a mixed quality. So far as it has opened the gates of Western knowledge to the people of this country it has been good and in return the thought and knowledge of India has poured back upon Europe to return the gift with overmeasure. Had they in addition consciously raised up and educated the whole people, all the fruits of that good Karma would have gone to England. But the education they have given is bad, meagre and restricted to the few, and their sympathy for the people has been formal and deficient. In consequence the main flood of the new thought and knowledge has been diverted to America, the giant of the future, which alone of the nations has shown an active and practical sympathy and understanding of our nation. British Karma in India has been bad in so far as it has destroyed our industries and arrested our national development. This Karma is also beginning to recoil, patently in Boycott and unrest, much more subtly in the growing demoralisation of British politics. Already the jealous love of liberty is beginning to wane in the upper classes in England, political thinkers are emerging who announce the failure of democracy, the doctrine of the rule of the strong man

is gaining ground and the temptation to strengthen the executive at the expense of the liberty of the citizen is proving too powerful even for a Radical Government. It seems impossible that even a veiled despotism or a virtual oligarchy should ever again rule in England, yet stranger things have happened in history. The change may come by the growth of Socialism and the seizure of the doctrine of State despotism by masterful and ambitious minds to cloak a usurpation the ancient and known forms of which would not be tolerated, just as the Caesars, while avoiding the detested name and form of kingship, yet ruled Rome under the harmless titles of Princeps and Imperator, first man of the state and general, far more despotically than Tarquin could have done. Under whatever disguises the change may steal upon the people, one thing is certain that if Lord Morley and the Anglo-Indian proconsuls succeed in perpetuating absolutism in India, it will recoil from India to reconquer England. The Nationalists of this country are fighting not only for the liberties of India but for the liberties of England.

### **Liberty or Empire**

It is an ancient and perpetually recurring choice which is now being offered to the British people, the choice between liberty and empire. The two are incompatible except by the substitution of a free federation for a dominion. Rome was offered the choice. She won an empire and lost her liberty. External expansion has always been accompanied by a concentration of internal power in King or oligarchy. Athens, the only people who attempted to be imperial and despotic abroad and democratic at home, broke down in the attempt. In English history also we find that the great expansion in the eighteenth century led to the reactionary rule of the third George and it was not till England after the severe lesson in America adopted her present colonial system that expansion and democracy went hand in hand. That system was not an imperial system but a loose collection of free states only nominally united by the British Crown. The Indian problem is the test of British Liberalism. The colonial system as it stands

cannot obtain between two States which are not mother and daughter. The one would not tolerate it, the other would not be content with it. But if England can bring herself to extend in a different form the principle of a collection of free States to India, she may keep her position in the world and her liberty together. Despotic empire and liberty she cannot keep; she must either yield up absolutism abroad or renounce liberty at home.

## An Open Letter to My Countrymen

**T**HE POSITION of a public man who does his duty in India today, is too precarious to permit of his being sure of the morrow. I have recently come out of a year's seclusion from work for my country on a charge which there was not a scrap of reliable evidence to support, but my acquittal is no security either against the trumping up of a fresh accusation or the arbitrary law of deportation which dispenses with the inconvenient formality of a charge and the still more inconvenient necessity of producing evidence. Especially with the hounds of the Anglo-Indian Press barking at our heels and continually clamouring for Government to remove every man who dares to raise his voice to speak of patriotism and its duties, the liberty of the person is held on a tenure which is worse than precarious. Rumour is strong that a case for my deportation has been submitted to the Government by the Calcutta Police and neither the tranquillity of the country nor the scrupulous legality of our procedure is a guarantee against the contingency of the all-powerful fiat of the Government watchdogs silencing scruples on the part of those who advise at Simla. Under such circumstances I have thought it well to address this letter to my countrymen, and especially to those who profess the principles of the Nationalist party, on the needs of the present and the policy of the future. In case of my deportation it may help to guide some who would be uncertain of their course of action, and, if I do not return from it, it may stand as my last political will and testament to my countrymen.

The situation of the Nationalist party is difficult but not impossible. The idea of some that the party is extinct because its leaders are sentenced or deported, is an error which comes of looking only at the surface. The party is there, not less powerful and pervading than before, but in want of a policy and a

leader. The first it may find, the second only God can give it. All great movements wait for their God-sent leader, the willing channel of His force, and only when he comes, move forward triumphantly to their fulfilment. The men who have led hitherto have been strong men of high gifts and commanding genius, great enough to be the protagonists of any other movement, but even they were not sufficient to fulfil one which is the chief current of a worldwide revolution. Therefore the Nationalist party, custodians of the future, must wait for the man who is to come, calm in the midst of calamity, hopeful under defeat, sure of eventual emergence and triumph and always mindful of the responsibility which they owe not only to their Indian posterity but to the world.

Meanwhile the difficulties of our situation ask for bold yet wary walking. The strength of our position is moral, not material. The whole of the physical strength in the country belongs to the established authority which our success would, so far as its present form is concerned, abolish by transforming it out of all possibility of recognition. It is natural that it should use all its physical strength to prevent, so long as it can, that transformation. The whole of the moral strength of the country is with us. Justice is with us, nature is with us, the law of God which is higher than any human justifies our action, youth is for us, the future is ours. On that moral strength we must rely for our survival and eventual success. We must not be tempted by any rash impatience into abandoning the ground on which we are strong and venturing on the ground on which we are weak. Our ideal is an ideal which no law can condemn; our chosen methods are such that no modern Government can expressly declare them illegal without forfeiting its claim to be considered a civilised administration. To that ideal and to those methods we must firmly adhere and rely on them alone for our eventual success. A respect for the law is a necessary quality for endurance as a nation and it has always been a marked characteristic of the Indian people. We must therefore scrupulously observe the law while taking every advantage both of the protection it gives and the latitude it still leaves for pushing forward our cause and our

propaganda. With the stray assassinations which have troubled the country we have no concern, and, having once clearly and firmly dissociated ourselves from them, we need notice them no farther. They are the rank and noxious fruit of a rank and noxious policy and until the authors of that policy turn from their errors, no human power can prevent the poison-tree from bearing according to its kind. We who have no voice either in determining the laws or their administration, are helpless in the matter. To deportation and proclamation, the favourite instruments of men incapable of a wise and strong rule, we can only oppose a steady and fearless adherence to the propagandism and practice of a lawful policy and a noble ideal.

Our ideal is that of Swaraj or absolute autonomy free from foreign control. We claim the right of every nation to live its own life by its own energies according to its own nature and ideals. We reject the claim of aliens to force upon us a civilisation inferior to our own or to keep us out of our inheritance on the untenable ground of a superior fitness. While admitting the stains and defects which long subjection has induced upon our native capacity and energy, we are conscious of that capacity and energy reviving in us. We point to the unexampled national vigour which has preserved the people of this country through centuries of calamity and defeat, to the great actions of our forefathers continued even to the other day, to the many men of intellect and character such as no other nation in a subject condition has been able to produce, and we say that a people capable of such unheard-of vitality is not one which can be put down as a nation of children and incapables. We are in no way inferior to our forefathers. We have brains, we have courage, we have an infinite and various national capacity. All we need is a field and an opportunity. That field and opportunity can only be provided by a national government, a free society and a great Indian culture. So long as these are not conceded to us, we can have no other use for our brains, courage and capacity than to struggle unceasingly to achieve them.

Our ideal of Swaraj involves no hatred of any other nation nor of the administration which is now established by law in this

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country. We find a bureaucratic administration, we wish to make it democratic; we find an alien government, we wish to make it indigenous; we find a foreign control, we wish to render it Indian. They lie who say that this aspiration necessitates hatred and violence. Our ideal of patriotism proceeds on the basis of love and brotherhood and it looks beyond the unity of the nation and envisages the ultimate unity of mankind. But it is a unity of brothers, equals and freemen that we seek, not the unity of master and serf, of devourer and devoured. We demand the realisation of our corporate existence as a distinct race and nation because that is the only way in which the ultimate brotherhood of humanity can be achieved, not by blotting out individual peoples and effacing outward distinctions, but by removing the internal obstacles to unity, the causes of hatred, malice and misunderstanding. A struggle for our rights does not involve hatred of those who mistakenly deny them. It only involves a determination to suffer and strive, to speak the truth boldly and without respect of persons, to use every lawful means of pressure and every source of moral strength in order to establish ourselves and disestablish that which denies the law of progress.

Our methods are those of self-help and passive resistance. To unite and organise ourselves in order to show our efficiency by the way in which we can develop our industries, settle our individual disputes, keep order and peace on public occasions, attend to questions of sanitation, help the sick and suffering, relieve the famine-stricken, work out our intellectual, technical and physical education, evolve a Government of our own for our own internal affairs so far as that could be done without disobeying the law or questioning the legal authority of the bureaucratic administration, this was the policy publicly and frankly adopted by the Nationalist party. In Bengal we had advanced so far as to afford distinct proof of our capacity in almost all these respects and the evolution of a strong united and well-organised Bengal had become a near and certain prospect. The internal troubles which came to a head at Surat and the repressive policy initiated immediately afterwards, culminating in the destruction of our organisations and the effective intimidation of Swadeshi workers

and sympathisers by official underlings, have both been serious checks to our progress and seem for the moment to have postponed the realisation of our hopes to a distant future. The check is temporary. Courage and sane statesmanship in our leaders is all that is wanted to restore the courage and the confidence of the people and evolve new methods of organisation which will not come into conflict even with the repressive laws.

The policy of passive resistance was evolved partly as the necessary complement of self-help, partly as a means of putting pressure on the Government. The essence of this policy is the refusal of co-operation so long as we are not admitted to a substantial share and an effective control in legislation, finance and administration. Just as “No representation, no taxation” was the watchword of American constitutional agitation in the eighteenth century, so “No control, no co-operation” should be the watchword of our lawful agitation — for constitution we have none, — in the twentieth. We sum up this refusal of co-operation in the convenient word “Boycott”, refusal of co-operation in the industrial exploitation of our country, in education, in government, in judicial administration, in the details of official intercourse. Necessarily, we have not made that refusal of co-operation complete and uncompromising, but we hold it as a method to be enlarged and pushed farther according as the necessity for moral pressure becomes greater and more urgent. This is one aspect of the policy. Another is the necessity of boycott to help our own nascent energies in the field of self-help. Boycott of foreign goods is a necessary condition for the encouragement of Swadeshi industries, boycott of Government schools is a necessary condition for the growth of national education, boycott of British courts is a necessary condition for the spread of arbitration. The only question is the extent and conditions of the boycott and that must be determined by the circumstances of the particular problem in each case. The general spirit of passive resistance has first to be raised, afterwards it can be organised, regulated and, where necessary, limited.

The first obstacle to our evolution is the internal dispute which has for the moment wrecked the Congress and left in

its place the hollow and mutilated simulacrum of a National Assembly which met last year at Madras and, deprived though it is of the support of the most eminent local leaders, purposes to meet again at Lahore. It is a grievous error to suppose that this dispute hung only on personal questions and differences of a trifling importance. As happens inevitably in such popular contests, personal questions and differences of minor importance intervened to perplex and embitter the strife, but the real questions in debate were those which involved the whole future development of the spirit and form of self-government in this country. Were that spirit and form to be democratic or oligarchic? Were they to be constitutional in procedure or governed by arbitrary and individual choice and discretion? Was the movement to be progressive and national or conservative and parochial in its aims, policy and spirit? These were the real issues. The Nationalist party stood for democracy, constitutionalism and progress. The Moderate party, governed by an exaggerated respect for old and esteemed leaders, helped, without clearly understanding what they did, those who stood for oligarchy, arbitrary procedure and an almost reactionary conservatism. Personal idiosyncracies, preferences, aversions settled like a thick cloud over the contest, the combatants on both sides flung themselves on every point of difference material or immaterial as a pretext or a weapon, the tactics of party warfare were freely used and, finally, the deliberate obstinacy of a few Moderate leaders in avoiding discussion of the points of difference and the unruly ardour of the younger men on both sides led to the violent scenes at Surat and the break-up of the Congress. If the question is ever to be settled to the advantage of national progress, the personal and minor differences must be banished from the field and the real issues plainly and dispassionately considered.

The questions of particular importance which divide the parties, are the exact form of Swaraj to be held forward as an ideal, the policy of passive resistance and the form of certain resolutions. The last is a question to be decided by the Congress itself and all that the Nationalists demand is that discussion shall not be burked and that they shall not be debarred from their

constitutional right of placing their views before the National Assembly. On the other points, they cannot sacrifice their ideal or their policy, but their contention is that these differences ought not in a free deliberative assembly to stand in the way of united progress. The Swaraj matter can easily be settled by the substitution of "full and complete self-government" for "self-government on Colonial lines" in the Swaraj resolution. The difference as to passive resistance hinges at present on the Boycott resolution which the Nationalist party — and in this they are supported by a large body of Moderate opinion, — cannot consent to sacrifice. But here also they are willing to submit the question to the arbitrament of a freely elected Congress, though they refuse to recognise a close and limited Subjects Committee as the final authority. It will be seen therefore that the real question throughout is constitutional. The body which at present calls itself the Congress, has adopted a constitution which is close, exclusive, undemocratic and so framed as to limit the free election of delegates by the people. It limits itself by proposing a number of articles of faith in a particular form of words to every intending delegate before he can take his seat; it aims at the election of delegates only by select bodies and associations instead of the direct election of the people; it excuses many from the chances of election and gives them an undue weight in the disposal of the affairs of the assembly. These and similar provisions no democratic party can accept. A Nationalist Conference or a Moderate Convention may so guard its integrity, but the Congress is and must be a National Assembly admitting freely all who are duly elected by the people. The proposed passing of this reactionary constitution by a body already limited under its provisions will not cure the constitutional defect. It is only a Congress elected on the old lines that can determine the future provisions for its constitution and procedure with any hope of universal acceptance.

It is not therefore by any manipulation of the Convention Congress that a solution of the problem can be brought about, but by the Provincial Conferences empowering the leaders of

both parties to meet in Committee and provide for an arrangement which will heal differences and enable the Congress to work smoothly and freely in the future. If there is a minority who refuse to associate themselves with any such attempt, the majority will be justified by the mandate of the Provinces in disregarding them and meeting to carry out the popular wish. Once the lines are settled they can be submitted to the free choice of a freely elected Congress for acceptance, rejection or modification. This will restore a Congress on sound constitutional lines in which the bitter experience of the past may be relied on to prevent those mistakes of obstinacy and passion which prevented a solution of the problem at Surat.

Outside the Congress the chances of united working are more complete than within it. There are only two questions which are likely either to trouble harmony or hamper action. The first is the question of the acceptance or rejection of the present reforms introducing, as they do, no element of popular control nor any fresh constitutional principle except the unsound principle of privileged representation for a single community. This involves the wider question of co-operation. It is generally supposed that the Nationalist party is committed to the persistent and uncompromising refusal of co-operation until they get the full concession of Swaraj. Nationalist publicists have not cared to combat this error explicitly because they were more anxious to get their ideal accepted and the spirit of passive resistance and complete self-help popularised than to discuss a question which was not then a part of practical politics. But it is obvious that a party advancing such a proposition would be a party of doctrinaires and idealists, not of practical thinkers and workers. The Nationalist principle is the principle of "No control, no co-operation." Since all control has been refused and so long as all control is refused, the Nationalist party preaches the refusal of co-operation as complete as we can make it. But it is evident that if, for instance, the power of imposing protective duties were given to a popular and elective body, no serious political party would prefer persistence in commercial boycott to the use of the powers conceded. Or if education were similarly

made free of official control and entrusted to a popular body, as Lord Reay once thought of entrusting it, no sensible politician would ask the nation to boycott that education. Or if the courts were manned by Indian judges and made responsible not to the Executive but to a Minister representing the people, arbitration would immediately take its place as a supplementary aid to the regular courts. So also the refusal to co-operate in an administration which excludes the people from an effective voice does not involve a refusal to co-operate in an administration of which the people are an effective part. The refusal of autocratic gifts does not involve a refusal to take up popular rights inalienably secured to the people. It is on the contrary with the object of compelling the concession of the various elements of Swaraj by peaceful moral pressure and in the absence of such concessions developing our own institutions to the gradual extrusion and final supplanting of bureaucratic institutions that the policy of self-help and passive resistance was started. This acceptance of popular rights does not imply the abandonment of the ideal of complete autonomy or of the use of passive resistance in case of any future arbitrary interference with the rights of the people. It implies only the use of partial Swaraj as a step and means towards complete Swaraj. Where the Nationalists definitely and decisively part company with an influential section of the Moderates is in refusing to accept any petty or illusory concession which will draw away our aspirations from their unalterable ideal or delude the people into thinking they have secured real rights.

Another question is that of cleaving to and enforcing the Boycott. In Bengal, even if there are some who are timid or reactionary enough to shrink from the word or the thing, the general feeling in its favour is emphatic and practically unanimous. But it is time now to consider seriously the question of regulating the boycott. Nationalists have always demurred to the proviso "as far as possible" in the Swadeshi resolution on account of the large loophole its vagueness left to the hesitating and the lukewarm, and they have preferred the form "at a sacrifice". But it will now be well if we face the concrete problems of the boycott.

While we must keep it absolute wherever Swadeshi articles are procurable as also in respect to pure luxuries with which we can dispense, we must recognise that there are necessities of life and business for which we have still to go to foreign countries. The public ought to be guided as to the choice of the countries which we shall favour in the purchase of these articles, — necessarily they must be countries sympathetic to Indian aspirations, — and those which we shall exclude. The failure to deal with this question is largely responsible for the laxity of our political boycott and our consequent failure to get the Partition rescinded. There are also other questions, such as the attempt of shopkeepers and merchants to pass off foreign goods wholesale as Swadeshi, which must be taken up at once if the movement is not to suffer a serious setback.

A final difficulty remains, — by what organisation are we to carry on the movement even when these questions are settled? The Nationalist programme was to build up a great deliberative and executive organisation on the basis of a reconstituted Congress, and this scheme still remains the only feasible means of organising the country. Even if a united Congress cannot be secured, the provinces ought to organise themselves separately, and perhaps this may prove to be the only possible way of restoring the Congress, by reconstituting it from the bottom. Even the District organisations, however, cannot work effectively without hands, and these we had provided for in the Sabhas and Samitis of young men which sprang up on all sides and were just succeeding in forming an efficient network of organisation all over Bengal. These are now being suppressed by administrative order. It becomes a question whether we cannot replace them by a loose and elusive organisation of young men in groups ordering each its own work by common agreement and working hand in hand, but without a rigid or definite organisation. I throw out the suggestion for consideration by the leaders of thought and action in the provinces where unity seems at all feasible.

This then is the situation as it presents itself to me. The policy I suggest to the Nationalist party may briefly be summed up as follows: —

1. Persistence with a strict regard to law in a peaceful policy of self-help and passive resistance.
2. The regulation of our attitude towards the Government by the principle of “No control, no co-operation.”
3. A rapprochement with the Moderate party wherever possible and the reconstitution of a united Congress.
4. The regulation of the Boycott movement so as to make both the political and the economic boycott effective.
5. The organisation of the Provinces if not of the whole country according to our original programme.
6. A system of co-operation which will not contravene the law and will yet enable workers to proceed with the work of self-help and national efficiency, if not quite so effectively as before, yet with energy and success.

AUROBINDO GHOSE

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# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Police Bill

The Police Bill has passed the Committee and next week, it is rumoured, will be made law. It is a provision for giving absolute power to the Police Commissioner and his underlings. It is true that the power is limited in time in certain respects, but so long as it lasts it is arbitrary, absolute, without checks and, practically, without appeal. We hear that the present Police Commissioner resents any proposal to put a check on his absolute power as a personal insult. If so, he is in good company, for he only follows the example of that great philosopher and democratic statesman, Lord Morley, who resents democratic criticism of his measures and actions as a crime and sacrilege and a petty amendment of the present provisions for the deportation of inconvenient persons as a vote of censure. The spirit of absolutism fostered by arbitrary government in India is not only swallowing up the old British virtues in India itself but encroaching on the free spirit of England. The powers of prohibition, regulation and arrest provided for in the Bill will exalt Mr. Halliday into the Czar of Calcutta. It is noticeable that any man may be arrested for the breach of any law by any policeman without a warrant and be sentenced to a fine of a hundred rupees or, for certain political offences among others,

to a month's hard labour. Any meeting can be stopped for a week at the sweet will and discretion of an individual. The provisions for search and entry of the police into houses and so-called public places are so ample as to give a power of inquisition and domiciliary visit second only to the Russian. Even boardings, messes and private lodging-houses are liable to entry at any hour and on any pretext. And by an inspired improvement on the stringent Bombay Act no action of the police, however vexatious, unwarranted and malicious, can be punished unless the aggrieved party can prove bad faith, a condition which in nine cases out of ten of malicious harassment is impossible of satisfaction. It is a sound principle that where a citizen has been causelessly harassed, the burden of proving good faith rests on the harasser. An opposite proviso means the destruction of the liberty of the person. No man's personal freedom and dignity will henceforth be safe for a moment from the whims of the lowest policeman in the street. The authorities may say that this is not the purposed object of the Bill. We have nothing to do with the intention of the framers, we have to do only with the provisions of the law itself, and it is enough if all these things are rendered possible under the provisions. To make bad laws and plead good intentions is an old evasion of weak and violent rulers.

### **The Political Motive**

That there is a political motive behind the Bill, any child can see and to conceal it only the most flimsy precautions have been taken. The prohibition of public meetings can have no reference to any but Swadeshi meetings, the reference to objectionable cries is obviously aimed at the national cry of *Bande Mataram* and the power of harassing under the pretext of regulating public processions and meetings can have no objective but the revived meetings and processions which have shown that the national movement was not dead but only suspended. Other provisions of the Bill may be dictated by the sole object of strengthening the hands, already overstrong, of the Calcutta Police in keeping

order, but the nature and wording of these provisions coupled with the amazingly comprehensive definition of "public place" leave us no option but to see the obvious political motive behind. It is possible for the Police Commissioner under these provisions to paralyse every legitimate form of public activity in the city of Calcutta. It is no use sheltering under the provisions of the Bombay Act. The Bombay Act has been used to paralyse public activity of a kind inconvenient to the Government in that city. What, moreover, was the necessity of suddenly resorting to the stringency of the Bombay Act at this particular juncture? It is not alleged that any of the meetings or processions recently organised were disorderly or led to disturbance or public inconvenience. The only fresh emergency was the political.

#### A Hint from Dinajpur

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* notices a case from Dinajpur which may give a few hints to Sir Edward Baker if he really wants or is wanted to establish police autocracy in Calcutta. Mr. Garlick there justified the caning of witnesses and accused by the police as a necessary "method of examination" without which the administration of justice in this country cannot be carried on. He says, "I dare say the police frequently quicken the witness' answers with a cut from their riding canes. Such methods of examination are no doubt to be deprecated but without them I do not suppose the police would get any information at all." The case will come up before the High Court and we await with interest the view that authority will take of this novel legal dictum. Meanwhile why should not Sir Edward Baker take time by the forelock and, after a now familiar method, validate such "methods" beforehand by a clause in his Police Bill empowering any policeman to cut with a cane any citizen whom he may fancy guilty of breaking any law so as to persuade him to desist? Of course the said policeman will not be liable to punishment unless it can be proved that he cut in bad faith.

### **The Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company**

We publish elsewhere an appeal from the promoters of the enterprise which first encouraged Indian energy and capital into the new path many are now preparing to follow. This Company, as the pioneer, had to face all the difficulties of a novel enterprise of considerable magnitude and it has suffered more than others from competition supported by official sympathy. To Nationalists it will be sufficient to recall the name of Chidambaram Pillai, condemned to a long term of imprisonment on the strength of police reports, and the plucky struggle made by the Company against overwhelming odds. The Company represents an output of patriotic effort and self-sacrifice such as no other has behind it and it would be a public disgrace if its appeal went unheard.

### **A Swadeshi Enterprise**

One of the great weaknesses of the Swadeshi movement at present is the ease with which, under the stress of necessity, we admit articles as Swadeshi which are to all intents and purposes foreign. It is always therefore an encouraging sign when a real Swadeshi enterprise is started which liberates us from the necessity of such humiliating compromises, especially when they affect articles of daily necessity. We take for an instance what we choose to call Swadeshi umbrellas although these are Swadeshi only so far as the labour of fitting the parts together is concerned. Sirdar Rajmachikar of Poona and his brother have done a service to Swadeshi by starting a factory in which all the parts except the iron ribs and stretchers are either made in the factory or, in the matter of the cloth, procured from Poona and Bombay mills. The only drawback is the high prices of these articles compared with the cheapness of the fractionally Swadeshi umbrellas. This we believe, is largely due to the high prices of the cloth produced from the Bombay mills, but the people of Bombay and Poona are taking these umbrellas by the thousand in spite of the difference. We hope Bengal will be as patriotic in this small but important matter. The prices will come

down as soon as a sufficient market is created. Meanwhile we must take the Swadeshi article at a sacrifice as we have pledged ourselves to do by any number of vows and resolutions. To replace foreign by indigenous in the objects of daily use is the very life-breath of Swadeshi.

## Youth and the Bureaucracy

SIR EDWARD Baker is usually a polite and careful man and a diplomatic official. It is not his fault if the policy he is called upon to carry through is one void of statesmanship and contradictory of all the experience of history. Neither is it his fault if he lacks the necessary weight in the counsels of the Government to make his own ideas prevail. He carries out an odious task with as much courtesy and discretion as the nature of the task will permit and, if we have had to criticise severely the amazing indiscretion foreign to his usual habits which he was guilty of on a recent occasion, it was with a recognition of the fact that he must have forgotten himself and spoken on the spur of the moment. But as the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy is now constituted, Sir Edward's personal superiority to his two predecessors is of no earthly use to us. We acknowledge the politeness and self-restraint of the wording in his recent advertisement to the educational authorities and the public at large of the inadvisability of allowing students to mix in the approaching Boycott celebration. But his reserve of language cannot succeed in blinding the public, still less the parties addressed, to the real nature of this promulgation. To parties circumstanced like the authorities of the Bengal Colleges official or private it is one of those hints which do not differ from orders. The whole Calcutta University has been placed under the heel of the Executive authority and no amount of writhing or wry faces will save Principals and Professors from the humiliating necessities proper to this servile and degraded position. They have sold themselves for lucre and they must eat the bitter bread of their self-chosen servitude. If they are asked to do the spy's office or to be the instruments for imposing on young men of education and respectability restrictions unexamined outside Russia, it is not theirs to reject the demand instantly

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as freemen would indignantly reject such degrading proposals. They must remember that the affiliation of their colleges and the grants which alone can enable them to satisfy the arduous conditions of affiliation depend on the fiat of those who make the demand. These things are in the bond. For the rest, the unwisdom of the wise men and the imprudence of the prudent who stopped the students' strike is becoming more and more apparent. Prudence and wisdom for the proprietors of private schools, for the country it was the worst imprudence and unwisdom. It has turned the training ground of our youth into a means of restraining the progress of our people and denying them that liberty which the other nations of the world enjoy. A university in which the representatives of academic culture are only allowed to keep their position on condition of forfeiting their self-respect and the pen of the pedagogue supplements the baton of the policeman, is no longer worth keeping.

But there are other considerations affecting a wider circle than the educational world, which arise immediately out of this notice. Ever since the beginning of this movement the opponents of progress have with an admirable instinct hit upon the misleading and intimidation of the youth of this country as the best means of thwarting the movement. Their direct attempts having failed, they are now trying to keep down the rising spirit of young India by objurgations addressed to the guardians and by playing on their selfishness and fears. Once the National Education movement was thwarted of its natural course and triumphant success by the leaders, it was easy for the bureaucrats to enforce this policy by gathering up all the authority of the Universities into their hands and using it as a political lever. The loss of education and a career,—this was the menace which they held over the guardians and young men of the country and by the continual flourishing of this weapon they have succeeded in putting back for a while the hour of our national fulfilment. The unwholesome and dangerous effects of denying the aspirations of youth a peaceful outlet, as dangerous to the government as they are unwhole-

some to the country, the arbiters of official policy in spite of their experience are too blind to realise. Bad leadership, bad because marred by selfishness and timidity, has aided the political experience and insight of the English rulers in inflicting upon the cause a check which still works to hamper us in our progress. We do not propose to waste space by answering the sophistries which our opponents advance to cover their interested suggestions. It is enough to say in answer that in all civilised countries young men are freely permitted to take part in politics and their want of interest in the chief national activity would be considered a mark of degeneration. It is not the arguments of adversaries but their own personal and class interests which actuate those among us who at the bidding of Anglo-Indians official or unofficial deter our young men from attending public meetings or mixing in the national movement. To these also we can say nothing. Men who can prefer the selfish gratification of their transitory individual needs and interests to the good of the nation are not needed in the new age that is coming. They are there only to exhaust a degraded and backward type which the world and the nation are intended soon to outgrow. If some of them still pose as men of weight and leading, it is only for a moment. They will vanish and the whole earth heave a sigh of relief that that type at least is gone for ever.

But to the young men of Bengal we have a word to say. The future belongs to the young. It is a young and new world which is now under process of development and it is the young who must create it. But it is also a world of truth, courage, justice, lofty aspiration and straightforward fulfilment which we seek to create. For the coward, for the self-seeker, for the talker who goes forward at the beginning and afterwards leaves his fellows in the lurch there is no place in the future of this movement. A brave, frank, clean-hearted, courageous and aspiring youth is the only foundation on which the future nation can be built. This seventh of August in this year 1909 is not an ordinary occasion. It is a test, a winnowing-fan, a separator of the wheat and the chaff. Because it is so, Sir Edward Baker

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has been inspired by an overruling Providence to publish his notification and the authorities of colleges to act according to their kind. The question is put not to these but to the young men who are asked under pain of academical penalties to abstain from an activity which is both their right and their duty. Let them remember that they disobey no law of the land and no provision of morality if they attend the celebration of the new nation's birthday. They will only disobey what professes to be an exercise of school discipline, but is nothing of the kind. It does not fall within the province of a schoolmaster to dictate what shall be the political opinions or activities of his pupils, nor are College professors concerned with what their students may do outside the precincts of College and hostel in the hours of their lawful liberty, so long as there is no infringement of law or morality. The attempt is a usurpation of the rightful authority of guardians or, in the case of those who have come of age, of their right to govern their own personal action. There only remains the question of self-interest. That is a point we leave to their hearts and consciences, whether they shall prefer their own interests or their country's. But if once they decide for the nobler part, let them stand by the choice they have made. God does not want falterers and flinchers for his work, nor does he want unstable enthusiasts who cannot maintain the energy of their first movements. Secondly, let them not only stand by their choice but stand by their comrades. Unless they develop the corporate spirit and the sense of honour which refuses to save oneself by the sacrifice of one's comrades in action when that sacrifice can be averted by standing together, they will not be fit for the work they will have to do when they are a little older. Whatever they do let them do as a body, whatever they suffer let them suffer as a body, leaving out the coward and the falterer but, once they are compact, never losing or allowing anything to break that compactness. If they can act in this spirit, heeding no unpatriotic counsels from whatever source they come, then let them follow their duty and their conscience, but let them do nothing in a light even if fervent enthusiasm, moving forward without due consid-

eration and then showing a weakness unworthy of the nation to which they belong and the work to which they have been called.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

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# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### *The Englishman* on Boycott

The speech of Sj. Bhupendranath Bose at the boycott celebration and the Open Letter of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose have put the *Englishman* in a difficulty. It has been the habit of this paper to lay stress on any facts or suggestions real or imaginary which it could interpret as pointing to violence and so persistently damn the movement as one not only revolutionary in the magnitude of the changes at which it aims but violently revolutionary in its purposed methods. The speech and the open letter have cut this imaginary ground away from under its feet. As a matter of fact there is nothing new in the attitude of either the Moderate or the Nationalist leader. What they say now they have said always. The Moderate party have always been in favour of constitutional methods which, whatever be the precise meaning of that phrase in a country where no constitution exists, must certainly exclude illegality and violence. The Nationalists on their side have always, while repudiating the principle that men are under all circumstances bound to obey unjust or injurious laws imposed without national consent, advocated observance of the law in the circumstances of India both on grounds of policy and in the interests of sound national development. Passive resistance to arbitrary edicts and proclamations in order to assert civic rights,

test illegal ukases or compel their recall is not breach of the law but a recognised weapon in the defence of civic liberty. Yet the *Englishman* chooses to save its face by imagining a change of front in the Boycott policy. There is no change. The Boycott has always been a movement within the law and such it remains. If there have been some individual excesses, that no more detracts from the legality of the movement than the excesses of individual strikers would affect the legality of a strike. The *Englishman* is full of anxiety as to the best way to meet the imagined change of front. With great sapiency it suggests to the Government the free use of deportation, for which it has been for some time clamouring in vain, and threatens the boycotters with an anti-boycott. One does not quite see how this mighty movement could be engineered. If a boycott of Indians by Englishmen is suggested, we would remind our contemporary that in life in this country Indians might conceivably do without Englishmen but Englishmen cannot do without Indians. That is precisely the strength of our position. The misfortune is that we ourselves still fail to realise it.

### **Social Boycott**

It seems to be especially the Boycott President's able defence of social boycott as opposed to violent constraint that has alarmed the *Englishman*. Here also there is nothing new. The social boycott is a weapon absolutely necessary for the enforcement of the popular will in this matter, the power of using fiscal law for the same purpose being in the hands of authorities who have been publicly declared by Lord Curzon to be active parties in British exploitation of the resources of India. It means the coercion of a very small minority by a huge majority in the interests of the whole nation; it consists merely in a passive abstinence from all countenance to the offender, — sending him to Coventry, in the English phrase; it is effective and, if properly applied, instantaneously effective; it involves, as the *Englishman* has been obliged to see, no violence, no disregard of public order, no breach of the peace. The only weapon the *Englishman* can

find against it is deportation, and after all you cannot deport a whole town, village or community. The Nationalist party have always struggled for and often obtained the recognition of the social boycott at various District Conferences and it has been freely and effectively applied in all parts, though mostly in East Bengal. It is gratifying to find the most moderate of Bengal Moderate leaders supporting and justifying it in a carefully prepared and responsible utterance on an occasion of the utmost public importance.

### **National or Anti-national**

We have long noticed with the deepest disapprobation and indignation the equivocal conduct of the National Council authorities with regard to matters of great national importance, but we have held our peace from unwillingness to hurt an institution established with such high hopes and apparently destined to play an important part in the development of the nation. We can hold our peace no longer. The action of the authorities in forbidding their students to attend a national festival commemorating the inception of the movement by which the College and Council were created, — a prohibition extended by them to the mofussil schools, — is only the crowning act of a policy by which they are betraying the trust reposed in them by the nation, contradicting the very object of the institution and utterly ruining a great and salutary movement. They imagine that by being more servile than the most servile of the ordinary institutions and flaunting their high academical purpose they will save themselves from official repression and yet keep the support of the people. They are wrong. Already there is such deep dissatisfaction with the Council that the mofussil schools are dying of inanition and people are turning away from the new education as differing in no essential from the old. If the authorities persist in their evil course, the public mind will write Anti-national instead of National over their signboard in Bow Bazaar and their schools be left empty of students. We shall return to this subject in a future issue.

## The Boycott Celebration

**A** NATIONAL festival is the symbol of the national vitality. All outward action depends eventually on the accepted ideas and imaginations of the doer. As these are, so is his aspiration; and although it is not true that as is his aspiration, so is his action, yet it is true that as is his aspiration, so will his action more and more tend to be. If it is the idea that finally expresses itself in all material forms, actions, institutions and consummations, it is the imagination that draws the idea out, suggests the shape and gives the creative impulse. Hence the importance of celebrations like the Seventh of August, especially in the first movements of a great national resurgence. A time may come when the living meaning may pass out of a solemnity or anniversary and leave it a dead form which only the persistence of habit preserves, but that cannot happen until the underlying idea is realised and the imaginative impulse towards creation has victoriously justified itself and exhausted its sources of satisfaction. The ideas which the boycott celebration holds as its roots and the imaginations to which it appeals are not yet even partially satisfied and, until they have confirmed themselves in victorious action and are perpetuated in lasting forms and institutions, it is of the first importance that this great festival should be celebrated in some form or other and, as far as possible, in the form it originally took. There is a meaning in the imaginative conservatism which refuses to part with the cherished pomps and even the little details of show and brightness which have always been associated with this day, the procession, the places, the meeting, the flags, music, songs, the vow, the resolution. Any laxness in these minutiae would show a fainting of the imagination which clings to the festival and its underlying ideas and a carelessness in the heart about those emotions without which the idea by itself is always inoperative. This appeal to the

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imagination and nourishing of the emotions is especially necessary when the outward circumstances are widely different from the cherished hopes and imaginations and the speedy advent of the longed-for future seems to the reason distant or improbable. That is why importance is attached in all countries to ceremonies and festivals. There are many of us who are inclined to speak with contempt of speeches and shows, and there was a time when we too in our impatience of the mere babblers were inclined to echo the cry for silent work. A juster knowledge of human psychology has led us to modify our view on that head. Man is not by nature a silent animal nor in the mass is he capable of work without frequent interchange of speech. Talk is necessary to him, emotion is necessary to him, imagination is necessary to him; without these he cannot be induced to action. This constitutes the supreme importance of the right of free speech and free meeting; this also constitutes the justification of symbolical holidays and festivals. Speech and writing are necessary to the acceptance and spread of the idea without which there can be no incentive to action. Ceremonies help the imagination and encourage it to see in the concrete that which cannot be immediately realised. It was out of the gurge and welter of an infinite oratory, thousand-throated journalism, endless ceremonies, processions, national festivals that the appallingly strenuous action of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic age in France arose to reconstitute society and transform Europe. Let us not therefore despise these mighty instruments. God has created them and the natural human love for them for very great and abiding purposes. Even in these few years the Ganapati and Shivaji festivals, instituted by the far-seeing human sympathy and democratic instinct of Mr. Tilak, have done much to reawaken and solidify the national feeling of Maharashtra, and we can all feel what a stimulus to the growth and permanence of the movement we have found in the celebrations of the 7th August and the 16th October. They are to us what sacred days are to the ordinary religions. The individual religious man can do without them, collective religion cannot. These are the sacred days in the religion of Nationalism, the worship of God the Mother.

The 16th October is the idea of unity, the worship of the Mother one and indivisible. The 7th of August is the idea of separateness, the worship of the Mother free, strong and glorious. Both these ideas are as yet ideas merely, realised in our faith and aspiration by the shaping imagination, not yet materialised in the world of concrete fact. This, according to our Vedantic ideas, is how the world and things whether in general or particular come into being. They exist first in seed form in the silent and unexpressed idea, in a world of deep sleep where there is as yet no action of thought or deed, only the inert, inoperative idea. Shiva the white and pure, the ascetic, the still, contemplative Yogin holds them in himself as Prajna, the Wise One, God ideal. But Shiva is *tamasic* and *rajas* is necessary to induce motion before things can exist. The thing has next to sprout out of the seed and take a volatile and unfixed shape in the psychic world where it waits for a material birth. Here Brahma, the flaming, shapeless and many-shaped, holds them in his brilliant vibrating medium of active imagination and thought and by his daughter Vach, the Goddess Speech eldest-born of the world, puts them into shape and body as Hiranyagarbha, God imaginative and therefore creative. Last they take permanent shape and abide in some material body, form, organism. Vishnu there holds them in his fixed and visible cosmos as Virat, God practical, until the divine imagination wearies of them and Shiva as destroyer draws them back again, their outward form disintegrated and their supporting imaginations dead, into the seed-state from which they emerged. For a long time the idea of unity, the idea of a strong national self-expression were merely sleeping and inoperative ideas held as sounding words rather than possibilities. Still the repetition of the words like the repetition even mechanical of a powerful mantra, began to awaken the divine force latent in the idea and, however feebly, it began to stir. But it was not till the 16th of October and the 7th of August that these ideas seized on the faith and imagination of the people and took shape, volatile and unfixed but still shape, as a living aspiration. The day of material realisation is yet distant. Moving to unity we are still divided by external and internal agencies. Moving towards

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strength and freedom we are still subject to external force and internal weakness. But this we have gained that the purpose and imagination of unity and strength is rooted in the hearts and minds of a great and the most vigorous portion of the young generation, inheritors of the future, beyond the power of force or sophistry to remove. Having secured so much we can go on in the confidence that, whatever now happens to the pioneers, Hiranyagarbha has taken the new ideas into his protection and when that has once happened Virat must inevitably fulfil them.

It is a short-sighted and superficial outlook which sees in the 16th October only the day of mourning for the partition of Bengal or in the 7th August only a commemoration of the Boycott. The Boycott is a symbol, the mourning a symbol. When the weapon of Boycott has done its work, we shall lay it aside, but the 7th August we shall not lay aside, for it is our sacred Day of Awakening. When the Partition is rescinded, we shall cease to go into annual mourning, but the 16th October will not fall into oblivion or desuetude, for it is our sacred Day of the Worship of the Indivisible Mother. These are the imaginations, these the mighty and creative thoughts and aspirations which we seek to foster by these celebrations. Therefore we regard the holding of the Boycott Day as a national duty. Let those who scoff at it and talk of the necessity of silent *sadhana*, for we have heard of such, be warned how they desecrate sacred words by using them as a convenient cant and try, out of selfish and infidel fears, to thwart in the minds of the young the work which by these celebrations God has been doing.

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## A Birthday Talk

**I**N MY childhood before the full development of my faculties, I became conscious of a strong impulse in me. I did not realise what it was then, but it grew stronger and stronger as I gained in years till all the weakness of my childhood, fear, selfishness, etc., vanished from my mind. From the day of my return to the mother country, the impulse is surging forth in great force, and my set purpose and devotion are becoming more confirmed with the trials and oppressions to which I am subjected. When some divine power by the grace of God manifests itself in a human being any efforts to develop it give a new force to the national life. You will have to sacrifice yourself at the feet of your Mother. You should, therefore, devote yourself with firm faith and whole heart to her service. Service of our motherland is our highest duty at this moment. This must be our duty in this iron age. It is now the time for us to conserve our energy. Do not be impatient, do not despair. Do not lose faith. The present fatigue and inactivity are natural; you will find instances of them in the history of every nation. Everyone must store up energy. Be prepared with fresh hope and vigour for the worship of the Mother. Divine power has infused this nation with a new power. This power will exalt the nation one day.

*Delivered at Sri Aurobindo's residence in Calcutta on 15 August 1909, his thirty-seventh birthday. Text in Bengali published in Bharat Mitra on 21 August; subsequently translated into English and published in a police intelligence report.*

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## Facts and Opinions

### Srijut Surendranath Banerji's Return

The veteran leader of Moderate Bengal has returned from his oratorical triumphs in the land of our rulers. The ovations of praise and applause which appreciative audiences and newspaper critics of all shades of opinion have heaped upon him, were thoroughly deserved. Never has the great oratorical gift with which Srijut Surendranath is so splendidly endowed, been displayed to such faultless advantage as in these the crowning efforts of his old age. The usual defect of his oratory, an excess of language and rhetoric over substantial force, a defect which also limited Gladstone's oratory and made it the glory of an hour instead of an abiding possession to humanity, was absent from these speeches in England. For the first time the orator rose to the full height of a great and sound eloquence strong in matter as in style. With the statesman's part in the speeches we do not wholly agree. Nevertheless it must be accounted as righteousness to Srijut Surendranath that he enforced the Moderate Nationalist view of things, — a very different view from Mr. Gokhale's which is certainly not Nationalism and hardly even strong enough to be called Moderatism, — to its utmost limits and did not leave the English public under the vain delusion that some paltry tinkering with the Legislative

Councils would satisfy the aspirations of an awakened India. His first speeches accepting the reforms were great blunders which might have done infinite harm, but his later utterances, however equivocal on this point, did much to redress the balance. We await with interest S<sub>j</sub>. Surendranath's action in this matter. In our view the one policy for us is "No control, no co-operation," and in this we believe we are supported not only by the whole mass of advanced Nationalist opinion but by a great body of Moderates. The danger is that the older Moderates, trained in a much less exacting system of political agitation, may attempt to enforce the demand for control only in speech while in action conceding co-operation without control and thus giving away for some fancied and worthless advantage the vital position of the new movement. The reforms give no control, therefore the reforms must be rejected. Co-operation is our only asset, the only thing we can offer in exchange for control, the only thing by withholding which we can by pressure bring about the cession of control. It would be the height of political folly to give away our only asset for nothing.

### **A False Step**

S<sub>j</sub>. Surendranath's maladroit reference to the outrages when speaking at Bombay was a false step which he has since made some attempt to recover. However it be put, it was maladroit and unnecessary. Any promise of co-operation in this respect implies an admission that we have the power to prevent these incidents and are therefore to some extent responsible either for bringing them about or for not stopping them before. It echoes the indiscretion by which Sir Edward Baker sought to make a whole nation responsible for these acts of recklessness and excuses the vindictive and headstrong utterances in which Mr. Gokhale tried to protect his own party and invoke the fiercest repression against his Nationalist countrymen. The isolated instances of assassination during the last year or more have been the reaction, deplorable enough, against the insane policy of indiscriminate police rule and repression which was started

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and progressively increased in the recent stages of the movement. Not by a single word or expression ought any public man to allow the responsibility to be shifted from the right quarter and to rest in the slightest degree on the people who had no part in them, no power to detect and stop the inflamed and resolute secret assassin and no authority given them by which they can bring about the removal of the real causes of the symptom. To dissociate oneself is a different matter. That should be done clearly, firmly and once for all.

### A London Congress

It is a pity that his oratorical triumphs in England seem to have blinded S. Surendranath to their small utility to the country. So far has he been led away by the slight and transient effect he has produced on the surface of the public mind in England that he is attempting to revive the old and futile idea of a Congress in London. Whether he will prevail on his fellow-Conventionalists to perpetrate this huge waste of money, we cannot say. The break-up of the Congress and the “stern and relentless repression” of the Nationalist party has delivered the old Congress Conservatives from the fear of public opinion. Needless to say, no so-called Congress held under such circumstances will be representative of the people. It is the old love of striking theatrical effects addressed to an English audience as patrons that has been revived in S. Surendranath by his visit. We notice that the dead cant about the faith in the sense of justice of the Government and the British democracy once more reappears in the columns of the *Bengalee*. All these are bad signs. What is it that the Moderate Leader proposes to effect by this expenditure of money which might be so much better used in the country itself? We fail to see how a meeting of forty or fifty Indians, however eminent and respectable, prosing about Indian grievances and the sense of justice of the British democracy or the immaculate Liberalism of Lord Morley can do any lasting service to the cause of India in England. Even if this could be turned into a really imposing theatricality, the effect of such shows in European countries is

merely a nine days' wonder unless they are followed up. It is natural that an orator should overrate the effect of oratory, but Sj. Surendranath is surely aware that the greatest speeches or series of speeches unconnected with its own interests now produce on the blasé British public only the effect of a passing ripple which is immediately effaced by the next that follows. Either therefore his proposal means only some temporary theatricals and waste of money or he must persuade our people to resume the old abandoned policy and carry on a perennial campaign in England for the "education" of the British Public. Only as part of such a campaign had the proposal of a London Congress ever any meaning or justification. But even in its best days the Congress leaders could never produce enough men, money and energy for so stupendous a work, and it is doubly impossible now that the old policy is discredited. Certainly, if Sj. Surendranath thinks that the newly awakened energies of India are going to follow him in throwing themselves into this channel, he is grievously mistaken. Not all his prestige and influence can put back the hands of the clock so utterly. The Indian movement has really to deal not with the British democracy, which is an almost negligible factor in Indian affairs, but with the politicians in Parliament, His Majesty's ministers and the powerful influence in England of the official and commercial English out here. These are hard-headed and obstinate forces which, so far as they can at all rise out of the narrow groove of class interests or racial pride and prejudice, can only be influenced by one consideration, the best way to preserve the Empire in India. Even in the minds of Sir Henry Cotton and Mr. Mackarness that cannot fail to be a dominant consideration. If any educational work has to be done in England, it is to convince these classes that it is only by the concession of control that the co-operation of the Indian people can be secured. And that work is best done from India.

## The Power that Uplifts

OF ALL the great actors who were in the forefront of the Italian Revolution, Mazzini and Cavour were the most essential to Italian regeneration. Of the two Mazzini was undoubtedly the greater. Cavour was the statesman and organiser, Mazzini the prophet and creator. Mazzini was busy with the great and eternal ideas which move masses of men in all countries and various ages, Cavour with the temporary needs and circumstances of modern Italy. The one was an acute brain, the other a mighty soul. Cavour belongs to Italy, Mazzini to all humanity. Cavour was the man of the hour, Mazzini is the citizen of Eternity. But the work of Mazzini could not have been immediately crowned with success if there had been no Cavour. The work of Cavour would equally have been impossible but for Mazzini. Mazzini summed up the soul of all humanity, the idea of its past and the inspiration of its future in Italian forms and gave life to the dead. At his breath the dead bones clothed themselves with flesh and the wilderness of poisonous brambles blossomed with the rose. Mazzini found Italy corrupt, demoralised, treacherous, immoral, selfish, wholly divided and incapable of union; he gave her the impulse of a mighty hope, a lofty spirituality, an intellectual impulse which despising sophistry and misleading detail went straight to the core of things and fastened on the one or two necessities, an ideal to live and die for and the strength to live and die for it. This was all he did, but it was enough. Cavour brought the old Italian statesmanship, diplomacy, practicality and placed it at the service of the great ideal of liberty and unity which Mazzini had made the overmastering passion of the millions. Yet these two deliverers and lovers of Italy never understood each other. Mazzini hated Cavour as a dishonest trickster and Machiavellian, Cavour scorned Mazzini

as a fanatic and dangerous fire-brand. It is easy to assign superficial and obvious causes for the undying misunderstanding and to say that the monarchist and practical statesman and the utopian and democrat were bound to misunderstand and perpetually distrust and dislike each other. But there was a deeper cause.

The one thing which Mazzini most hated and from which he strove to deliver the hearts and imaginations of the young men of Italy was what he summed up in the word Machiavellianism. The Machiavellian is the man of pure intellect without imagination who, while not intellectually dead to great objects, does not make them an ideal but regards them from the point of view of concrete interests and is prepared to use in effecting them every means which can be suggested by human cunning or put into motion by unscrupulous force. Italian patriotism previous to the advent of Mazzini was cast in this Machiavellian mould. The Carbonari movement which was Italy's first attempt to live was permeated with it. Mazzini lifted up the country from this low and ineffective level and gave it the only force which can justify the hope of revival, the force of the spirit within, the strength to disregard immediate interests and surrounding circumstances and, carried away by the passion for an ideal, trusting oneself to the impetus and increasing velocity of the force it creates, to scorn ideas of impossibility and improbability and to fling life, goods and happiness away on the cast of dice already clogged against one by adverse Fortune and unfavourable circumstance. The spiritual force within not only creates the future but creates the materials for the future. It is not limited to the existing materials either in their nature or in their quantity. It can transform bad material into good material, insufficient means into abundant means.

It was a deep consciousness of this great truth that gave Mazzini the strength to create modern Italy. His eyes were always fixed on the mind and heart of the nation, very little on the external or internal circumstances of Italy. He was not a statesman but he had a more than statesmanlike insight. His plan of a series of petty, local and necessarily abortive insurrections

strikes the ordinary practical man as the very negation of common sense and political wisdom. It seems almost as futile as the idea of some wild brains, if indeed the idea be really cherished, that by random assassinations the freedom of this country can be vindicated. There is, however, a radical difference. Mazzini knew well what he was about. His eyes were fixed on the heart of the nation and as the physician of the Italian malady his business was not with the ultimate and perfect result but with the creation of conditions favourable to complete cure and resurgence. He knew final success was impossible without the creation of a force that could not be commanded for some time to come. But he also knew that even that force could not succeed without a great spiritual and moral strength behind its action and informing its aspirations. It was this strength he sought to create. The spiritual force he created by the promulgation of the mighty and uplifting ideas which pervade his writings and of which *Young Italy* was the organ.

But moral force cannot be confirmed merely by ideas, it can only be forged and tempered in the workshop of action. And it was the habit of action, the habit of strength, daring and initiative which Mazzini sought to recreate in the torpid heart and sluggish limbs of Italy. And with it he sought to establish the sublime Roman spirit of utter self-sacrifice and self-abnegation, contempt of difficulty and apparent impossibility and iron insensibility to defeat. For his purpose the very hopelessness of the enterprises he set on foot was more favourable than more possible essays. And when others and sometimes his own heart reproached him with flinging away so many young and promising lives into the bloody trench of his petty yet impossible endeavours, the faith and wisdom in him upheld him in the face of every discouragement. Because he had that superhuman strength, he was permitted to uplift Italy. Had it been God's purpose that Italy should become swiftly one of the greater European powers, he would have been permitted to free her also. He would have done it in a different way from Cavour's,—after a much longer lapse of time, with a much more terrible and bloody expense

of human life but without purchasing Italy's freedom in the French market by the bribe of Savoy and Nice and with such a divine output of spiritual and moral force as would have sustained his country for centuries and fulfilled his grandiose dream of an Italy spiritually, intellectually and politically leading Europe.

The work was given to Cavour precisely because he was a lesser man. Mazzini saw in him the revival of Machiavellianism and the frustration of his own moral work. He was wrong, but not wholly wrong. The temper and methods of Cavour were predominatingly Machiavellian. He resumed that element in Italian character and gave it a triumphant expression. Like the Carbonari he weighed forces, gave a high place to concrete material interests, attempted great but not impossible objects and by means which were bold but not heroic, used diplomacy, temporising and shuffling with a force of which they were incapable and unlike them did not shrink from material sacrifices. He succeeded where they failed, not merely because he was a great statesman, but because he had learned to cherish the unity and freedom of Italy not as mere national interests but as engrossing ideals. The passion greater than a man's love for child and wife which he put into these aspirations and the emotional fervour with which he invested his Liberal ideal of a free Church in a free State, measure the spiritual gulf between himself and the purely Machiavellian Carbonari. It was this that gave him the force to attempt greatly and to cast all on the hazard of a single die. He had therefore the inspiration of a part of the Mazzinian gospel and he used the force which Mazzini created. Without it he would have been helpless. It was not Cavour who saved Italy, it was the force of resurgent Italy working through Cavour.

History often misrepresents and it formerly represented the later part of the Revolution as entirely engineered by his statecraft, but it is now recognised that more than once in the greatest matters Cavour planned one way and the great Artificer of nations planned in another. But Cavour had the greatest gift of a statesman, to recognise that events were wiser than himself and throwing aside his attachment to the

success of his own schemes to see and use the advantages of a situation he had not foreseen. This gift Mazzini, the fanatic and doctrinaire, almost entirely lacked. Still the success of Cavour prolonged in the Italian character and political action some of the lower qualities of the long-enslaved nation and is responsible for the reverses, retardations and deep-seated maladies which keep back Italy from the fulfilment of her greatness. Mazzini, with his superior diagnosis of the national disease and his surgeon's pitilessness, would have probed deeper, intensified and prolonged the agony but made a radical cure.

The circumstances in India forbid the use of the same means as the Italians used. But the general psychological laws which govern nations in their rise, greatness, decline and resurgence are always the same. The freedom we seek in India may be different in its circumstances from Italian freedom, the means to be used are certainly different, but the principle is the same. The old patriotism of the nineteenth century in India was petty, unscrupulous, weak, full of insincerities, concealment, shufflings, concerned with small material interests, not with great ideals, though not averse to looking intellectually and from far-off at great objects. It had neither inspiration nor truth nor statesmanship. Nationalism has done part of the work of a Mazzini by awakening a great spiritual force in the country and giving the new generation great ideals, a wide horizon of hope and aspiration, an intense faith and energy. It has sought like Mazzini to raise up the moral condition of the nation to the height of love, strength, self-sacrifice, constancy under defeat, unwearied and undaunted perseverance, the habit of individual and organised action, self-reliance and indomitable enterprise; but it has rejected the old methods of insurrectionary violence and replaced them by self-help and passive resistance.

That work is not yet complete and only when it is complete will it be possible for a strength to be generated in the country which the past represented by the bureaucracy will consent to recognise as the representative of the future and to abdicate in its favour by a gradual cession of powers. It is our hope

that as the work has begun, so it will continue in the spirit of Nationalism and not only the political circumstances of India be changed but her deeper diseases be cured and by a full evocation of her immense stores of moral and spiritual strength that be accomplished for India which Mazzini could not accomplish for Italy, to place her in the head and forefront of the new world whose birth-throes are now beginning to convulse the Earth.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Katha Upanishad II.2  
Anandamath I (continued)

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## Facts and Comments

### The Cretan Difficulty

Foreign affairs are as a rule lightly and unsubstantially dealt with by Indian journals. This is partly due to want of the necessary information, partly to the parochial habit of mind encouraged by a cabined and subject national life which cannot enlarge its imagination outside the sphere of those immediate and daily events directly touching ourselves. And yet the happenings of today in Asia, Europe and Africa are of great moment to the future of India and full of encouragement and stimulus to the spirit of Nationalism. The recent events in Turkey are an instance. It is not the methods of the Young Turks which have any lesson for India. The circumstances are too dissimilar to warrant any fanciful theories of that kind. It is rather the character of the party of freedom which bears a lesson to all struggling nationalities. The dominant qualities of the democratic leaders—and these are the qualities they have imparted to the movement,—are strength, manhood, a bold heart, a clear brain, a virile efficiency. The Government they have established has been showing these qualities to the full in its treatment of the Cretan difficulty. It has shown that free Turkey, while not rashly oblivious of the circumstances created by an unfortunate past, will not tolerate any attempt

to be treated as Sultan Abdul Hamid suffered himself to be treated. Sultan Abdul Hamid, afraid of his subjects, afraid of the world, afraid even of his spies and informers, followed the weak and cowardly policy of a dishonest, intriguing and evasive Machiavellianism. He conducted that policy with a certain skill and statecraft in details which eventually evoked admiration, but it could neither save Turkey from ignominy and weakness nor permanently protect a throne based upon cruelty, falsehood and despicable meanness. All that it did, for Satan must be given his due, was to stave off a final disruption of Turkey and expulsion of the Ottoman from Europe. But true freedom is always conscious of strength and knows that it is better to perish than to live for a short while longer at the cost of continual insult, degradation and weakness. The first efforts of the new Government have been to save what remained of the outskirts of Turkish empire in Europe, the suzerainty in Crete, the supreme control in Macedonia. Their diplomacy has been strong, outspoken and fearless. It did not flinch nor in any way draw back a step or lower its tone until it forced Greece to a satisfactory attitude and obliged the Powers to baffle the tortuous Greek methods by lowering the Greek flag in Canea. It has quietly ignored the attempt of the Powers to interfere even by a suggestion in the direct question between itself and Greece; for we read that Turkey is not going to give any formal answer to the Powers' Note recommending pacific counsels as that Note did not call for any reply. It has been supported by the newly liberated nation by means of a Boycott which would have alarmed into reason a stronger Government than that of Athens. And as strength, when firm and able, can never be ignored, it has secured the sympathy of the Powers in the shape of concessions which would never have been yielded to a weak or overcautious Government. Strength attracts strength; firm and clear-minded courage commands success and respect; strong and straight dealing can dispense with the methods of dissimulation and intrigue. All these are signs of character and it is only character that can give freedom and greatness to nations.

### **Greece and Turkey**

It is not to be imagined, however, that this is the closing chapter. The question between Greece and Turkey will have eventually to be fought out by the sword. It is true that the immediate question is for the moment settled and the rent in the Cretan patchwork mended. But that patchwork is not of a kind to last. The Greek Government is not likely to give up its methods in Crete, the Christian population their desire for union with Athens or the present Cretan administration their secret sympathy with and support of these aspirations. It would have been a simpler matter if the population of the island had been wholly Christian, but there is a Mahomedan population also which is as eagerly attached to the Turkish connection as the others are desirous of the Greek. The ancient history of Crete supports the sentiment of Greek unity, its later history the sentiment of imperial Ottoman greatness. And apart from Crete, there are inevitable sources of quarrel in Macedonia. Some day the Powers will have to stand aside and allow these natural enemies to settle the question in the only possible way. The result of such non-intervention in an armed struggle could not be doubtful. The Mongolian is a stronger spirit than the Slav, the Musulman a greater dynamic force than the Christian, and it is only ignorance and absolutism that has for the time depressed the Turk. The disparity between the Turk and the Greek is abysmal. The former is a soldier and statesman, the latter a merchant and intriguer. A war between two such Powers with none to intervene would speedily end with the Turk not only in occupation of Thessaly but entering Athens.

### **Spain and the Moor**

Another corner of the Asiatic world — for Northern Africa is thoroughly Asianised if not Asiatic, — is convulsed with struggles which may well precede another resurgence. There was a time when the Moor held Spain and gave civilisation to semi-barbarous Europe. The revolution of the wheel has now gone to

its utmost length and finds the Spaniard invading Morocco. But this invasion does not seem to promise any Spanish expansion in Africa. With infinite difficulty and at the cost of a bloody émeute in Spain King Alfonso's Government have landed a considerable army in Morocco and yet with all that force can only just protect their communications and stand facing the formidable country where the stubborn Kabyle tribesmen await the invader. There the army is hung up for the present, unwilling to retreat and afraid to advance, and the Spanish General has again sent to Spain for reinforcements, a feat of military strategy at which he seems to be exceptionally skilful. If the men of the mountains are fortunate enough to have a leader with a head on his shoulders, the circumstances augur a reverse for Spain as decisive and perhaps more sanguinary than the Italian overthrow in Abyssinia. Meanwhile King Alfonso has sacrificed all his youthful popularity by this ill-omened war and the bloody severity which has temporarily saved his throne. And with the popularity of the young King has gone the friendship of the Spanish nation for England, for the Spaniards accuse that friendship of the origination of these troubles and the British Government as the selfish instigators of the intervention in Morocco.

### **The London Congress**

Since we made our remarks on the proposal of a Congress session in London, we have seen two reasons urged for this reactionary step. It is necessary, it seems, to prevent judgment going against us in England by default and also to win the sympathy of the civilised world. The former argument we have already answered in our last issue. Neither the speeches of a famous orator nor the conjoint speeches of many less famous will win for us the support of the British people for claims which go directly against their interests. Only a prolonged and steady campaign in England all the year round for several years can make any impression of a real and lasting kind and even that impression cannot in the nature of things be sufficient for the purpose. Those who are on the side of Indian interests must always be in the

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minority and will always be denounced by the majority as allies of the enemies of English interests. Even now that is increasingly the attitude of the public towards Mr. Mackarness and his supporters and we do not think S. J. Surendranath's eloquence has changed matters. Already the most prominent critics of Lord Morley and his policy of repression have received intimation from their constituents of their serious displeasure and are in danger of losing their seats at the next election. This is in itself a sufficient refutation of the fable that speeches and Congresses in England can change an ignorant British public into informed and enthusiastic supporters of Indian self-government. It is only political necessity and the practical recognition that change is inevitable which can convert the statesmen of England. As for the opinion of the civilised world, we do not despise it as a moral force. But its practical effect is so little as to be almost nil. In a constitutional question between the present Government in India and the people we do not see what can be the place or mode of operation of the world's opinion or sympathy. An academical approval of our aims can be of no help to us. Nor is the sympathy of the world likely to be excited beyond such academical approval unless the Government faithfully imitates the Russian precedent in dealing with popular aspirations. Even then it is not likely to tell on the action of the Government concerned which will certainly resent foreign interference in its dealings with its own subjects. The impotence of the civilised world was strikingly shown in the crisis of Russian despotism and at the time of the Boer War. Even were it otherwise, a London session of the Congress would only awaken a passing interest. In that respect the visit of Swami Vivekananda to America and the subsequent work of those who followed him did more for India than a hundred London Congresses could effect. That is the true way of awaking sympathy, — by showing ourselves to the nations as a people with a great past and ancient civilisation who still possess something of the genius and character of our forefathers, have still something to give the world and therefore deserve freedom, — by proof of our manliness and fitness, not by mendicancy.

### Political Prisoners

We extract elsewhere some very telling criticisms from the pen of the well-known positivist Mr. Frederic Harrison on the treatment of political prisoners. This is a subject on which a Nationalist writer is naturally somewhat shy of dilating, as any stress on the brutality and callousness of the treatment to which not only convicted but undertrial prisoners of gentle birth and breeding are sometimes subjected in Indian jails, might be misinterpreted by our opponents as an unwillingness to face the penalties which repressive legislation inflicts on those who cherish great aspirations for their race and country. But two instances have occurred recently which compel attention. One is the death of the convicted prisoner Ashok Nandi of consumption brought on by exposure and neglect during fever in the undertrial period of the Alipur Case. We exonerate from blame the jail authorities who were exceptionally humane men and would have been glad to deal humanely with the prisoners. But their blamelessness only brings out the barbarity of a system which allows of the confinement of a delicate ailing lad in a punishment cell exposed night after night to the dews and cold of an unhealthy season, and that without his having committed any fault or shown anything but the mildest and most docile of characters. The other case is that of Mr. Achyutrao Kolhatkar of Nagpur, editor of the *Deshsevak*, a gentleman of distinguished education, ability and character, who was convicted for the publication in his paper of the reports of Sj. Aurobindo Ghose's speeches delivered at a time when Mr. Kolhatkar was absent from Nagpur. The Sessions Judge of Alipur declared on the police reports of these speeches that so far from being seditious or violent they told in favour of the speaker and not against him. We find it difficult to believe that the newspaper report of speeches from which the police could extract nothing that was not in the speaker's favour, could be at all seditious. Be that as it may, Mr. Kolhatkar was convicted and perhaps, according to the "strong man" code of ethics, forfeited claim to generous treatment by his refusal to apologise. We have heard rumours of treatment being meted

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out to him which can only be described as studied brutality and the evidence of eye-witnesses who have seen the condition to which he was reduced, do not encourage us to reject these reports as fabrications. Finally, the refusal of the Central Provinces Government to face independent medical inspection and so dispose of the serious allegations publicly preferred put a very ugly aspect on this case. If the allegations are true, they amount to a treatment which would evoke the loudest indignation and reprobation in England if applied under the same circumstances in another country. But we cherish little hope of redress. The prison system of the European nations is only a refined and systematised savagery perpetuating the methods of ancient and mediaeval barbarity in forms that do not at once shock the eye. Besides, the account of the recent starvation strike of the Suffragettes has shown what callous and brutal treatment can be inflicted by English officials in England itself even on women, and women of education, good birth, position and culture, guilty only of political obstruction and disorderliness. Yet this is the civilisation for which we are asked to sacrifice the inheritance of our forefathers!

### **An Official Freak**

We suppose in a bureaucracy it is inevitable that officials should be masters and be able to inflict inconvenience and loss on the citizen without any means of redress. Last Monday the publication of a new weekly named *Dharma*, edited by Aurobindo Ghose, was due and had been widely announced. The issue was ready and the printer duly attended the Police Court to declare his responsibility for printing and publishing the periodical. Except under very unusual circumstances this is a mere formality and one would have thought no difficulty could intervene, but nothing could persuade the Court Official to refrain from delaying the acceptance till the next day. It was pointed out that this would entail unnecessary inconvenience and perhaps considerable financial loss, but that naturally did not concern him as he was the master of the public and not their servant. The next

day a variation of the same vexatious procedure was repeated. It was whispered, we do not know with what truth, that the first delay was for the Criminal Investigation Department to have time to find out whether the printer had been convicted in any sedition case. If so it was a futile delay. There is no concealment of the responsibility with regard to this paper. The name of the editor and proprietor was openly given and the printer was there to accept his responsibility. This does not look like intended sedition. If there were any doubt the required information could easily have been gained from the Manager of the paper who was present and would no doubt have been glad to save delay and loss by stating the printer's antecedents. It was not likely that he would conceal a conviction as that would be a thing impossible to suppress. But then, if officialdom were to acquire a common sense, the laws of Nature would be sadly contravened and it is better to inflict loss on individuals than to upset a law of Nature.

### **Soham Gita**

Every Bengali is familiar with the name of Shyamakanta Banerji the famous athlete and tiger-tamer but it may not be known to all that after leaving the worldly life and turning to the life of the ascetic, this pioneer of the cult of physical strength and courage in Bengal has taken the name of Soham Swami and is dwelling in a hermitage in the Himalayas at Nainital. The Swami has now published a philosophical poem in his mother tongue called the *Soham Gita*. The deep truths of the Vedanta viewed from the standpoint of the Adwaitavadin and the spiritual experiences of the Jnani who has had realisation of *dhyān* and *samadhi* are here developed in simple verse and language. We shall deal with the work in a more detailed review in a later issue.

## Bengal and the Congress

THE DISSENSIONS in the Congress have been a severe test of the capacity of the Indian people to act politically under modern conditions. The first necessary element of democratic politics is difference of opinion, robust, frank, avowed, firmly and passionately held, and the first test of political capacity in a democratic nation is to bear these differences of opinion, however strong and even vehement, without disruption. In a monarchy differences of opinion are either stifled by an all-powerful absolute will or subordinated and kept in check by the supreme kingly arbiter; in an aristocracy the jealousy of a close body discourages free opinion and its free expression; in a bureaucracy stereotyped habits of action and method lead to a fixed and inelastic way of thinking and difference of opinion, when tolerated, is kept by the exigencies of administration private and largely ineffective. It is democracy alone that demands free divergence of opinion in politics and open propagandism and debate as the very breath of its nostrils. The tendency to democracy creates freedom of speech and thought and these in their turn hasten the advent of democracy. All attempts to silence by force or evasion important differences of opinion are anti-democratic and though they do not necessarily show an incapacity for government, do show an incapacity for democratic politics. The democratic tendency in humanity is and has long been pressing forward victoriously to self-fulfilment and the modern attempt of the banded forces of autocracy, bureaucracy, plutocracy and theocracy to turn its march can only result in its growing stronger by the check and urging forward with greater impetuosity to its goal. It is therefore the democratic tendency and the democratic capacity which must be accepted and shown by any nation which aspires to go forward and be among the leaders of the world. In the

matter of the Congress it is only Bengal, so far, that has shown the democratic capacity of being able to meet and discuss and to a certain extent work together in spite of grave and even fundamental differences. To a large extent this is due to the fact that all parties in Bengal have some common ground. Just as the different parties in a well-organised country, even when they differ in everything else, have this foundation of union and common tolerance that all are desirous of the freedom, greatness and sound internal condition and development of their nation, so we in Bengal are all agreed in holding the development of a well-organised, self-sufficient and self-governing people as the immediate and ultimate object of all our politics. This is only to say that Bengal has attained earlier than other provinces to political perception and sound political instincts. There are forces of disruption in Bengal as everywhere else, but it says much for the capacity and insight of the mass of the educated class that these forces have been overborne and Bengal preserves her unity. The credit is due much more to the people themselves than to the leaders on either side, and this itself is the healthiest sign of all and the guarantee of democratic development. When the people are wiser than their leaders and wise men, the democratic future of a country is assured. Men of great gifts and strong character are often carried away by their eager perceptions and at such moments it is the sound common sense of a capable democracy that sets right the balance. It was this common sense that saved the situation after Surat. The people had the instinct to desire unity and the good sense to see that unity was not possible or, if possible, was not worth having by the sacrifice of the movement which Bengal had initiated. That such an unthinkable repudiation would have been the first result of surrender to the Convention leaders of Bombay and Madras, has been sufficiently proved by the determined rejection of the Boycott resolution at the meeting of the Convention last December. The Pabna resolution for a United Congress was therefore so framed as to leave the Convention Committee a door open for reconciliation. They rejected the opportunity on a constitutional

technicality of a purely verbal character and of doubtful validity and proceeded to show the honesty of this sudden passion for scrupulous constitutional procedure when they imposed a constitution on the body they chose to call the Congress without allowing it to be submitted for acceptance or amendment by that body. The resolution at Hughly ought to be differently framed so as not only to make a United Congress possible but to bring it about so far as Bengal can help towards that consummation.

In Bengal there are three classes of opinion as to the best way of meeting the difficulty. There is a small section of the Moderate party which desires the Convention Congress to stand and the Nationalists to be excluded. There are two courses open to this minority. They may insist on the Bengal Provincial Conference and the District Committees accepting the body created by the Congress Committee as the real Congress and on their loyally following the rules and the instructions of this Congress and its Provincial Committee. If that were accepted the Bengal Provincial Conference would become a Moderate organisation and, while commercial Swadeshi would be preserved, the Boycott would disappear from the avowed programme of Bengal. But we do not think anyone will have the hardihood to make this proposal in so many terms and, if any ventured so far, it would be without any chance of popular acceptance. A more probable course is for this minority to agree to a vague and easily evaded resolution which they will have no intention of accepting as a guide to conduct and to oppose the passing of any more definite resolution on the ground that Bengal ought to preserve its own integrity and leave the rest of India to its divisions. The object they would aim at is to leave the Convention and its Committees to figure as the real Congress and Congress Committees and themselves be free to join them without popular disapproval. But the inevitable consequence would be that the Nationalists will be compelled to erect another body which would represent their interests. The erection of a rival National Congress at Nagpur last year was prevented by the Government, fortunately, we think, for no such body could really claim to be a National Assembly

any more than the Convention can justly claim that character. But if a United Congress proves impossible, the Nationalists cannot allow the Convention unchallenged to delude the world by pretending to voice authoritatively the sense of the Indian nation.

A second section of opinion is that of advanced Moderates and among these we find two ways of thinking. Some lay stress on the unconstitutional conduct of the Convention Committee in forcing their constitution on the Madras Convention without submitting it to discussion and seemed to think that by passing it through the next sitting the constitutional defect will be cured. They seem to forget that it will be a Congress elected under this unconstitutional constitution to which the question will be submitted. In effect, therefore, a body unconstitutionally elected will sit to validate the unlawful law under which it was born and so cure its own unconstitutional character without getting rid of the initial and incurable defect which prevents it from sitting at all. The constitutional difficulty will not be met and the political difficulty will remain as serious as ever, for the Nationalists would still be excluded and the menace to our unity in Bengal would increase every year. Others of the advanced Moderates see more clearly and can understand that only a freely elected Congress, as freely elected as the Hughly Conference will be, can accept this constitution or form any other. Any resolution passed on this subject must therefore contemplate a freely elected session and the submission to it of any constitution proposed or drafted for the better organisation of Congress procedure and Congress affairs.

The third section of opinion is that of the Nationalist party. Immediately after the fracas at Surat, on the same day indeed, the party became acutely sensible of the nature of the catastrophe which had occurred and its first step was to take an attitude which might leave the way open to reconciliation; and this attitude they maintained at all the subsequent Conferences where they were either represented or dominant. We do not agree with Lala Lajpat Rai's suggestion that the Congress should always remain in the hands of the Moderates; a popular body must remain

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either in the hands of the party which numerically predominates or be run by a joint body representing them proportionately to their numbers. But the Nationalists would not deny the name of Congress to a body merely because its administration was in the hands of a single party. They refuse it because that body by a constitution passed without right or authority excludes a powerful section of opinion in the country and pretends to be a National Congress when it is really a party organisation. If the Convention were to consent to a free election and a free constitution, the Nationalist party would not allow a matter of nomenclature, however important, to stand in the way of reunion. But the Convention constitution is not free. It is in the first place a close oligarchical constitution seeking to limit the right of election to a few privileged bodies affiliated to itself. Even if this reactionary limitation were to be confirmed by a freely elected Congress the Nationalists would have no cause of complaint, for they would still be free to organise a party institution which would spread the knowledge and appreciation of democratic principles and get this limitation abrogated from within the Congress itself. But the Constitution is also not free in virtue of the eligibility to delegateship being limited to those who can sign a declaration of faith specially designed to exclude the advanced school of patriotism. This limitation is vital. A national Assembly cannot bind itself by any creed but the creed of patriotism which is understood and which it would be futile to express. The Nationalist party cannot accept the limitation of delegateship by an exclusive creed. They would not seek to bind it by their own creed, still less can they accept a creed which contravenes their avowed principles. The Congress may always pass a resolution expressing its aims and objects. That is merely the opinion of the majority and can always be changed if the minority becomes the majority. But a personal subscription to views one does not hold is unthinkable to any man of honour and probity. These are the three parties and their views. The election of a free Congress is the only possible way to their final reconciliation, the omission of the creed the only condition of the continuance of a United Congress. It is for

the good sense of the people at large to decide between these conflicting views and determine what is best for Bengal and the nation.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Katha Upanishad II.3  
Anandamath II, III

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## Facts and Comments

### The Kaul Judgment

The Kaul Boycott case which has attracted some comment in the Press is one which ought to be drawn more prominently into public notice. The Settlement Patwary of Kaul together with four leading Banias, two Zamindars and a Brahmin of the place were charged by the police with having held a Boycott meeting which endangered the peace of the town. It is alleged that they agreed to impose a penalty upon all persons using foreign sugar after a certain date and a heavier fine on anyone importing the commodity. It does not appear that there was any complaint from a single person in the neighbourhood as to any such meeting being held, still less to their being inconvenienced or stopped in their avocations by any action or threatened action on the part of the defendants. But on the ipse dixit of the complaining constable the defendants were found guilty and bound over to keep the peace. The defendants themselves denied the meeting and alleged that they took no part in politics and were guiltless of any religious objection to foreign sugar. In itself the case appears to be a judicial vagary of the worst kind. But the remarkable pronouncements of the Sub-divisional Officer of Kaithal on the juristic aspects of the case make it of more than local importance.

Mr. Garrett in his judgment starts a very surprising metaphysical argument by drawing a nice distinction between illegal, non-legal and wrongful acts. Illegal acts are those against which the law provides a penalty either by criminal or civil action. Non-legal acts are those which are contrary to public policy but are left to social opinion to discourage. Wrongful acts, according to Mr. Garrett, are those which, being neither illegal nor non-legal, are yet abhorrent to the moral sense of men of reason. We do not know if this remarkable definition of wrongful acts will be supported by lawyers. But Mr. Garrett farther improves on these distinctions by assevering on the strength of an Irish judgment that a perfectly legal action becomes illegal when it is done by many persons in combination, provided anyone can show that his interests as an individual or as one of a class are aimed at or necessarily injured. In order that we may not be accused of misrepresenting the learned Sub-divisional Officer we quote the words of the judgment. "Without quoting chapter, verse and date I call to mind the judgment of the late Lord Chief Justice of Ireland, I believe, Baron Rolleston, in what is known as the Baker's Case. In that case it was held that the baker had a cause of action against the farmers of the village in which he established a bakery because they combined to boycott his bakery by each establishing a kitchen for the preparation of the bread for themselves and their servants, their motive being simply a difference on political grounds. The Irish farmers did not go so far as the defendants are said to have gone in this case, and they in nowise interfered with the baker personally. The illegality of their action consisted in their combining to do an act which if done separately would have been legal. The learned Judge observed to the effect that whereas a single man may be left to work out his own salvation when opposed by an individual, he could claim protection from a combination. In that case there were no proposals to inflict fines or outcaste, yet the act was held illegal. It is very certain therefore that an act which in violence far outstrips that, is, if not illegal, at least wrongful."

### **The Implications in the Judgment**

That is the judgment. It is obvious that these remarkable dicta have very wide implications and, if upheld, make every combination harmful to personal or class interests impossible under the law. That has been for some time the tendency of magisterial decisions in India. Every action for instance which may be objectionable to a number of Mahomedans is now liable to be forbidden because it is likely to lead to a breach of the peace, and one is dimly beginning to wonder whether the day may not yet come when worship in Hindu temples may be forbidden on that valid ground. Under Mr. Garrett's dictum it seems to depend purely on the bias of the judge what action will or will not be allowed by the law. A teetotal judge may easily penalise a party of men going into a public house to drink, because it is an action abhorrent to his moral sense as a man of reason. And certainly it would not be unarguable that such a combined action might very easily lead to a breach of the peace, much more easily than the meeting of a few hundred or thousand men on the Boycott day. By his other dictum every caste decision forbidding a breach of caste rules is a punishable act, every trade strike is a punishable act, every National School Committee is liable to an action under the law for injuring the interests of the local Government school, every big concern aiming at the extinction in a locality of the retail shopkeeper and the capture of his business commits a wrongful act, or an illegal act, it is not clear which; all Swadeshi, Boycott, National Education movements are objectionable. The Tariff Reform movement itself is only saved by being directed against men outside the country, even if it is so saved, for after all it affects adversely the middlemen who bring in foreign manufactures. Even if, driven beyond endurance by my dhobi's delays, I combine with some friends to open and patronise a laundry, I can be stopped by a magisterial sympathiser with the rights of the individual. If this is Irish law, all we can say is that it is very Irish indeed and we do not yearn to have it imported into India. The object of the learned Magistrate was no doubt to aim a blow at the Swadeshi movement which

is probably abhorrent to his moral sense as a man of reason. The Sessions Judge has refused to interfere with the discretion of the executive, but there is more here concerned than the discretion of the executive. There is a very original and far-reaching elucidation of the law behind the executive discretion. We hope that the victimised citizens of Kaul will carry their appeal higher and get a more authoritative pronouncement on the juristic philosophy of the learned Mr. Garett.

### **The Social Boycott**

The reason why we have drawn so much attention to this case, is its intimate connection with the question of social boycott. We are advocates of this weapon not in all cases, but in circumstances where milder expedients are impotent to prevent a wound to the body social or body politic by refractory or conscienceless individuals who wish to enjoy all the benefits of social existence while disregarding the vital necessities of the society. We are aware of the grave consequences of the misuse of the social boycott to prevent the legitimate exercise by the individual of his free reason and honest conviction. We therefore advocate it only in very serious instances where the whole community is attacked in a vital point and is practically at one in resenting the act as fatally injurious to it. For instance when the turbulent Mahomedans of Eastern Bengal made an organised attack on the property of Hindus and on the honour of Hindu women, the Hindu community of East Bengal would have been perfectly justified in boycotting Mahomedans as servants. Similarly, now that the educated classes of the Hindu community are at one in the belief that the Swadeshi movement supported by Boycott is necessary to the economical existence of their community, to say nothing of the whole nation, they are justified in refusing to have any dealings with those who out of personal and selfish motives deal a blow at that movement by persisting in the purchase of foreign articles. The use of this weapon of self-defence by Hindu castes became hurtful because it was applied without discrimination and not always with honesty. Had it been confined to cases

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of gross moral depravity destructive of social order, there would have been no revolt against it. The penalising of the pursuit of education in foreign countries and similar blunders recoiled on the caste system and it is notable that communities with a strong democratic common sense like the Mahrattas have even while adhering to orthodox religion avoided the worst of these errors. But the misuse of a necessary instrument is no argument against its necessary and discriminating use. We hold the use of this instrument, not in all cases but in the most heinous, to be legitimate in protecting the life of the nation.

### **The Law and the Nationalist**

There are several points connected with the national movement in which the law is in a state of dangerous uncertainty. The exact limit of sedition is one of them, the matter of social boycott is another. We believe that social boycott involving no violence or direct coercion is perfectly legal but it is certain that not only the Anglo-Indian community at large but a portion of the judiciary would be glad to find it illegal. Any doubt on such subjects ought to be removed, for although ignorance is in itself no excuse in law, it ought to be a defence when it is created by the uncertainties of the law itself. We think the Nationalists ought to take every opportunity of testing the extent of the liberties still allowed to us in the ordinary course of the law. We are aware that a section of Nationalist opinion has held that our principle of Swadeshi Boycott ought to debar us from taking any part in any legal proceedings whatever. While many of us had openly expressed our admiration for the heroic stoicism with which this principle has been adhered to in many cases, we have not held it binding on any except those fine consciences to whom it appealed nor would we allow it to guide our own action. We hold that no Nationalist should resort to the British Courts under the present political conditions as against a brother Nationalist or in any circumstances which give him a real choice. If he is dragged to the criminal or civil courts by others he is entitled to defend himself to the end by all the means that the

law provides. If arbitration is refused in a case where his interests are attacked, he is absolved from the self-denying obligation, or if the law of the land compels him as a landholder or propertied or business man to protect himself by certain legal forms, it is obvious that he cannot deny himself that protection without imperilling work or wealth necessary to the nation. The same overriding rule of necessity which compels us to exclude machinery and other instruments of education, work and production from the Boycott, limits the application of the arbitration principle and the abstention from British Courts. Formerly we were content to go our way in doubtful cases, such as the limits of the law of sedition, putting our own interpretation and taking the consequences of a too elastic reading of the law. We even held ourselves justified in the case of unjust and arbitrary laws in breaking them not by violence but peacefully and passively, as the Dissenters did in England, so as to get them either tested or altered. This we still hold to be morally and politically justifiable. But the outbreak of Terrorism compels us to restrict our circle of passive resistance lest even by the most peaceful rejection of unjust laws we should seem to be encouraging lawlessness and disorder. Still, if we are to observe the law scrupulously, just or unjust, we must know what the law is, and now that there is a man at the head of judicial administration who knows the law and tries to keep to it, we ought to take advantage of this now unusual circumstance and use every opportunity to fix the legal position of our movement and its methods.

## The Hughly Resolutions

WE PUBLISH in this issue the draft resolutions of the Hughly Reception Committee which have reached our hands in a printed form. Formerly our information had been that the Committee had based its resolutions on the Pabna Conference resolutions and preserved them in the spirit if not in the letter. We regret to find that this information was erroneous. While appreciating the labours of the Committee we cannot pretend to be satisfied at the result. The letter of the Pabna resolutions has been preserved in a few cases and their manly and dignified character contrasts strangely with the company in which they are found, but for the most part the mass of the resolutions represent an attempt to go back to the tone of appeal, prayer and protest which Bengal had decided to give up until the concession of real control should impart to these forms the sense of power which can alone save them from the stamp of a futile mendicancy. The phrasing also of these draft resolutions seems to us to be defective. The pronouncements of opinion of a public assembly of this standing ought to be free from an undignified effusiveness, prolixity or argumentativeness. Whatever argument is needed beyond what is barely necessary for an adequate expression of the assembly's opinion on the subject in hand, should be reserved for the speeches. That too is the proper place for enthusiasm, eloquence and rhetoric. To import those elements into the resolutions themselves is to import into the assembly's pronouncements an appearance of immaturity and inexperienced youthfulness not conducive to its dignity in the eyes of those who are accustomed to the serious handling of weighty affairs. Two of the resolutions, quite apart from other objections, travel beyond the scope of the assembly by their local character. The proper place for such resolutions is the District Conference and the

mere fact of the larger assembly being held in a particular district does not change the character of the Conference whose business is to express the opinion and guide the public activities of the people of Bengal in matters affecting the country and the province as a whole. These resolutions deal with particular local interests of the people of Hughly and the riparian towns and districts on the banks of the Ganges. If the Conference is to handle local matters, there is no reason why they should ignore similar wants and necessities in the districts of East Bengal. Finally, there are two questions of national importance in which the Nationalist party holds views connected with a distinct policy and on which it is necessary to know the opinion of the country, and in these two matters the resolutions of the Committee do not satisfy us. The resolution on the Reforms contains a parenthesis which is unwarranted by the facts and will have the effect of committing the people of Bengal to the acceptance of the Reforms with all their vital imperfections and disastrous tendencies. The resolution on the Congress, while unexceptionable in sentiment, has the vital defect of not dealing with the crucial questions at issue or showing a way to the realisation of the desirable consummation advocated. At Pabna there was a distinct means pointed out and, since that has been rendered null and void, the people of Bengal must take other means as definite and more decisive to see that their wishes are no longer ignored. To call on the leaders is to express merely a pious wish and the time has gone by when in this matter the action can be left to the discretion of the leaders. They may ignore the resolution in their action or say that they could find no means of carrying out the wishes of the Conference.

In view of these defects the Nationalist party in Calcutta have drawn up a number of draft resolutions and amendments of the Reception Committee's draft which they propose to bring forward before the Subjects Committee. We hold it imperative that in these matters there should be no unnecessary secrecy or hole and corner action. We have nothing to conceal either from the Government, the people or those whose opinions may differ

from ours. Our propaganda is open, frank and democratic. The actual details of action, when action is in our hands, are best discussed in Cabinets and private Committees, but in a people striving to be free and democratic deliberation must be public and policy openly and fully expressed. Unfortunately, the late period at which we were able to procure a copy of the draft resolutions and the necessity of immediate action have made it impossible to circulate the draft in time to receive the opinions of Mofussil Nationalists or even to consult all who are in Calcutta. We have however sent copies to the Mofussil and hope that the delegates will be ready with any suggestions they may have to make when they meet at Hughly. The want of a Nationalist daily at this time is being severely felt; we have to do what we can with the means at our disposal.

The alterations made in the Committee's draft have been dictated by the considerations above stated. We have thought it right to adhere to the decision arrived at by us at Pabna to clear our politics of all that is low and humiliating in tone and substance and to make self-reliance, self-respect and a manly expression of opinion the cast of our public resolutions. There are certain matters in which the ultimate decision rests with the Government and yet in which the people are bound to express their opinion, but so long as they have no recognised instrument through which they can bring their weight to bear in these matters, all they can do is to place their opinion on record and leave to the Government the responsibility of ignoring the opinion of a whole province. The expression of opinion is addressed to the people of this province and of the whole country; it is their sympathy and moral support we seek and we do not wish to appeal to an authority which is not bound to listen to or consider our appeals and protests and with whom even the reception of public resolutions by great bodies representing whole populations is a matter of rare condescension and favour. When we have a direct and effective share in administration, then will be the time to submit representation and protest to a Government which will be partly ours. In our draft resolutions everything expressing this attitude of appeal and unavailing objurgation

has been rigorously excluded and in only one instance we have followed the precedent of the Pabna Conference in making a demand, not because we expect it to be fruitful but to mark a strong sense of the serious breach of a definite promise with which the authorities have long been charged and the nonfulfilment of an elementary obligation binding on all Governments popular or democratic which ranks along with the preservation of order and the defence of the country from foreign invasion. We were somewhat opposed to the making even of this demand at the time of the Pabna Conference, but now that the authorities profess a willingness to reform the administration and claim co-operation on our part, it is advisable to emphasise the serious failings which make co-operation under present conditions impossible and to indicate the conditions which can alone make co-operation of a real kind possible to the people. The draft resolutions on Councils Reform, local self-government and the improvement of judicial administration have the latter purpose in view. Purely local resolutions we propose to omit. We have restored in our draft the Pabna resolution on the Boycott; we do not see any sufficient reason for departing from the Pabna wording whether to lower the tone or to enter into an unnecessary justification of the legitimate character of the Boycott which a body like the Conference long committed to the movement ought to take for granted. We have omitted the first clause of the Education Resolution for the same reasons which motivated its exclusion at Pabna and especially because we look with suspicion on mass education entirely under official control. If primary education is placed under free District Boards, there will be no farther objection; otherwise we must confine ourselves to the effective extension of National Education to the primary stage. We totally reject the resolution on the Terrorist outrages which no Bengal Conference ought to pass after the speech of the Lieutenant Governor which still stands on record and has not been withdrawn. Sir Edward Baker distinctly declared that the Government has no farther use for mere denunciations of the outrages however fervently worded and he has thrown on the whole country the responsibility for the cessation of the

assassinations or their continuance. The suitable course for the Conference is to dissociate itself in a dignified manner from all forms of violence and quietly remind the authorities that the atmosphere in which the worst forms of political crime can alone exist is of their creation and the means of eradicating them in their hands. The people are helpless spectators of this miserable strife and the Conference has no right to pass any resolution which would even by implication admit their responsibility.

There remain the questions of Reform and the Congress. On the former we have already stated the attitude of the Nationalist party which is not irreconcilable on the point but refuses to countenance any reform which does not begin the concession of self-government. Especially is it impossible for us to accept a measure which introduces permanent elements of discord and maims the growing national sentiment by perpetuating divisions, to say nothing of the false and vicious principles, destructive of democratic development on which it is based. The reform ensures us nothing but an increase in the number of nominated and elected members and a non-official, not an elective, majority. It also holds out to us a promise of ampler discussion, interpellation and division. But the rules for formation of electorates, election and the conduct of business as well as the admissibility of particular elections and an unqualified power of veto are all in the hands of the authorities. There might be an increase of moral weight behind a popular opinion or protest, but equally there might be an increase of moral weight behind the Government if they can succeed in passing anti-national measures by a majority of members, official, nominated and elected from convenient electorates, as approved by a majority in a reformed Council. In any case we would not think so doubtful and trivial a concession worth accepting, — for gratitude for concessions implies acceptance of the concessions, — and when it is practically an inducement for consenting to the permanent mutilation of the body politic and offered without amnesty, cessation of repressive measures or release of the deportees it is binding on the Nationalist delegates to stand or fall by the rejection of the measure.

In the matter of a united Congress we have pointed out that it is imperatively necessary to provide a means by which the desired union can be brought about. The difficulties in the way of union are two, the creed and the Constitution. The Constitution of the body now calling itself the Congress has been framed and imposed on it without consulting even that body and it is well known that many members of the Moderate party refuse to join a body constituted by a means which, even if it were not ultra vires, would be as arbitrary as the most arbitrary action of which even Lord Curzon's Government was ever guilty. The Nationalists on their part insist that they cannot be called on to accept a Constitution of many clauses of which they disapprove and which was imposed on a body from which they were specially excluded. The call on them to join a body which insists on their forswearing their fundamental principles before they enter, is still more absurd. Therefore a freely elected Congress constituted on the old lines is the only solution and the Conference must decide that point if it is serious in its desire. Our draft resolution provides a means by which negotiations can be carried on by Bengal with the other provincial leaders and the organisers of what is called the Lahore Congress and, in case of unanimity proving impossible, for the assembling of a real united Congress on the initiative of Bengal in co-operation with all who desire union. We admit that the success of the plan depends on its acceptance by the Bengal Moderates, but we believe it was substantially this idea which the deported Moderate leader S. Krishna Kumar Mitra was trying to get carried out when he was arrested. We see no reason why Bengal Moderates should object to it. At any rate this is the Nationalist proposal.

In addition to these amendments and substitutions we have appended two additional resolutions to which there ought to be no objection. One of them is in the Pabna list and we do not know why it should be omitted.

## APPENDIX

# Bengal Provincial Conference Hughly – 1909

### DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

I. That this Conference places on record its profound feelings of regret and sorrow at the death of Lord Ripon who has justly been called the father of local self-government in India and whose policy of justice and righteousness will for ever enshrine his memory in the hearts of the people of this country. This Conference also urges that immediate steps should be taken to perpetuate his memory.

II. (a) That this Conference is of opinion that the system of Government obtaining in the self-governing British Colonies should be extended to India.

(b) That while expressing its gratefulness to the Government for the concessions made in the recent Reform Scheme, this Conference records its firm conviction that no reform will ensure the happiness and contentment of the people unless it gives them a direct control over the finances of the country.

### NATIONALIST DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

I. That this Conference places on record its sorrow at the death of Lord Ripon who was an earnest and sincere sympathiser with Indian aspirations and did much for the cause of local self-government.

II. (a) As in the Committee's draft.  
(b) That this Conference emphatically condemns the principle of separate electorates on sectarian lines and of special privileges for one community which it is intended to introduce into the Reform Scheme and is farther of the opinion that no reform will be acceptable to the country which does not concede to the people a direct and substantial control over finance and legislation.

The rest to be omitted.

*The draft resolutions in the left column were written by the Moderate Congress leaders. The Nationalist draft resolutions were written by Sri Aurobindo.*

(c) That this Conference is further of opinion that any undue favour in the matter of representation in the Councils which may be shown to any particular community cannot fail to encourage sectarianism in the different communities and to create dissensions and political troubles amongst them.

(d) That this Conference also urges the Government to publish the rules framed in accordance with Lord Morley's Scheme before they are finally adopted.

III. (a) That this Conference declines to accept the Partition of Bengal as a settled fact or question and resolves to continue the agitation against it with a view to its reversal or modification.

(b) That in this connection this Conference appeals to the Government of India to act in the spirit of His Majesty's assurance in his recent message that the rectification of errors has ever been one of the guiding principles of British Government in India.

IV. That this Conference urges the people to continue the Boycott of foreign goods which is, in its opinion, a perfectly legitimate movement and is calculated to promote the political as well as industrial and economic welfare of the country.

V. That this Conference urges upon the country the necessity of using Swadeshi articles in preference to foreign, even at a sacrifice, and developing the resources of the country.

III. As in the Committee's draft but clause (b) to be omitted.

IV. That this Conference accords its fullest support to the Boycott movement and recommends its farther extension both as a political weapon and as a measure of economic protection.

N.B. This is the Pabna resolution.

V. As in the Reception Committee's draft.

VI. That this Conference places on record its emphatic and unqualified condemnation of the detestable outrages and deeds of violence which have been recently committed and is of opinion that such acts will retard the progress of the country.

VII. (a) That this Conference records its emphatic protest against the repressive measures adopted by the Government and especially against the deportation of nine Bengali gentlemen without trial or charge and further protests against the persistent refusal of the Government to furnish any information regarding the charges against them and to give them an opportunity of exculpating themselves. This Conference considers the immediate release of the deportees as absolutely necessary in the interests of justice and fair-play.

(b) That having regard to the grave risk of injustice involved in Government action based upon *ex parte* and untested informations and to the penal laws of the country, this Conference urges upon the Government the repeal of the Bengal Regulation III of 1818.

VIII. That having regard to the prevalence of Cholera, Malaria and Smallpox in the province throughout the year and the abnormal death rate as disclosed in the last Sanitary Report of Bengal, this Conference urges the Government as well as the

VI. That this Conference looks with strong disapproval on all methods of violence and holds that the furtherance of the national movement should be effected by peaceful and legitimate means, and it warns the authorities that the policy of repression stimulates terrorist activity and the best way to paralyse it is to restore normal conditions.

VII. That this Conference emphatically condemns the repressive measures adopted by the Government and especially the deportation of nine Bengali gentlemen without trial or charge and considers their immediate release and the repeal of the Bengal Regulation III of 1818 as the only way to assuage the profound discontent created by these measures.

VIII. That inasmuch as the Government has failed hitherto to redeem its pledges with regard to the application of the Road Cess for the purposes originally intended and has not fulfilled its duties with regard to the improvement of sani-

people to adopt amongst others the following measures:—

(1) The sinking of wells and the excavation and reservation of tanks in the villages for purely drinking purposes.

(2) The draining of the rural areas.

(3) The clearing of jungle in the inhabited areas of towns and villages.

(4) The prevention of noxious discharges from septic tanks into the River Hughly which form the principal cause of Cholera in the riparian towns and villages on both banks of the said river.

IX. That this Conference recommends—

(a) That all local self-governing bodies and Panchayats should, without further delay, be vested with powers to elect their own Chairman.

(b) That the principle of representation should be extended to village Union Committees and Panchayats.

(c) That the Union Committees should be vested with powers to initiate and carry on measures for the sanitary improvement of the areas within their jurisdiction and that grants of money should be made to them for that purpose.

X. (a) That this Conference urges the Government to take immediate action on their circular on free primary education issued about three years ago and invites their attention to the fact that the grants in aid of technical and scientific education are not at all commensurate with the needs of the country.

tation in rural areas, the Conference demands the fulfilment of this duty and the organisation of adequate measures for the provision of good drinking water, medical aid and proper drainage of the country.

N.B. This is the Pabna resolution with some verbal modifications.

IX. That this Conference is of opinion that local self-governing bodies including Panchayats and Village Union Committees should be entirely elected on the principle of popular representation and freed from official control and that Village Union Committees should be vested with powers and provided with the necessary funds to carry on sanitary improvements.

X. That in the opinion of this Conference steps should be taken for promoting a system of education literary, technical and scientific suited to the requirements of the country on national lines and under national control and maintaining national schools throughout the country. Clause (a) is omitted.

(b) That in view of the recent educational policy of the Government which has practically closed the doors of the University against many students of the province and the necessity of organising a system of literary, scientific, technical and industrial education suited to the requirements of the country, this Conference urges the people to take steps to establish educational institutions throughout the country on national lines and under national control.

XI. (a) That, while recording its satisfaction at the recognition by the Government of India of the principle of separation of Judicial from Executive functions, this Conference regrets that effect has not yet been given to it.

(b) That this Conference is of opinion that the only effective method of reforming the Police is to separate the Judicial from the Executive functions and that no scheme for such separation will be successful unless all the Judicial Officers are placed under the direct control and supervision of the High Court.

(c) That this Conference is further of opinion that for the better administration of Civil and Criminal justice in the country, the District and Sessions Judges should be recruited from among the ranks of the legal profession.

XII. That this Conference enters a strong protest against the Calcutta Police Bill which is an uncalled for measure of an absolutely retrograde

XI. That this Conference is of opinion that the separation of judicial from executive functions, which has been recognised in principle, should be forthwith put into effect and all judicial officers placed under the direct control and supervision of the High Court and that provision should be made in the scheme for the District and Sessions Judges being appointed in future from the ranks of the legal profession in this country.

XII. As in the Committee's draft except that in place of "enters a strong protest against" should be put "strongly condemns".

character and which will restrict the freedom of action of the people in Calcutta and will subject them to unscrupulous harassments.

XIII. (a) That in view of the large surplus under the head of Stamp Revenue and the growing poverty of the people, this Conference urges upon the Government the necessity of reducing the Court fees levied for the institution of suits and complaints.

(b) That having regard to the ruinous expenses of litigation in Courts of law, this Conference is of opinion that arbitration Courts should be established throughout the country.

XIV. That with a view to mitigate the hardship arising from chronic high prices of food stuffs, this Conference urges on the District Associations the necessity of establishing Co-operative Banks and Stores with Dharmagolas throughout the country.

XV. That in view of the ravages of wild animals and the frequent dacoities in the towns and villages, this Conference appeals to the Government to repeal the Arms Act.

XVI. That this Conference views with apprehension the decrease in the normal growth of the Bengali Hindu population and hereby appoints a Committee consisting of the following gentlemen to ascertain the causes which have led to this state of things and to suggest what steps should be taken to prevent it.

XIII. Omit clause (a), otherwise as in the Committee's draft.

XIV. As in the Committee's draft.

XV. That in view of the ravages of wild animals and frequent dacoities in the towns and villages against which there is no adequate protection, this Conference is of opinion that the Arms Act should be repealed or radically modified.

XVI. As in the Committee's draft.

XVII. That this Conference, while sympathising with the Indian residents of South Africa in their struggle for equal rights and privileges with the White population and admiring their firm attitude, places on record its deep sense of indignation at the gross wrongs inflicted on them and suggests the adoption of Boycott of Colonial and British goods by other Provinces of India by way of protest and retaliation.

XVIII. That having regard to the gradual diminution of commons or pasture land for cattle, this Conference urges the Government and the people specially the land-holding classes to adopt measures for the protection and preservation of cows and oxen.

XIX. That this Conference is of opinion that the Government grants of money for drainage and irrigation purposes in Bengal which is essentially an agricultural Province are lamentably inadequate for its needs and urges the Government to take the following steps at an early date:—

1. The dredging of the Bhagirathi.
2. The immediate adoption of the measures recommended by Mr. Horn and other expert engineers for the prevention of the annual floods in the Arambagh Sub-division by the overflow water of the Begua Breach.
3. The draining of the Kadua Math in the Amta basin in the District of Howrah.

XX. That in the present situation of the country united action being highly

XVII. As in the Committee's draft, except that after "firm attitude" should be inserted "and heroic sufferings".

XVIII. As in the Committee's draft, except that the words "the Government and" should be omitted.

XIX. Omit

XX. That this Conference considers a United Congress imperatively

desirable, this Conference earnestly appeals to the leaders to bring about a compromise between the two wings of the Indian Nationalist party and to arrange for holding a United Congress.

XXI. That with a view to inaugurate a vigorous system of self-help and voluntary work for the redress of their grievances, this Conference urges the people to organise village Committees, Sub-Divisional Associations and District Associations.

necessary in the interests of the country and believes that the best way to bring about union is to hold a session elected as in all Congresses up to 1906, to which any future arrangements for the procedure of the Congress shall be submitted.

(b) That in this view it appoints the following Committee to confer on behalf of the province with the organisers of the meeting at Lahore and with other provincial leaders for the holding of such a session and it further empowers the Committee in case of necessity to propose and arrange for this session being held in Calcutta in co-operation with all who are desirous of union.

XXI. As in the Committee's draft, omitting only the words "and voluntary work for the redress of their grievances".

Additional Resolutions.

1. That this Conference is of opinion that two of the most necessary and important classes of enterprise from the point of view of our commercial development are (1) Swadeshi Banks and (2) Steam Navigation Companies to control the waterways of Bengal, and urges on the country the necessity of initiating and supporting such enterprises, and it expresses its appreciation of the efforts of those who have already undertaken work of this kind.

2. That the Conference is of opinion that physical training be encouraged by all means to infuse greater manliness in the younger generation and make them capable of self-protection and self-defence.

## Speech at the Hughly Conference

**A**UROBINDO Ghose spoke to Resolution No. IV — “that this conference urges the people to continue the boycott of foreign goods inaugurated on August 7th 1905, which is, in its opinion, a perfectly legitimate movement and is calculated to promote the political as well as the industrial and economical welfare of the country.”

Moulvi Dedar Bux moved and Sasankajiban Roy seconded it.

Aurobindo Ghose said: —

Mr. President and Members: — I desire to say two words before I say anything further — I entreat you to hear me out without expressing or giving any sign either of approval or dissent; I pray you to hear me in perfect silence. This is a resolution which nobody can oppose. It is not my intention to bring any amendment with regard to it, but I have simply to make a brief statement without argument of any kind from the standpoint of myself and those who are of the same way of thinking as myself. You are aware that we have a certain theory of politics, a certain view with regard to political action in this country. We hold that as we have no effective share in the administration of this country, and our position is such that there is no means of having even our prayers and petitions listened to, therefore the only effective course for us to take is, as far as possible, to withhold our co-operation from the Government, until they give us some effective control over the administration and some constitutional means by which we can bring the voice of the people and the weight of public opinion to bear upon the management

*Delivered at the Bengal Provincial Conference, held at Hughly, Bengal, on 6 September 1909. Report published in the Bengalee on 7 September and reproduced in a Government of India Home Department file.*

of the affairs of this country. We hold that in these circumstances we ought to put forward the interests of the country partly by a movement of self-help and so far as we have power to deal with the Government by means of passive resistance, peaceably and within the law. And this passive resistance we do not wish to confine merely to commercial boycott. We hold that it can and should be extended to other kinds of boycott. (“*Hear, hear*”) We don’t hold that it should be done with absolute thoroughness but so far as is possible and rational and so far as is wise in the interests of the country. Last year at Pabna a resolution was passed which gave room for our view of politics and it was our intention to press this resolution upon the Subjects Committee. But we found that by pressing the point on the Committee the hope of a United Congress and the unity of Bengal and this Provincial Conference might be seriously imperilled. Now we are extremely anxious for the unity of the Congress. We are anxious we should throw no obstacle in the way of any hope of union, therefore we have decided not to press that amendment in the Subjects Committee, nor to bring forward our full amendment with regard to the reforms. At the same time we want it to be clearly understood that in taking this course we are not for a moment receding from the policy and line we have taken up, and we consider for obvious reasons that it is absolutely necessary for us, especially at this time, to make it clear that we have not receded so far as the resolution goes. We thoroughly support it. But at the same time we wish it to be understood that we keep our position and we adhere to our policy of a boycott — of a boycott movement without any qualification, as a measure of policy for this country, as a political weapon, and as a measure of economical protection. (“*Bande Mataram*.”)

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## Facts and Opinions

### Impatient Idealists

The President of the Hughly Conference, in reference to the formal statement by Sj. Aurobindo Ghose of the adherence of the Nationalist party to the policy of self-help and passive resistance in spite of their concessions to the Moderate minority, advised the party of the future under the name of impatient idealists to wait. The reproach of idealism has always been brought against those who work with their eye on the future by the politicians wise in their own estimation who look only to the present. The reproach of impatience is levelled with equal ease and readiness against those who in great and critical times have the strength and skill to build with rapidity the foundations or the structure of the future. The advice to wait is valueless unless we know what it is that we have to wait for and why it is compulsory on us to put off the effort which might be made at the present. If we can progress quickly there must be adequate reasons given us for preferring to progress slowly or to stand still. We have not yet heard those adequate reasons. As far as we have gone, the only reason we have been able to find is that the fears and hesitations of our Moderate countrymen stand in our way. The whole Asiatic world is moving forward with enormous rapidity. In Persia, in Turkey, in Japan the impatient idealists have by

means suited to the conditions of the country effected the freedom and are now busy building up the dignity and strength of their motherland. Constitutional Government has been everywhere established or is being prepared for consciously and with a steady eye to its establishment in the immediate future. Even in Russia a Duma has been established with however restricted an electorate. Of all the great nations of the world India alone is bidden to wait. It is bidden by Lord Morley and Anglo-India to wait for ever. It is bidden by its own leaders to wait till the rulers are induced by prayers and petitions to concede a constitutional government and we have been told by those rulers when that will be — never. We have been told not by conservative statesmen but by the chief teacher of Radicalism and democracy. Under the circumstances, which is the more unpractical and idealistic, the impatience of the Nationalist or the supine and trustful patience of the President of the Hughly Conference?

### **The Question of Fitness**

It is possible the President had his eye on the question of fitness or unfitness which is the stock sophistry of the opponents of progress. One of the delegates strangely enough selected the occasion of moving the colonial self-government resolution for airing this effete fallacy. The storm of disapprobation which his lapse evoked proves that in Bengal at least that superstition is dead in the minds of the people, and it is well, for no nation can live which at the bidding of foreigners consents to despise itself and distrust its capacities. We freely admit that no nation can be fit for liberty unless it is free, none can be wholly capable of self-government until it governs itself. We freely admit that if we were given self-government we should commit mistakes which we would have to rectify, as has been done even by nations which were old in the exercise of free and self-governing functions. We freely admit that the liberated nation would have to face many and most serious problems even as Turkey and Persia have to face such problems today, as Japan had to face them in the period of its own revolution. But to argue from

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these propositions to the refusal of self-government is to use a sophistry which can only impose on the minds of children. In the nineteenth century owing to a stupefying education we had contracted the trustfulness, naivety and incapacity to think for itself of the childish intellect and we swallowed whole the sophisms which were administered to us. But we have thrown off that spell and if the impatient idealists of the Nationalist party had done nothing else for their country this would be sufficient justification for their existence that they have made a clean sweep of all this garbage and purified the intellect and the morale of the nation. It is enough if the capacity is there in the race and if we can show by our action that it is not dead. This we have shown by organised successful and national action under circumstances of unprecedented difficulty. If the success is now jeopardised, it is because of the temporary revival of the weaknesses of our nineteenth century politics and the desire to fall back into safe and easy methods in spite of their unfruitfulness. That is a weakness which is not shared by the whole nation, but is only temporarily suffered because a situation of unprecedented difficulty has been created in which it was not easy to see our way and in the silence that was unfortunately allowed to fall on the country and deepen the uncertainty, the forces of reaction found their opportunity. In times of difficulty to stop still for a long time is a cardinal error, the best way is to move slowly forward, warily watching each step but never faltering. Action solves the difficulties which action creates. Inaction can only paralyse and slay.

### **Public Disorder and Unfitness**

A favourite device of the opponents of progress is to point to the frequent ebullitions of tumult and excitement which have recently found their way into our political life and argue from them to our unfitness.

In the mouths of our own countrymen the use of this argument arises partly from political prejudice but still more from inexperience of political life and the unexamined acceptance of

Anglo-Indian sophistries. But in the mouths of Englishmen this kind of language cannot be free from the charge of hypocrisy. They know well of the much worse things that are done in political life in the West and accepted as an inevitable feature of party excitement. The rough horseplay of public meetings which is a familiar feature of excited times in England, would not be tolerated by the more self-disciplined Indian people. As for really serious disturbance the worst things of that kind which have happened in India occurred at Surat when Sj. Surendranath Banerji was refused a hearing and on the next day when Mr. Tilak was threatened on the platform by the sticks and chairs of Surat loyalists and the Mahratta delegates charged and after a free fight cleared the platform. The refusal to hear a speaker by dint of continuous clamour, hisses and outcries is of such frequent occurrence in England that it would indeed be a strange argument which would infer from such occurrences the unfitness of the English race for self-government. We may instance the University meeting at which Mr. Balfour was once refused a hearing and at the end of an inaudible speech two undergraduates dressed as girls danced up to the platform and gracefully offered the Conservative statesman a garland of shoes which was smilingly accepted. As for the storming of platforms and turning out of the speakers and organisers, that also is a recognised and not altogether infrequent possibility of political life in England. A case remarkable for its sequel happened at Edinburgh when a faith-healer attempted to speak against Medicine and the undergraduates forced their way in, attacked and wounded the police, smashed all the chairs, hurled a ruined piano from the platform and hooted the discreetly absent orator in his hotel and challenged him to come out with his speech. On complaint the Chancellor of the University declared his approval of this riot and in a court of law the students were acquitted on the plea of justification. It may well be said that such a view of what is permissible in political life ought not to be introduced into India, but it is the worst hypocrisy for the citizens of a country where such things not only happen but are tolerated and sometimes approved by public opinion,

to turn up the whites of their eyes at Indian disorderliness and argue from it to the unfitness of the race for democratic politics. And it must be remembered that worse things happen on the Continent, free fights occurring even in august legislatures, yet it has not been made an argument for the English people going over to the Continent to govern the unfit and inferior European races.

## The Hughly Conference

**T**HE CHANCES of politics are in reality the hidden guidance of a Power whose workings do not reveal themselves easily even to the most practised eye. It is difficult therefore to say whether the successful conclusion of the Provincial Conference at Hughly without the often threatened breach between the parties, will really result in the furtherance of the object for which the Nationalists consented to waive the reaffirmation of the policy formulated at Pabna and refrained from using the preponderance which the general sentiment of the great majority of the delegates gave them at Hughly. If things go by the counting of heads, as is the rule in democratic politics, the Nationalist sentiment commands the greater part of Bengal. But in leaders of recognised weight, established reputation and political standing the party is necessarily inferior to the Moderates, both because it is a younger force very recently emerged and because its leaders have been scattered by a repression which has aimed at the tall heads of the party. There is also a large body of sentiment in the Mofussil which is Nationalist at heart but does not always venture to be Nationalist in action because of the difficulties in the way of the Nationalist programme and the respect due to the elder leaders. On the other hand among the young men who command the future, Moderatism is dead and what takes its place is a Nationalism which loves rather to act than to think, because it has not yet accustomed itself to the atmosphere of strenuous political thought. In fact the spirit of Nationalism and its objects are becoming universal but its methods, though preferred, are not always adhered to and its thought has not everywhere penetrated below the surface.

The possibility or otherwise of united action was the governing thought throughout the Conference. The tendency to break to pieces was very prominent in the first day's proceedings and

was fostered by certain incidents slight in themselves but each of which was in the existing state of feeling a quite possible pretext for disruption. It was from an observation of the proceedings of the first day that either party offered its programme of action for the second. The Nationalist party intended to put forward a formal protest against any acceptance of the reforms in however slight a degree, to press the Pabna resolution on the Boycott and above all to insist on the Conference taking some definite step which would either materialise the chances of a United Congress or once for all show that union was impossible. The Moderate leaders came determined on four things, not to allow any resolution recognising general passive resistance, not to allow any resolution amounting to an absolute refusal of the Reforms, not to allow any resolution debarring delegates from Bengal from joining the Lahore Convention in case of that body rejecting union and not to consent even to the bringing forward of any amendment or proposal of a pronounced nationalist character in the Conference. On all these points it was made quite evident that if the Nationalists pressed their points the Conference would be broken up by the secession of the Moderate leaders. In all these disputed matters, therefore, the Nationalists gave way and adhered only to their main point of securing some definite step in relation to the holding of a united Congress.

It is necessary to explain this action on the part of our party, for in his speech on the Boycott resolution S. J. Aurobindo Ghose purposely refrained from stating more than the bare facts in order that nothing he might say should lead to excitement or anything which could be an excuse for friction. It is not that the Nationalist party is not willing or able to stand by itself if that proves inevitable and seems the best course in the interests of Nationalism and the future of the country. But it has always been the ideal of the Nationalists to make of the Congress a great and living body deliberative in the manner of free assemblies which consider from various points of view what is best for the country and decide by majority or, whenever possible, unanimously, the parties holding together not by identity of views but by one common aim and interest and the combined freedom and re-

straint of a constitution which provides for the free expression of opinion under fair and impartial rules. They seek also a centre for the country's strength which can give authority to a network of organisation systematising the work of the nation. They seek in other words a centre of deliberation and a centre of order and authority which can take charge of national progress. To seek this centre outside the long established body to which the nation has looked as the pivot of its political activities would have been a waste of material already half-prepared for the purpose. In attempting to convert this instrument to its proper uses they may have committed errors of over-eagerness and passionate impatience, the ordinary faults of a party of progress still young and energetic, but the errors on the other side were yet greater. The errors of life and progress are more exuberant and striking but less fatal than the errors of decay and reaction. However that be, in the attempt the instrument itself was broken, but it is capable of being mended if the past errors on both sides can be got rid of, and it is the duty of the Nationalist party to give a fair chance to the forces that make for the preservation of this old and honoured institution. This is the more incumbent on them as the sense of the country is in favour of an attempt to restore unity. A democratic party is bound to give the utmost weight to the general sense of the country in a matter of such primary importance.

It remains to be seen whether the great concessions made by the party will bear any fruit. The situation is not wholly encouraging. The position taken by the Moderate leaders that the Nationalists even if they are in a majority, must not try to enforce resolutions which travel beyond the limits of common agreement and unanimity and must allow resolutions to pass which are contrary to their principle and policy on pain of a Moderate secession may be tolerated for some time; but how long can a growing sentiment and ideal representing the future consent to be restrained within such iron limits? And if such be the basis of union proposed, it is obvious that the Congress will be a united Congress only in name and the attendance of the Nationalists perfunctory or useless. If on the other hand the

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resolutions of the Congress are recognised as the opinion of the majority leaving the minority perfect freedom to bring in their own resolutions when they have converted the mass of public opinion to their views, the unity will be real and living. We were never in favour of shams. It is only righteousness that exalts a nation and righteousness means going straight; nothing can long endure which is based upon unreality and hollowness. If therefore there is any union it must be one which recognises that there are two parties in the country and that each has a right not only to exist but to make itself felt. This is a right we have not refused to the Moderate party when we were in the majority; if they refuse it to us, then the talk of unity must cease and Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Gokhale must have their way.

This is the position from the Nationalist point of view. We hope that the largeness of the sacrifice made will not, in view of the slightness of the chance in favour of which everything else was thrown overboard, create any dissatisfaction in the party. All shades of Nationalist opinion were represented at Hughly and they consented to be guided in the matter by Srijiut Aurobindo Ghose on whom the responsibility of leadership fell in the absence of older colleagues who have been temporarily or permanently removed from the field. The Nationalist party is in practical possession of the heart and mind of Bengal. It is strongly supported in other parts of India and controls Maharashtra. It is growing in strength, energy and wisdom. It surely inherits the future. Under such circumstances it can afford to wait.

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Two Programmes

There could hardly be a more striking contrast than the pronounced dissimilarity between the resolutions passed at the Hughly Provincial Conference under the pressure of the Moderate leaders' threat to dissociate themselves from the proceedings if the Pabna resolutions were reaffirmed and the resolutions passed at the enthusiastic and successful District Conference held last Saturday and Sunday in the Surma Valley. They are severally the reaffirmation of two different programmes, the advanced Moderate programme of a section of opinion in West Bengal supported by Faridpur in the East and a sprinkling of individuals in some of the large towns and the Nationalist programme as advanced by East Bengal and a great section of opinion in the West. The advanced Moderate programme contemplates Colonial self-government as a distant and ultimate goal, advocates commercial boycott of foreign goods, contemplates National education as an educational experiment supported practically by some, in theory only by others, and regards self-help as a pendant and subordinate to so-called constitutional agitation, in other words, the acceptance of everything the Government does subject to protest, criticism and, when necessary, invective. This is the theory of co-operation

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plus opposition, opposition in words, co-operation in practice. It has to be seen how far the reassertion of this policy, for some time discredited, will go in its results and what is the underlying motive of the Moderate leaders in insisting on the reassertion at this particular moment when the Partition, deportations, coercive laws are in full operation and not a single one of our grievances redressed. The Nationalist programme asserts autonomy as the right of all nations, advocates the use of every legitimate and peaceful means towards its establishment whether swift or gradual, and especially favours the use of self-help to train and organise the nation for self-government and of passive resistance to confirm and defend the measures of self-help and to bring pressure on the bureaucracy to yield a substantial measure of self-government. The defect of the Nationalist party is not in energy or organisation, for it has a superior capacity in these respects to its opponents, but in means and the present weight of its personalities. It is only by effective, persistent and organised work with what means it has at its disposal that the party can make up for this inferiority. That organisation must now be taken definitely in hand. It is doubtful whether the frail hope of a United Congress will ever take shape as a materialised fact, and even if it does, it is likely to be under such circumstances that the Nationalists would be ill-advised to put their main energy into Congress work until they have so all-pervading and solid a strength in the country as to make it possible for them to assert themselves without any peril to the united progress of the nation. They must vindicate the superiority of their programme by its effectual execution and result, leaving the Moderates for the present to the raptures of their rapprochement with the bureaucracy.

### **The Reforms**

An argument advanced in favour of the Reforms is that, however ineffectual and illusory the expansion of the Legislative Councils may be — and the illusory nature of that expansion cannot be seriously denied, — still there is included in the Reform Scheme a

measure of local self-government generous, complete and effective, which is well worth acceptance. We are by no means certain how far a substantial measure of local self-government is really contemplated by the Government. It was originally proposed, we believe, to form local self-governing bodies elected by the people and uncontrolled by any official chairman. But many things were originally proposed which seem to have little chance of taking shape as ultimate actualities. We are not aware how far the measure will be carried out, what limitation may be put upon it or whether the control of the official chairman will not be replaced by a higher and more distant but eventually more effective control. We shall have to be thoroughly assured on these points before we can allow that any measure of local self-government included in the measure can outweigh the nugatory character of the main change in the instruments of government. Unless the local self-government is complete and ungrudging, it may be a convenient measure and to a slight extent strengthen the educated class in the mofussils, but it cannot be a vital measure or even one of the first importance among changes of administrative structure. In any case it cannot outweigh, however full it may be, the disastrous character of the principle of separate electorates introduced by Lord Morley, intentionally or unintentionally, as the thin end of a wedge which, when driven well home, will break our growing nationality into a hundred jarring pieces. Only by standing aloof from the new councils can this destruction be avoided. This is the point on which we feel bound to lay stress again and again because it is the one vital and effective thing in the new measure, all the rest is mere frippery and meaningless decoration. It would be a poor statesmanship which bought a small and temporary gain by throwing away the future of the nation and the hope of a united India, and posterity will have reason to curse the memory of any popular leader who for the sake either of more gilt on the "gilded shams" or even for a real measure of local self-government, induces the nation to accept the reforms with the separate electorate and special privileges for one community as an essential feature.

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**The Limitations of the Act**

There is another point in this connection which destroys the little value that might possibly have attached to the argument from Lord Morley's intentions about local self-government. One peruses the Act in vain for a guarantee of any measure of reform which may be conceded under it to the people except the number of elected and nominated members in the Councils. Everything else, literally everything else, is left to the discretion of Anglo-Indian officialdom. No doubt the present Secretary of State will have the ultimate decision as to the rules of election, nomination, formation of electorates, acceptance or rejection by the Government of elected members, veto, division, interpellation etc., and he may decide to put the felt on thickly and copiously. But even if this be done, not one of these things will be assured to us, not one of them but may be reversed by subsequent Viceroys and Secretaries of State without infringing the meagre provisions of this Act. As for local self-government we fail to find any guarantee either for its introduction or, if introduced, — as, no doubt, Lord Morley will have some slight respect even yet for his own reputation, — for its retention in the future. What is to prevent a future Alexander Mackenzie in the Viceregal seat from so altering any measure that may be given as to render it nugatory and what is to prevent a future Curzon in the India Office from confirming this step rearwards? So far as we have been able to find, nothing at all. We are just where we were before, with concessions granted by arbitrary condescension which may be withdrawn at any moment by arbitrary arrogance. Well may Lord Morley say that this is not a measure of self-government and, if he thought it were, he would not concede the measure. The Nationalist party is not opposed to all acceptance of reform; it would welcome and support a measure which would really concede even a minimum of control and provide a means for future expansion while perpetually guaranteeing the small amount conceded; but a measure by which no control is given, no step taken is guaranteed as to permanence and no provision is made for future expansion is one which no thinking man

would care to have even apart from other defects, and no practical politician will look at for a moment when coupled with provisions disastrous to the future of the nation.

### **Shall We Accept the Partition?**

This may sound a startling proposition to a nation which is perpetually reaffirming its decision never to accept the settled fact. But it rises definitely upon the question of accepting the reforms. We cannot conceal from ourselves the startlingly patent fact that if we accept the reforms, we accept the Partition. The new changes are partly meant to confirm the division which every English statesman declares it to be essential to British prestige to perpetuate, and if the older leaders of West Bengal accept the reforms and stand for Sir Edward Baker's Council or allow their followers to stand for it, the sooner the partition resolution is deleted from the proceedings of Provincial and District conferences and the celebration of the 16th October discontinued, the better for our national honesty and sincerity. If the West Bengal leaders, who under the pressure of public opinion gave up their seats on the old Council and the idea of becoming Honourables in future, join the reformed Council in Calcutta, there is nothing to prevent the East Bengal leaders from joining Sir Lancelot Hare's Council in the capital of the New Province. If that happens, where will the Anti-Partition agitation be and where the solemn vow of unity? To solemnly meet once a year and declare that we will never, never accept what we have accepted, would be a farce too hypocritical for the conscience of the most cynical or the intelligence of the most deluded to tolerate. Any revival of the fiction that it is East Bengal which has been partitioned from West Bengal and therefore there is no obligation on the West Bengal leaders to boycott the Councils while the East Bengal leaders are so bound, will not be suffered. But the Moderates have definitely and rigidly excluded political boycott from their programme; yet what is the abstention from the Councils but a political boycott? If they carry this exclusion to its logical result and accept the reformed Councils, that is the

end of the Anti-Partition agitation. Lord Morley's policy will be entirely successful and Mr. Gokhale may still more loudly acclaim him as the saviour of India from a state of anarchy and chaos.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Process of Evolution

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Convention President

The nomination of Sir Pherozshah Mehta as the President of the three men's Convention at Lahore is not an event that is of any direct interest to Nationalists. Just as the three tailors of Tooley Street represented themselves as the British public, so the three egregious mediocrities of the Punjab pose as the people of their province and, in defiance of the great weight of opinion among the leading men and the still stronger force of feeling among the people against the holding of a Convention Congress at Lahore, are inviting the representatives of the Moderate party to a session of what is still called, even under these discouraging circumstances, the Indian National Congress. It is of small importance to us whom these three gentlemen elect as their President. The nomination was indeed a foregone conclusion. Sir Pherozshah Mehta, having got rid of his Nationalist adversaries, now rules the Convention with as absolute a sway as he ruled the Corporation before the European element combined against him and showed that, servile as Bombay respectability might be to the Corporation lion, it was still more servile to the ruling class. Indirectly, however, the election is of some importance to Bengal owing to the desire of the people of this province for a United Congress. It is no longer a secret that in Bengal

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Moderate circles the feeling against Sir Pherozshah is almost as strong as it is in the Nationalist party. It has even been threatened that, if Sir Pherozshah becomes the President, Bengal will not attend the session at Lahore. This has since been qualified by the proviso that Bengal as a province will not attend, although some individuals may overcome their feelings or their scruples. Bengal as a province would in no case attend the sitting of a mutilated Congress. Even the whole Moderate party were not likely to attend unless their objections on the score of constitutional procedure were properly considered. All that the threat can mean is that, even of those who would otherwise have gone, most will not attend. This is, after all, a feeble menace. Neither S. J. Surendranath nor S. J. Bhupendranath nor the Chaudhuri brothers are likely to forego attendance, and, for all practical purposes, these gentlemen are the Moderate party in Bengal. If the Bengal leaders do go to Lahore, they are certain to obey meekly the dictates of Sir Pherozshah Mehta; for there is not one of them who has sufficient strength of character to stand up to the roarings of the Bombay lion. They were in the habit of obeying him even when he had no official authority, and it can well be imagined how the strong, arrogant and overbearing man will demean himself as President, and how utterly impossible it will be even to suggest, either in Subjects Committee or in full meeting, any idea which will not be wholly palatable to the autocrat. S. J. Surendranath Banerji at Hughly advanced the strangely reactionary conception of the President of a Congress or Conference as by right not less absolute than the Czar of all the Russias, bound by no law and no principle and entitled to exact from the Conference or Congress implicit obedience to his most arbitrary and unconstitutional whims and caprices. This absolutist conception is likely to be carried out to the letter at the Lahore Convention. If ever there was any hope that the Lahore session of the Convention might be utilised for bringing about a United Congress, that has now disappeared. The hope was cherished by some, but it was from the first an idle expectation. A firm combination of all, whether Moderates or Nationalists, who are in favour of union, and the holding of a freely elected

Congress at Calcutta was all along the only chance of bringing about union.

### **Presidential Autocracy**

The conception of the President as a Russian autocrat and the assembly as the slave of his whims is one which is foreign to free and democratic institutions, and would, if enforced, make all true discussion impossible and put in the hands of the party in possession of the official machinery an irresistible weapon for stifling the opinions of its opponents. It is a conception against which the Nationalist party have struggled from the beginning and will struggle to the end. The ruling of the President is final on all points of order, but only so long as he governs the proceedings of the body according to the recognised rules of debate. He cannot dictate the exclusion of resolutions or amendments which do not seem to him rational or expedient, but must always base his action on reasons of procedure and not on reasons of state. The moment he asserts his individual caprice or predilection, he lays himself open to an appeal to the whole assembly or even, in very extreme cases, to an impeachment of his action by a vote of censure from the delegates. It has been erroneously alleged that the Speaker of the House of Commons sways the House with an absolute control. The Speaker is as much bound by the rules of the House as any member; he is the repository of the rules and administers an old and recognised procedure, elaborate and rigid in detail, which he cannot transgress, nor has any Speaker been known to transgress it. Some have been suspected of administering the rules, wherever they left discretion to the Speaker, with a partiality for one party, but even this has been rare, and it was always the rules of procedure that were administered, not personal whim or caprice. As the present Speaker pointed out recently in his evidence before a public Commission, there is a recognised means by which the conduct of the Speaker can be called in question by the House. It would be strange if it were otherwise. The framers of the British Constitution, who so jealously guarded every loophole by which autocracy might

creep into any part of the system, were not likely to leave such a glaring defect of freedom uncorrected, if it had ever existed.

### **Mr. Lalmohan Ghose**

The death of Mr. Lalmohan Ghose removes from the scene a distinguished figure commemorative of the past rather than representative of any living force in the present. His interventions in politics have for many years past been of great rarity and, since the Calcutta Congress, had entirely ceased. It cannot therefore be said that his demise leaves a gap in the ranks of our active workers. He was the survivor of a generation talented in politics rather than great, and, among them, he was one of the few who could lay claim to the possession of real genius. That genius was literary, oratorical and forensic rather than political but as these were the gifts which then commanded success in the political arena, he ought to have stood forward far ahead of the mass of his contemporaries. It was the lack of steadiness and persistence common enough in men of brilliant gifts, which kept him back in the race. His brother Mr. Manmohan Ghose, a much less variously and richly gifted intellect but a stronger character, commanded by the possession of these very qualities a much weightier influence and a more highly and widely honoured name. In eloquence we doubt whether any orator of the past or present generation has possessed the same felicity of style and charm of manner and elocution. Mr. Gokhale has something of the same debating gift, but it is marred by the dryness of his delivery and the colourlessness of his manner. Mr. Lalmohan Ghose possessed the requisite warmth, glow and agreeableness of speech and manner without those defects of excess and exaggeration which sometimes mar Bengali oratory. We hope that his literary remains will be published, especially the translation of the Meghnad Badh, which, from such capable hands, ought to introduce favourably a Bengali masterpiece to a wider than Indian audience.

## The Past and the Future

OUR CONTEMPORARY, the *Statesman*, notices in an unusually self-restrained article the recent brochure re-published by Dr. A. K. Coomaraswamy from the *Modern Review* under the title, "The Message of the East". We have not the work before us but, from our memory of the articles and our knowledge of our distinguished countryman's views, we do not think the *Statesman* has quite caught the spirit of the writer. Dr. Coomaraswamy is above all a lover of art and beauty and the ancient thought and greatness of India, but he is also, and as a result of this deep love and appreciation, an ardent Nationalist. Writing as an artist, he calls attention to the debased aesthetic ideas and tastes which the ugly and sordid commercialism of the West has introduced into the mind of a nation once distinguished for its superior beauty and grandeur of conception and for the extent to which it suffused the whole of life with the forces of the intellect and the spirit. He laments the persistence of a servile imitation of English ideas, English methods, English machinery and production even in the new Nationalism. And he reminds his readers that nations cannot be made by politics and economics alone, but that art also has a great and still unrecognised claim. The main drift of his writing is to censure the low imitative un-Indian and bourgeois ideals of our national activity in the nineteenth century and to recall our minds to the cardinal fact that, if India is to arise and be great as a nation, it is not by imitating the methods and institutions of English politics and commerce, but by carrying her own civilisation, purified of the weaknesses that have overtaken it, to a much higher and mightier fulfilment than any that it has reached in the past. Our mission is to outdistance, lead and instruct Europe, not merely to imitate and learn from her. Dr. Coomaraswamy speaks of art, but it is certain that a man of his wide culture would not

exclude, and we know he does not exclude, thought, literature and religion from the forces that must uplift our nation and are necessary to its future. To recover Indian thought, Indian character, Indian perceptions, Indian energy, Indian greatness, and to solve the problems that perplex the world in an Indian spirit and from the Indian standpoint, this, in our view, is the mission of Nationalism. We agree with Dr. Coomaraswamy that an exclusive preoccupation with politics and economics is likely to dwarf our growth and prevent the flowering of originality and energy. We have to return to the fountainheads of our ancient religion, philosophy, art and literature and pour the revivifying influences of our immemorial Aryan spirit and ideals into our political and economic development. This is the ideal the *Karmayogin* holds before it, and our outlook and Dr. Coomaraswamy's do not substantially differ. But in judging our present activities we cannot look, as he does, from a purely artistic and idealistic standpoint, but must act and write in the spirit of a practical idealism.

The debasement of our mind, character and tastes by a grossly commercial, materialistic and insufficient European education is a fact on which the young Nationalism has always insisted. The practical destruction of our artistic perceptions and the plastic skill and fineness of eye and hand which once gave our productions pre-eminence, distinction and mastery of the European markets, is also a thing accomplished. Most vital of all, the spiritual and intellectual divorce from the past which the present schools and universities have effected, has beggared the nation of the originality, high aspiration and forceful energy which can alone make a nation free and great. To reverse the process and recover what we have lost, is undoubtedly the first object to which we ought to devote ourselves. And as the loss of originality, aspiration and energy was the most vital of all these losses, so their recovery should be our first and most important objective. The primary aim of the prophets of Nationalism was to rid the nation of the idea that the future was limited by the circumstances of the present, that because temporary causes had brought us low and made us weak, low therefore must be our aims and weak our methods. They pointed the mind of the people to a great

and splendid destiny, not in some distant millennium but in the comparatively near future, and fired the hearts of the young men with a burning desire to realise the apocalyptic vision. As a justification of what might otherwise have seemed a dream and as an inexhaustible source of energy and inspiration, they pointed persistently to the great achievements and grandiose civilisation of our forefathers and called on the rising generation to recover their lost spiritual and intellectual heritage. It cannot be denied that this double effort to realise the past and the future has been the distinguishing temperament and the chief uplifting force in the movement, and it cannot be denied that it is bringing back to our young men originality, aspiration and energy. By this force the character, temper and action of the Bengali has been altered beyond recognition in a few years. To raise the mind, character and tastes of the people, to recover the ancient nobility of temper, the strong Aryan character and the high Aryan outlook, the perceptions which made earthly life beautiful and wonderful, and the magnificent spiritual experiences, realisations and aspirations which made us the deepest-hearted, deepest-thoughted and most delicately profound in life of all the peoples of the earth, is the task next in importance and urgency. We had hoped by means of National Education to effect this great object as well as to restore to our youth the intellectual heritage of the nation and build up on that basis a yet greater culture in the future. We must admit that the instrument which we cherished and for which such sacrifices were made, has proved insufficient and threatens, in unfit hands, to lose its promise of fulfilment and be diverted to lower ends. But the movement is greater than its instruments. We must strive to prevent the destruction of that which we have created and, in the meanwhile, build up a centre of culture, freer and more perfect, which will either permeate the other with itself or replace it if destroyed. Finally, the artistic awakening has been commenced by that young, living and energetic school which has gathered round the Master and originator, S. J. Abanindranath Tagore. The impulse which this school is giving, its inspired artistic recovery of the past, its intuitive anticipations of the future, have to be popularised and made a national possession.

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Dr. Coomaraswamy complains of the survivals of the past in the preparations for the future. But no movement, however vigorous, can throw off in a few years the effects of a whole century. We must remember also why the degradation and denationalisation, "the mighty evil in our souls" of which the writer complains, came into being. A painful but necessary work had to be done, and because the English nation were the fittest instrument for His purpose, God led them all over those thousands of miles of alien Ocean, gave strength to their hearts and subtlety to their brains, and set them up in India to do His work, which they have been doing faithfully, if blindly, ever since and are doing at the present moment. The spirit and ideals of India had come to be confined in a mould which, however beautiful, was too narrow and slender to bear the mighty burden of our future. When that happens, the mould has to be broken and even the ideal lost for a while, in order to be recovered free of constraint and limitation. We have to recover the Aryan spirit and ideal and keep it intact but enshrined in new forms and more expansive institutions. We have to treasure jealously everything in our social structure, manners, institutions, which is of permanent value, essential to our spirit or helpful to the future; but we must not cabin the expanding and aggressive spirit of India in temporary forms which are the creation of the last few hundred years. That would be a vain and disastrous endeavour. The mould is broken; we must remould in larger outlines and with a richer content. For the work of destruction England was best fitted by her stubborn individuality and by that very commercialism and materialism which made her the antitype in temper and culture of the race she governed. She was chosen too for the unrivalled efficiency and skill with which she has organised an individualistic and materialistic democracy. We had to come to close quarters with that democratic organisation, draw it into ourselves and absorb the democratic spirit and methods so that we might rise beyond them. Our half-aristocratic half-theocratic feudalism had to be broken, in order that the democratic spirit of the Vedanta might be released and, by absorbing all that is needed of the aristocratic and theocratic culture, create for the Indian race a new and

powerful political and social organisation. We have to learn and use the democratic principle and methods of Europe, in order that hereafter we may build up something more suited to our past and to the future of humanity. We have to throw away the individualism and materialism and keep the democracy. We have to solve for the human race the problem of harmonising and spiritualising its impulses towards liberty, equality and fraternity. In order that we may fulfil our mission we must be masters in our own home. It is out of no hostility to the English people, no race hatred that we seek absolute autonomy, but because it is the first condition of our developing our national self and realising our destiny. It is for this reason that the engrossing political preoccupation came upon us; and we cannot give up or tone down our political movement until the lesson of democratic self-government is learned and the first condition of national self-fulfilment realised. For another reason also England was chosen, because she had organised the competitive system of commerce, with its bitter and murderous struggle for existence, in the most skilful, discreet and successful fashion. We had to feel the full weight of that system and learn the literal meaning of this industrial realisation of Darwinism. It has been written large for us in ghastly letters of famine, chronic starvation and misery and a decreasing population. We have risen at last, entered into the battle and with the Boycott for a weapon, are striking at the throat of British commerce even as it struck at ours, first by protection and then by free trade. Again it is not out of hatred that we strike, but out of self-preservation. We must conquer in that battle if we are to live. We cannot arrest our development of industry and commerce while waiting for a new commercial system to develop or for beauty and art to reconquer the world. As in politics so in commerce, we must learn and master the European methods in order that we may eventually rise above them. The crude commercial Swadeshi, which Dr. Coomaraswamy finds so distasteful and disappointing, is as integral a part of the national awakening as the movement towards Swaraj or as the new School of Art. If this crude Swadeshi were to collapse and the national movement towards autonomy come to nothing, the artistic renaissance he

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has praised so highly, would wither and sink with the drying up of the soil in which it was planted. A nation need not be luxuriously wealthy in order to be profoundly artistic, but it must have a certain amount of well-being, a national culture and, above all, hope and ardour, if it is to maintain a national art based on a widespread development of artistic perception and faculty. Moreover, aesthetic arts and crafts cannot live against the onrush of cheap and vulgar manufactures under the conditions of the modern social structure. Industry can only become again beautiful if poverty and the struggle for life are eliminated from society and the co-operative State and commune organised as the fruit of a great moral and spiritual uplifting of humanity. We hold such an uplifting and reorganisation as part of India's mission. But to do her work she must live. Therefore the economical preoccupation has been added to the political. We perceive the salvation of the country not in parting with either of these, but in adding to them a religious and moral preoccupation. On the basis of that religious and moral awakening the preoccupation of art and fine culture will be added and firmly based. There are many who perceive the necessity of the religious and moral regeneration, who are inclined to turn from the prosaic details of politics and commerce and regret that any guide and teacher of the nation should stoop to mingle in them. That is a grievous error. The men who would lead India must be catholic and many-sided. When the Avatar comes, we like to believe that he will be not only the religious guide, but the political leader, the great educationist, the regenerator of society, the captain of co-operative industry, with the soul of the poet, scholar and artist. He will be in short the summary and grand type of the future Indian nation which is rising to reshape and lead the world.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Anandamath IV

# KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW

of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Rump Presidential Election

The Lahore Special Correspondent of the *Rashtra Mat* telegraphs to his paper a story of the proceedings at the Presidential election for the Rump Congress at Lahore, which, if correct, sheds a singular light on the proceedings of the valiant Three who are defending the bridge of conciliation and alliance between the bureaucracy and the Moderates which now goes by the name of the Indian National Congress. According to this correspondent, the account of Sir Pherozshah's election cabled from Lahore is incorrect and garbled. What really happened was that eighteen gentlemen assembled at Lahore as the Reception Committee, of whom more than half were employees of Mr. Harkissen Lal's various commercial ventures. This independent majority voted plump for Mr. Harkissen Lal's candidate, Sir Pherozshah, but the rest were strong and firm for S. Suren-  
dranath Banerji. This revolt in the camp led to much anxiety and confusion and great efforts were made to bring back the insurgents to their allegiance, but in vain. If this account is correct, no criticism can be too strong for the misrepresentation which suppressed the facts of the election. Was it not circulated that Sir Pherozshah would not accept the Presidentship unless it were offered unanimously? A strenuous attempt was made

to save the face of the Dictator by representing in the Lahore cables that the nomination of S. Surendranath by the Bengal Convention Committee was only a suggestion in a private letter. But even then, what of Burma? What of this remarkable division in the toy committee itself at Lahore? We imagine that the Lion will put his dignity in his pocket or in his mane or any other hiding place that may be handy and accept the Presidentship; and if he does, we also imagine that he will roar discreetly at Lahore about the touching and unanimous confidence placed in him and the imperative voice of the whole country calling him to fill this great and responsible position of a Rump President! We have a suggestion for our highly esteemed Lion. Why not save his dignity and effect his object by appointing some lieutenant like Mr. Watcha as President? In that case Sir Pherozshah would be as much President in fact as if he enjoyed the doubtful and mutilated honours of the Rump Presidentship.

### Nation-stuff in Morocco

The Powers of Europe are highly indignant at the tortures and mutilations practised by Mulai Hamid on his vanquished rival, El Roghi, and his captured adherents. There is no doubt that the savage outbreak of mediaeval and African savagery of which the Moorish Sultan has been guilty, is revolting and deprives him personally of all claim to sympathy; but European moral indignation in the matter seems to us to be out of place when we remember the tortures practised by American troops on Filipinos (to say nothing of the ghastly details of lynching in the Southern States), and the unbridled atrocities of the European armies in China. Be that as it may, we come across a remarkable account, extracted in the *Indian Daily News*, of the stuff of which the Moorish people are made. The narrator is Belton, the Englishman who commanded the Sultan's army and has resigned his post as a protest against the Sultan's primitive method of treating political prisoners. Death and mutilation seem to have been the punishments inflicted. Belton narrates that twenty officers of El Roghi had their right hands cut off and then seared, according

to the barbarous old surgical fashion, in a cauldron of boiling oil, to stop the bleeding. Not from one of these men, reports the English soldier with wonder, did there come, all the time, a single whimper. And he goes on to tell how one of them, after the mutilation, quietly walked over to the fire where the cauldron was boiling, and, while his stump was being plunged in the boiling liquid, lighted from the flame with the utmost serenity a cigarette he held in his hand. Whatever may be the present backwardness of the Moors and the averseness to light of their tribes, there is the stuff of a strong, warlike and princely nation in the land which gave birth to these iron men. If ever the wave of Egyptian Neo-Islam and Mahomedan Nationalism sweeps across Morocco, Europe will have to reckon with no mean or contemptible people in the North West of Africa.

### **Cook versus Peary**

It is with a somewhat sardonic sense of humour that we in India, whom that eminently truthful diplomat, Lord Curzon, once had the boldness to lecture on our mendacity and the superior truth of the Occidental, have watched the vulgar squabble between Dr. Cook and Commander Peary about the discovery of the North Pole. Long ago, most of the romance and mystery had gone out of the search for the Pole. The quest, though still extremely difficult and even perilous to an incautious adventurer, had no longer the charm of those gigantic dangers which met and slew the old explorers. It was known besides that little was likely to reward the man who succeeded, and there was small chance of anything but ice and cold being discovered at the North Pole. What little of the interesting and poetic was left in the idea, has now gone out of it for ever, and only a sense of nausea is left behind, as the controversy develops and leaves one with a feeling that it would have been better if the goal of so many heroic sacrifices had been left undiscovered for all time, rather than that it should have been discovered in this way. The spectacle of two distinguished explorers, one, we suppose from his title, an American naval officer and the other a savant not unknown to fame, hurling at

each other such epithets as liar and faker, accusing each other of vile and dishonourable conduct, advancing evidence that when examined melts into thin air, citing witnesses who, when questioned, give them the lie, while all Europe and America join and take sides in the disgusting wrangle, is one that ought to give pause to the blindest admirer of Western civilisation and believer in Western superiority. We certainly will not imitate the general run of European writers who, arguing smugly from temporary, local or individual circumstances, talk, in the style of self-satisfied arrogance, of Oriental barbarity, Oriental treachery and mendacity, Oriental unscrupulousness; we will not say that the continents of Europe and America are peopled by nations of highly civilised liars, imposters and fakers of evidence without any sense of truth, honour or dignity, although we have as good cause as any Western critic of Asia; but at any rate the legend of European superiority and the inferior morals of the Asiatic has, by this time, been so badly damaged that we think even the *Englishman* might think twice before it bases its opposition to national aspirations on the pretensions of the Pharisee. It is evident that we are as good as the Europeans; we think we are in most respects better; we certainly could not be worse.

## Nationalist Organisation

**T**HE TIME has now come when it is imperative in the interests of the Nationalist party that its forces should be organised for united deliberation and effective work. A great deal depends on the care and foresight with which the character and methods of the organisation are elaborated at the beginning, for any mistake now may mean trouble and temporary disorganisation hereafter. It is not the easy problem of providing instruments for the working of a set of political ideas in a country where political thought has always been clear and definite and no repressive laws or police harassment can be directed against the dissemination of just political ideals and lawful political activities. We have to face the jealousy, suspicion and hostility of an all-powerful vested interest which it is our avowed object to replace by Indian agencies, the opposition, not always over-nice in its methods, of a rich and influential section of our own countrymen, and the vagueness of thought and indecisiveness of action common to the great bulk of our people even when they have been deeply touched by Nationalist sentiment and ideals. To form a centre of order, clear, full and powerful thought, swift effectiveness, free and orderly deliberation, disciplined and well-planned action must be the object of any organisation that we shall form. Two sets of qualities which ought not to be but often are conflicting, are needed for success: resolute courage and a frank and faithful adherence to principle on the one side and wariness and policy on the other.

The first mistake we have to avoid is the tendency to perpetuate or imitate old institutions or lines of action which are growing out of date. The Nationalist party is a young and progressive force born of tendencies, aims and necessities which were foreign to the nineteenth century, and, being a party of the future and not of the immediate past, it must look, in all it does

and creates, not to the past but to the future. There are still in the party the relics of the old desire to raise up a rival Congress and assert our claim to be part legatees of the institution which came to a violent end at Surat. Our claim stands and, if a real Congress is again erected, it must be with the Nationalists within it and not excluded. The strength of the demand in the country for a United Congress is a sufficient vindication of the claim. But if we try still farther to enforce it by holding a rival session and calling it the Congress, we shall take an ill-advised step calculated to weaken us instead of developing our strength. A technical justification may be advanced by inviting men of all shades of opinion to such a session, but as a matter of fact none are likely to attend a session summoned by pronounced Nationalists unless they are pronounced Nationalists themselves. A United Congress can be effectively summoned only if we are able to effect a combination of Nationalists, advanced Moderates and that large section of opinion which, without having pronounced views, are eager to revive a public body in which all opinions can meet and work together for the good of the country. Such a combination would soon reduce Sir Pherozshah's Rump Congress to the lifeless and meagre phantasm which it must in any case become with the lapse of time and the open development of the Mehta-Morley alliance. But to create another Rump Congress on the Nationalist side would be to confound confusion yet worse without any compensating gain. It would moreover throw on the shoulders of the Nationalists a portion of the blame for perpetuating the split, which now rests entirely on the other side.

If a Nationalist Rump Congress is inadvisable and inconsistent with the dignity of the Nationalist party and its aversion to mere catchwords and shams, an imitation of the forms and working of the old Congress is also inadvisable. We were never satisfied with those forms and that working. The three days' show, the excessively festal aspect of the occasion, the monstrous preponderance of speech and resolution-passing over action and work, the want of true democratic rule and order, the weary waste of formal oratory without any practical use or object, the incapacity of the assembly for grappling with the real problems

of our national existence and progress, the anxiety to avoid public discussion which is the life-breath of democratic politics, these and many other defects made the Congress in our view an instrument ill-made, wasteful of money and energy and the centre of a false conception of political deliberation and action. If we imitate the Congress, we shall contract all the faults of the Congress. Neither can we get any help from the proceedings of the Nationalist Conference which met at Surat; for that was a loose and informal body which only considered certain immediate questions and emergencies arising out of the Surat session. Yet a centre of deliberation and the consideration of past progress and future policy is essential to the building of the Nationalist party into an effective force conscious of and controlling its mission and activities. We shall indicate briefly the main principles on which we think the organisation of such a body should be based.

The first question is of the scope and object of the institution. In the first place, we must avoid the mistake of making it a festival or a show occasion intended to excite enthusiasm and propagate sentiment. That was a function which the Indian National Congress had, perhaps inevitably, to perform, but a body which tries to be at once a deliberative assembly and a national festival, must inevitably tend to establish the theatrical and holiday character at the expense of the practical and deliberative. National festivals and days of ceremony are the best means of creating enthusiasm and sentiment; that is the function of occasions like the 7th August and the 16th October, the Shivaji Utsav and similar celebrations. We must resolutely eschew all vestiges of the old festival aspect of our political bodies and make our assembly a severely practical and matter-of-fact body. Secondly, we must clearly recognise that a body meeting once a year cannot be an effective centre of actual yearlong work; it can only be an instrument for deliberation and the determination of policy and a centre of reference for whose consideration and adjudgment the actually accomplished work of the year may, in its main features and the sum of its fulfilment, be submitted. The practical work must be done by quite

different organisations, provincial and local, carrying out the policy fixed by the deliberative body but differently constituted; for, as the object of an executive body is entirely different from the object of a deliberative body, so its constitution, rules and procedure must be entirely different. In fact our All-India body must be not a Congress or Conference even, but a Council, and since in spite of Shakespeare and S. J. Baikunthanath Sen, there is much in a name and it largely helps to determine our attitude towards the thing, let us call our body not the Nationalist Congress, Convention or Conference, but the Nationalist Council.

If the body is to be a Council, its dimensions must be of such a character as to be manageable and allow of effective discussion in the short time at our disposal. A spectacular Congress or Conference gains by numbers, a Council is hampered by them. Therefore the maximum number of delegates must be fixed and apportioned to the different parts of the nation according to their numbers. Secondly, in the proceedings themselves all elements of useless ornament and redundancy must be purged out, such as the long Presidential Speech, the Reception Committee Chairman's speech and the division of the proceedings into the secret and effective Subjects Committee sittings and the public display of oratory in the full assembly. The first two features are obviously useless for our purpose and a mere waste of valuable time. With the disappearance of the spectacular aspect usually associated with our public bodies, the reason for the mere display of oratory also disappears. The only other utility of the double sitting is that the full assembly forms a Court of Appeal from the decision of the Subjects Committee and an opportunity to the minority for publicly dissenting from any decision by a majority which they might otherwise be supposed to have endorsed. The necessity for the first function arises from the imperfectly representative character of the Subjects Committee, as it is at present elected; the necessity for the second function from the absence of publicity in its proceedings. If the whole Council sits as Subjects Committee, the necessity for the Court of Appeal or the public assertion of dissent will not occur. The

only justification for the existence of the Subjects Committee in our present political bodies is their unwieldy proportions, the only reason for its secrecy the attempt to conceal all difficulties in the way of coming to a unanimous conclusion; and neither of these reasons will have any existence in a Nationalist Council. The subjects can be fixed by a small executive body existing throughout the year, which will be in charge of all questions that may arise in connection with the Council, subject to approval or censure by the Council itself at its annual meeting. The resolutions on these subjects can be formed in the Council and additional resolutions can be brought forward, if the Council approves. All unnecessary oratory should be avoided and resolutions formulating policy of a standing character can be first got out of the way by a formal motion of them from the Chair. After this preliminary, the Council can go into Committee to consider, approve or amend the report of progress made by the Secretaries for the past year, and, on the second day, resolutions demanding debate and deliberation may be discussed in full Council.

The next question is the procedure and constitution. We desire no autocratic President, no oligarchy of ex-Presidents and long-established officials, no looseness of procedure putting a premium on party trickery and unfair rulings. The only body of officials will be two general secretaries and two secretaries for each province, forming the executive body of the Council, who will be for the most part recorders of provincial work and summoners of the Council and will have no power to direct or control its procedure. Instead of an autocratic and influential President we should have a Chairman who will not intervene in the discussion with his views, but confine himself to guiding the deliberations as an administrator of fixed rules of procedure which he will not have the power to depart from, modify or amplify. He must therefore be, like the Speaker of the House of Commons, not an active and prominent leader who cannot be spared from the discussion, but a man of some position in the party whose probity and fairness can be universally trusted.

The last question is that of the electorate. We throw out the suggestion that, in the first place, we should cease to be bound by

the British provincial units which are the creation of historical circumstances connected with the gradual conquest of India by the English traders, and have no correspondence with the natural divisions of the people, and should adopt divisions which will be favourable to the working out of the Nationalist policy. And since the main work of the party will have to be done through the vernacular, the most natural and convenient divisions will be those of the half dozen or more great literary languages, minor or dialectal tongues of inferior vitality being thrown under the great vernaculars to which they geographically or by kinship belong. It was the programme of the Nationalist party in Bengal to create a register of voters throughout the country, who could form a real electorate. Such a conception would have been impracticable in the old days when the people at large took no active part in politics; it was fast approaching the region of practicability when the repressions broke the natural course of our national development and introduced elements of arbitrary interference from above and a feeble and sporadic Terrorist reaction from below, the after-swell of which still disturbs the country. S. J. Bipin Chandra Pal has written advocating the creation of a register of Nationalists, as a basis for organisation. This is, no doubt, the only sound basis for a thoroughly democratic organisation, but so long as the after-swell lasts and the tempest may return, so long as police misrule does not give way to the complete restoration of law and order, a register of Nationalists would only be a register of victims for investigators of the Lalmohan and Mazarul Haq type to harass with arrests, house-searches, binding down under securities, prosecutions with no evidence or tainted evidence, and the other weapons which Criminal Procedure and Penal Code supply, and against which there can be no sufficient redress under an autocratic regime not responsible to any popular body, leaning on the police rather than on the people and master of the judiciary. In these circumstances we can only create convenient limited electorates for the election of our council delegates, awaiting a more favourable condition of things for democratising the base of our structure.

On these principles we can establish a deliberative body

which will give shape, centrality and consistency to Nationalist propaganda and work all over the country. We invite the attention of the leading Nationalist workers throughout India to our suggestion. The proposal has been made to hold a meeting of Nationalists at Calcutta at which a definite scheme and rules may be submitted and, as far as possible, adopted in action so that the work may not be delayed. No United Congress is possible this year, and if or when it comes, the existence of our body which is avowedly a party organisation will not interfere with our joining it.

## An Extraordinary Prohibition

**P**ANDIT Bhoje Dutt of Agra has been in our midst for some time, and none had hitherto imagined that he was a political agitator or his preachings dangerous to the public peace. We all knew him as secretary of the Suddhi Samaj, a religious body having for its object the re-admission of converts from Hinduism into the fold of the religion and also, we believe, the admission of converts to Hinduism from other religions into Hindu society with the full status of Hindus. The society has been working for some time with signal success and no breach of the law or the peace. Yet the other day Mr. Swinhoe thought fit to prohibit the Pandit from lecturing in Calcutta and the public from attending his lectures for the space of two months. We reproduce the order as it affords singularly clear proof of the contention, always advanced by Nationalists, that under the present system such public liberty as we enjoy, is not an ensured right but an insecure concession, based not on status but on permission, and therefore not, properly speaking, a liberty at all. It runs:—

“Whereas it has been made to appear to me by evidence adduced before me that Pandit Bhoje Dutt, political agitator and Editor of the vernacular paper ‘Musafir Arya’, Agra, has arrived in Calcutta and intends to lecture in the Albert Hall in Calcutta this evening at 8 p.m. on the subject of ‘Musulman logonke barkhilaf’ *i.e.* against the interests of Mahomedans:—

And whereas I am satisfied that such lecturing or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt at any place or in any building in Calcutta may lead to a serious disturbance of the public tranquillity and rioting which will be a source of danger to human life and public safety:—

And whereas I am satisfied that the immediate prevention of such lecturing and preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt

within the town of Calcutta is necessary in the interests of human life and safety and in order to prevent any riot or affray, I do hereby under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code order and direct the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt to refrain from delivering any lecture or preaching or holding or taking part in any meeting within the town of Calcutta, and I hereby direct the public generally to refrain from attending or taking part in any lecture or preaching by the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt and to refrain from attending or taking any part in any meeting or meetings held by or on behalf of the said Pandit Bhoje Dutt in the town of Calcutta and I farther direct that this order shall remain in force for a period of two months from the date thereof.

Given under my hand and seal of this court dated the 25th September 1909.”

The value of the evidence which so easily satisfied Mr. Swinhoe may be judged from its inaccuracy and triviality. Pandit Bhoje Dutt is not a political agitator, but a religious preacher and social reformer; the proposed lecture had nothing to do with the Mahomedans and was upon the Hindu Puranas, and there was no breach of peace or any approach to a breach of the peace at Monghyr. So much for the accuracy. Secondly, Mr. Swinhoe ought to have known that, although a lecture may be against the interests of the Mahomedans, “Against the interests of the Mahomedans” cannot be the title or subject of a lecture, and we can only suppose that this satisfactory witness was a badly-educated detective or informer who either did not know his own meaning or could not make it clear to Mr. Swinhoe. Nor is it alleged that the preaching in Monghyr resulted in a breach of the peace, only that it nearly so resulted. On such incorrect and flimsy evidence, given *ex parte* and without any opportunity to the lecturer to expose its falsity, a magistrate is able and willing to deprive a citizen of his civic rights for two months and hamper a legitimate movement. If, after proper enquiry, the Magistrate had found that there was likely to be anything inflammatory in the lecture, he could have stopped the speaker from giving that or any similar lecture, but, even so, there would be no ground for a prolonged denial of civic rights. Farther, it is not enough that

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a lecture should be against the interests of any community, for there may be such a thing as legitimate opposition of interests; the conversion of Hindus to Mahomedanism is against the interest of Hindus and the conversion of Mahomedans to Hinduism is against the interest of Mahomedans, but neither religion can, on that ground, be denied the right of proselytisation. If it be argued that wherever the exercise of legitimate rights may lead to a breach of the peace, that exercise may be stopped, we say that this is a most dangerous principle, since it would be enough for any section of the community to break or threaten to break the peace to stop others from the exercise of their legitimate rights. On such grounds Mr. Asquith should be debarred from holding any meeting because the suffragettes climb walls and throw stones wherever he goes! Such a principle simply means putting a premium upon lawlessness. In other countries the indiscreet use of powers by Magistrates is restrained by public opinion but in India there is no such safeguard.

(Since the above was in type, the Police have undertaken to prove their statements, and the facts stated above must be taken as Pandit Bhoje Dutt's side of the case. Our general criticisms of the policy of the order remain unaffected. The chance now given to the Police to substantiate their case ought to have been given to the Pandit before the order was passed. — EDITOR)

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Anandamath V  
Indian Art and an Old Classic

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Apostasy of the National Council

We have received an open letter from some teachers of the Rangpur National school in which they warn the President of the National Council of Education of the evil effects likely to ensue from the recent National Risley Circular and protest strongly against the policy underlying it. For reasons of space we are unable to publish the letter. The signatories point out that the movement took its birth in the boycott movement and was from the first, closely associated with it in nature and sympathy, that the participation of young men in the national awakening has been one of the chief causes of its rapid progress and success and that the new policy of the Council not only divorces education from the life of the country, but destroys the sympathy and support of the most progressive elements in the nation. It is also pointed out that the donation made by Raja Subodh Mallik, from which the practicability of the movement took its beginning, and the sacrifices made by the teachers and students of the first established schools were intimately connected with the revolt against the Risley Circular, and yet the same circular is repeated in a more stringent form by the Council itself. There were two conditions attached to Raja Subodh Chandra's gift: the first that the maintenance of the Rangpur and Dacca schools,

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which were created to give shelter to students who persisted in taking part in politics in spite of all prohibitions, should be assisted out of his donation, and second that no form of Government control should be submitted to by the Council. It would be mere hypocrisy to deny that the issue of the prohibitory telegrams by the Secretary was the result of the Government circular previous to the seventh of August. We do not know by what morality or law of honour the Council clings to the donation while infringing in the spirit its most vital condition. Perhaps these things also, no less than courage and sincerity, are considered unessential in this new "national" education. We notice that S. Hirendranath Dutt at Dacca seems to have openly proclaimed the abjuration of all connection with politics as part of the duty of a "National" school. We must therefore take the divorce of the National Council from the national movement as part of a deliberate and permanent policy, and not, as it might otherwise have been imagined, a temporary aberration due largely to the fact that the President and the most active of the two Secretaries are members of Legislative Councils and therefore parts of the Government which is supposed to have no control over the institution. All that we can now expect of the Council is to be a centre of scientific and technical education; it can no longer be a workshop in which national spirit and energy are to be forged and shaped.

### **The Progress of China**

A recent article in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* gives a picture of the enormous educational progress made by China in a few years. In the short time since the Boxer troubles China has revolutionised her educational system, established a network of modern schools of all ranks, provided for a thorough modern education for her princes and nobles, and added to the intellectual education a thorough grounding in military knowledge and the habits of the soldier, so that, when the process is complete, the whole Chinese people will be a nation trained in arms whom the greatest combination of powers will not care to touch. On

another side of national development, a railway has just been opened which has been entirely constructed and will be run by Chinese. When the process of education is well forward, it is intended by the Chinese Government to transform itself into a constitutional and Parliamentary government, and in its programme this great automatic revolution has been fixed to come off in another eight years. No other race but the Chinese, trained by the Confucian system to habits of minute method, perfect organisation and steady seriousness in all things great and small, could thus calmly map out a stupendous political, social and educational change, as if it were the programme of a ceremonial function, and carry it out with thoroughness and efficiency. Once the Chinese have made up their minds to this revolution, they are likely to carry it out with the greatest possible completeness, businesslike method, effective organisation, and the least possible waste and friction. In the history of China, no less than the history of Japan, we are likely to see the enormous value of national will-power using the moral outcome of a great and ancient discipline, even while breaking the temporary mould in which that discipline had cast society, thought and government. We in India have an ancient discipline much more powerful than the Chinese or Japanese; but where is the centre of sovereignty in India which will direct the national will-power to the right use of that discipline? Where even is the centre of national endeavour which will make up for the absence of such a Government? We have a Government manned by aliens, out of touch with and contemptuous of the sources of national strength and culture; we have an education empty of them which seeks to replace our ancient discipline by a foreign strength, instead of recovering and invigorating our own culture and turning it to modern uses; we have leaders trained in the foreign discipline who do not know or believe in the force that would, if made use of, revolutionise India more swiftly and mightily than Japan was or China is being revolutionised. It is this and not internal division or the drag of old and unsuitable conditions that makes the work in India more difficult than in any other Asiatic country.

**Partition Day**

Partition Day comes round again on the 16th October. Last year, executive caprice prevented the day from being celebrated with all its accustomed ceremonies; this year, there is not likely to be a similar interference, and we trust that all the usual circumstances of the occasion will be observed without any abridgment. On the 7th of August the official organisers were afraid to start the procession from the College Square; now that S. Surendranath is with us, we trust that no such unworthy considerations will be allowed to mar the fullness and imposing nature of this feature. From no other centre in Calcutta is an effective procession at all probable, and it was seen last August that the only result of trying to change it was to break up the procession and mar its effect. The two most essential features, however, of the Partition Day are the Rakhi Bandhan and the reading of the National Proclamation; it is above all a day of the declaration of Bengal's indivisible unity and these two functions are for that reason the very kernel of the observances. It is unfortunate that the celebration should coincide this year with the Puja sales, as this may interfere with the closing of the shops, which is the most salient sign of protest against the dismemberment. We hope the official organisers are taking steps to counteract this unfavourable factor.

## Nationalist Work in England

WE PUBLISH in this issue an article by Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal in which he suggests the necessity of a Nationalist agency or bureau in England, and states the reasoning which has led him to modify the views formerly held by the whole party on the inutility of work in England under the present political conditions. Bipin Babu has been busy, ever since his departure from India, in work of this kind and it goes without saying that he would not have engaged in it or persisted in it under discouraging circumstances, if it had not been borne in on him that it was advisable and necessary. At the same time, rightly or wrongly, the majority of our party still believe in the concentration of work into the effort to elicit and organise the latent strength of the nation, and cannot believe that work in England at present is anything but hopeless and a waste of money and energy. We freely admit that under certain circumstances an agency in England might become indispensable. That would certainly be the case if an elective body with substantial but limited powers were established in India and serious differences of opinion were to arise between the Government and the popular representatives. But such a state of things is yet remote, and the reformed councils will certainly not be such a body. At present, what will such a bureau or agency do for the country? Bipin Babu suggests that it may supply the British public with correct information so as to stem the tide of unscrupulous or prejudiced misinformation pouring into England through Reuter and other Anglo-Indian sources, and that, if the British public get correct information, they will at once put a stop to the policy of repression. We confess, our impression is the reverse, — that however correct the information we supply, the British public as a whole — we do not speak of just and open-minded individuals, — will still prefer to put confidence in the misstatements of their

own countrymen rather than in the true statements of what they believe to be an inferior race indebted to them for any element of civilisation it may now possess. Our impression is that even a correct idea of the facts would not necessarily lead to a correct appreciation and policy based on those facts; — many political and psychological factors would interfere.

If we are to change our opinion, it must be either as the result of new experience showing the effect of agitation in England or of new reasoning correcting the imperfections of our old premises and conclusions. The only fact that seems to be in favour of a readjustment of our views, is the energetic campaign in Parliament of Mr. Mackarness and his friends for the release of the deportees. It is alleged that, but for the untoward incident of the Curzon-Wyllie murder, some if not all the deportees would by this time have been released. We have our doubts about this conclusion. Sir Henry Cotton and some of his colleagues were always ever-hopeful about the effect of their pressure, and their expectations were more than once disappointed. No ministerial pronouncement ever lent any colour to their idea that the release was imminent when the assassination happened. All that the Government had promised, was to consider the question of the deportees' farther detention, in the usual course, on the presentation of the six-monthly report, a consideration usual without any Parliamentary agitation. The discomfort of the questions was, no doubt, great and the long-established sentiment of many Liberals and not a few Conservatives was offended by the long detention of public men without a trial. But this in itself, though it strewed the path of the deporters with thorns instead of its being, as they would have liked, strewn with roses, would not, by itself, have secured the release of the deportees. Even if it had, the release of one or two or more of the deportees would not have removed the policy of repression. Only the repeal of the Act could have done that, and it must have been followed by the eradication of executive illegalities and police harassment as well as of the readiness of Government to pass repressive legislation, before the real obstacles in the way of peaceful progress could be removed. Would an agency in England seriously help

towards such a consummation, — that is the question. It means the diversion of money and effort, and we must see a reasonable chance of a return before we embark on it.

Bipin Babu urges that it will, and bases his conception on a certain reading of the British character and policy which we hesitate to endorse in its entirety. It is quite true that we have heard of certain irresponsible Englishmen longing for a violent outbreak on the part of the people, which would give them an excuse for equally violent measures to crush Indian aspirations for ever. But we do not believe for a moment, that some of the responsible officials, — and that we believe is all Bipin Babu implies, — cherished the same idea. We think that all Government officials have regarded the outbreak of Terrorism, small though it was, with alarm and the utmost anxiety to get rid of it, and indeed we believe the institution of organised repression to have been the result of an ignorant and unreasoning alarm which hugely exaggerated the dimensions and meaning of the outbreak, as well as wholly misunderstood the drift of the Nationalist movement. We take exception also to Bipin Babu's suggestion of the bully in the British character being responsible for the repressions, as if it were something peculiar to the British race. What Bipin Babu wishes to indicate by this phrase, the readiness to use repression and what are erroneously called strong measures, to intimidate a popular movement, is a tendency which belongs not to British character especially but to human nature, and should be considered the result not of character but of the position. The Government in India favour repression because it seems the only way of getting over what they regard as a dangerous movement, without concessions which mean the immediate or gradual cessation of their absolute paramountcy. It is a case of incompatible interests, and until both parties can be brought to a *modus vivendi*, such it will remain. How is that incompatibility to be surmounted, for, at first sight, it seems to be an insurmountable obstacle. Bipin Babu relies on the enlightened self-interest of the British people and to a certain extent on their civilised conscience. We think we may as well leave

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the civilised conscience out of the reckoning for the present. The civilised conscience is a remarkably queer and capricious quantity, on which, frankly, we place no reliance whatever. It is very sensitive to breaches of principle by others and very indignant when the same breaches of principle are questioned in its own conduct. It sees the mote in other eyes; it is obstinately unaware of the beam in its own. It is always criticising other nations, but it ignores or is furious at criticism of its own. It has fits of sensitiveness in which it makes large resolutions, but it can never be trusted to persist in them contrary to its own interests. This civilised conscience is not peculiar to the British people, but belongs in a greater or less degree to every European nation with the possible exception of Russia. We prefer infinitely to rely, if we have to rely on anything, on the sense of enlightened self-interest. Here also we differ from Bipin Babu. He argues as if the British were a thoughtful and clear-minded people, and only needed the data to be correctly placed before them in order to understand their interests correctly. This is far from the truth about British character. The English are, or were, a people with a rough practical common sense and business-like regularity and efficiency which, coupled with a mighty *thew* and *sinew* and a bulldog tenacity and courage, have carried them through all dangers and difficulties and made them one of the first peoples of the globe. They have had men of unsurpassed thought-power and clearness of view and purpose, but the race is not thoughtful and clear-minded; on the contrary on all questions requiring thought, intelligence and sympathy they are amazingly muddle-headed and can only learn by knocking their shins against hard and rough facts. When this first happens, they swear profusely, rub their shins and try to kick the obstacle out of the way. If it consents to be kicked out of the path, they go on their way rejoicing; otherwise, after hurting their shins repeatedly they begin to respect the obstacle, stop swearing and kicking, and negotiate with it. In this process, familiar to all who have to do with Englishmen from the point of view of conflicting interests, there is much rough practical sense but little thought

and intelligence. It is on this conception of the British character that the Nationalist party has hitherto proceeded. The hard fact of a continued and increasing Boycott, an indomitable national movement, a steady passive resistance, have been the obstacles they have sought to present to the British desire for an absolute lordship. We must prevent these obstacles from being kicked out of the way by repression, but the way to achieve that end is to show a tenacity and courage and a power of efficiency rivalling the British, and not to make an appeal to the conscience and clear common sense of the British public. We could only imagine such an appeal having an effect in the as yet improbable circumstance of a Liberal Government with a small majority dependent for its existence on a powerful Socialist and Independent Labour party. Even if this should be the result of the approaching general elections, the appeal could not have effect unless the hard facts were there in strong evidence in India itself. Our whole effort should be devoted to establishing these hard facts in a much more efficient and thorough way than we have hitherto done, and the only way is for the Nationalist party to establish its separate existence, clear from the drag of Moderatism on the one side and disturbance by ill-instructed outbreaks of Terrorism on the other, and erect itself into a living, compact and working force in India.

One day the Government in India will be obliged to come to the Nationalist party, which it is now trying to destroy, for help in bringing about a satisfactory settlement of the quarrel between the bureaucracy and the people. But that will not be till they have exhausted their hopes of achieving the same end on their own terms by playing on the weaknesses of the Moderate party. If the country were to follow the Moderate lead and content itself with the paltry and undesirable measure of reform now proposed, the progress of India towards self-government would be indefinitely postponed. The Nationalist party therefore, while showing all willingness to coalesce with the Moderates in the Congress on reasonable terms, must jealously guard their separate individuality and existence and decline to enter the Congress on terms

which would make them an inoperative force and perpetuate the misbegotten creature of the Allahabad Convention Committee under the name of the Congress. Nor should they be drawn into experiments in England which are, at present, of doubtful value or none.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

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## College Square Speech – 2

**M**R. AUROBINDO Ghose next rose amid loud cheers and cries of “Bande Mataram”. He said that the meeting was the last they could hold before the Partition Day, which was approaching, and so he could speak a few words about that illustrious day which should be observed with great national enthusiasm. The 16th October had become a memorable day, not only in the history of India, but in that of the world. The 7th of August was the day of the awakening of the nation and the 16th October was the day when that awakened nation publicly declared its individuality and indestructible vitality. A time might come when the future generation would have an occasion to celebrate that day as one of national rejoicing. The speaker then dwelt upon the several aspects of Partition Day, when Bengal was split up, and said he did not recognise the separation and would not do so. It was on that day that they declared through the leaders of the nation, and by a national proclamation, that the unity of Bengal remained intact and that there was no power strong enough to break it. He explained the true meaning of the Swadeshi and boycott movements and went on to say that they should have a separate existence. They had a past and a future and should assert their individuality. He emphasised the fact that every country in the world was more or less Swadeshi. So Bengal must learn the value of self-help. The Partition Day should also be associated with national determination to revive the commerce and industry of the country and to regain that prosperity which once prevailed in India. Bengal must remain united.

Mr. Ghose proceeded to say that the national movement was

*Delivered at College Square, Calcutta, on 10 October 1909. Text published in the Times of India (Bombay) on 11 October.*

beset with manifold difficulties. Holding up before the audience a piece of Manchester cloth, stamped with the words “Bande Mataram”, he exclaimed that the great cause was suffering on account of certain unprincipled men who were trying to assail the Swadeshi movement from all sides. The speaker had learned with great sorrow that foreign cloths were still pouring into the market and having a large sale. The more the difficulties in the way, he declared, the stronger would the movement be. He concluded his address by asking his countrymen to observe the 16th of October with due mourning.

## Bhawanipur Speech

**G**ENTLEMEN, — The time before us is extremely short. There are other speakers who will address you and the sun is now hastening down to its set. Therefore I hope you will excuse me if what I have to say to you is very briefly said. We meet here preliminary to the holding of the anniversary of the Partition. Babu Lalit Mohan Das has told you the significance of that day. Let me add this, that the 16th October has become one of the chief landmarks of our year, and not only the chief landmark of our year but the landmark of the progress of our movement — a movement of the progress of Swadeshi and boycott which we undertook in the year when the Partition was effected. We see on that day how far it has progressed, or if it has receded, how far it has receded. We are carrying on that movement at the present time under the greatest difficulties possible. Every kind of obstruction is being thrown in our way. You know very well what efforts have been made to mar the attendance at the meeting. It is supposed that the meeting is mainly composed of students, a delusion which the authorities cannot get rid of and therefore strenuous efforts are made to prevent students of our colleges from joining any political meeting and pressure is brought to bear upon the authorities of colleges to dismiss from their employment any professor who joins in the political life of his country. Yesterday the news was published of the suppression of another Samiti, the Anushilan Samiti. We all know what the Anushilan Samiti is. We all know that it is one of those Samitis which has the least to do with politics. It is one of the most self-restrained and self-denying of all the associations and confined itself to perfectly harmless activities, to improve

*Delivered at Bhawanipur, Calcutta, on 13 October 1909. Text published in the Bengalee on 15 October.*

the physique of the nation, to give relief in time of famine, to help their countrymen on occasions like the recent Ardhoday Yog. This was the kind of work which this Samiti did. Suddenly the Government has found out that with the existence of this society it is impossible to carry on the administration of the law. Our associations have been suppressed and we are carrying on this Swadeshi movement without organisation, without proper instrument and without proper equipment. We have to face any number of temptations, we have to face any number of obstacles, we have to face also intimidation. In spite of all that, we cling to the movement and we go on with it.

The one message we can give to you, under such circumstances, is the message to hold firm. If you cannot progress see that you have not receded. Hold firm to the Swadeshi, hold firm to your refusal to the recognition of the Partition, hold firm to the national movement which is uplifting India. Let not any act of yours individually or collectively make you guilty in the eye of posterity in this critical hour of the destinies of India. Remember this, whether we look to our own efforts to raise the nation or whether we look to our rulers, that nothing can be done by the weak and so nothing is given to the weak. Remember the people of England do not understand weakness. They only understand strength. Remember this that they do not understand those who aspire to a height and yet flinch. They only understand resolution, steadfastness and determination. Even if you look from that standpoint the only message that the leader of the people can give to you is always to hold firm. If we look higher, if we look to the deeper significance of this movement, remember that whenever a subject nation arises it is by the will of God. If only we are true and hold firm, everything in this God-given movement will help towards the goal. As favourable circumstances help us so also will unfavourable circumstances help us. Temptation is necessary to maintain the moral fibre of the nation, both to maintain and to strengthen it. Resistance to obstacles is necessary to train its capacity to resistance, refusal to yield to intimidation necessary to attain that strength and courage without which no nation can rise, or if it rises to

maintain itself in the great struggle which pervades this world. Therefore, whatever happens to us, once we have started let us carry it forward. If we are defeated it is in order to learn how to conquer. If we are suppressed it is in order to learn how to rise irresistibly; and if we for a moment recoil, it is in order that we may be led forward more swiftly and further on. Therefore I trust that even with all these obstacles and even in spite of various rumours we hear on this 16th of October, the landmark of our progress, we will show that we have not receded one step but progressed. Even if it is not so, let us remember the enormous difficulties that we have to face. Let us remember the power that led us on. Whatever happens let us have faith and courage — faith that looks beyond all momentary obstacles and reverses and sees the goal that God has set before us, and the courage that never flinches for a moment but moves forward calmly, wisely, but strongly and irresistibly to that goal.

## Beadon Square Speech – 2

**T**HEN amidst fresh cheers and renewed and prolonged shouts of “Bande Mataram” in came Babu Aurobindo Ghose and the inevitable rush for *rakhi bandhan* ensued for a few minutes. Babu Aurobindo also spoke a few words in Bengali. He said that he was unwilling to speak in a foreign tongue on such a sacred occasion. He was not, on the other hand, accustomed to speak in his mother tongue. But he would only say one thing, viz., that the *rakhi bandhan* was not only a bond of thread but it was the semblance of another tie. It was the sign of uniting the hearts of millions of people of United Bengal. The *rakhi* might be removed in a day or two but that sacred bond of hearts would remain firm through all ages. There was no power on earth which could untie that sacred knot — it was a national bond. They had taken oath. They should stick to it, God helping.

*Delivered at Beadon Square, Calcutta, on 16 October 1909, the fourth anniversary of the effectuation of the Partition of Bengal. Report published in the Bengalee on 17 October.*

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### Gokhale's Apologia

We do not think we need waste much space on the arguments of the recent speech in which Mr. Gokhale has attempted to reconcile the contradictory utterances in which his speeches have lately abounded. Vibhishan's utterances are of little importance nowadays to anyone except the Government and Anglo-India, who are naturally disposed to make the most of his defection from the cause of the people. Justice Chandavarkar, who long ago gave up the cause of his country for a judgeship and whose present political opinions can be estimated from his remarks in the Swaraj case, grandiloquently condemned the "vilification" to which Mr. Gokhale has been exposed, and declared that condemnation from such quarters was the greatest compliment a man like his protege could have. Of course the worthy judge could not foresee that the *Englishman* would hail the first Servant of India as a brand plucked from the burning and compliment him on being the only righteous and right-thinking man among Indian politicians, — which is after all a little hard on Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Harkissen Lal. But in the same report that enshrines Mr. Chandavarkar's semi-official rhetoric, we have it that the Commissioner of Police and his deputy were present to support the speaker with their moral influence and loudly

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applauded his sentiments. Surely this was a yet greater compliment to Mr. Gokhale, — the greatest he could receive. And if we suppose, with the Bombay Judge, that the condemnation of his countrymen is an honour for which the erstwhile popular leader eagerly pants, surely the support and loud applause of the two highest police officials in the land, — and one of them his old friend, Mr. Vincent, of whom he must have pleasant memories connected with his famous apology to the British army, — must have been yet dearer to the statesman's heart. Only three things are noteworthy in the speech itself. Mr. Gokhale fervently declares that it is not only the duty of every Indian to shun religiously all aspirations towards independence, but also to rush to the defence of the Government when it is attacked. This explains Mr. Gokhale's recent speeches. It is a pity that he awoke to the sense of his duty so late; otherwise, not being overburdened by a sense of consistency he might have rushed to the help of the Government against himself when he was loudly advocating political Boycott and even outdistancing the most extreme Nationalist by suggesting the refusal of payment of taxes. The second thing we note, is the remarkable statement that, even if we try to use peaceful methods, the Government will not long allow them to retain their peaceful character. This can mean only that the Government will deliberately force the advocates of Indian freedom to use violent means by persecuting the use of lawful and peaceful methods. We had recently to dissent from a much more limited suggestion by S. Bipin Pal, but an aspersion of this kind from Mr. Gokhale, not on officials but on the Government whom he is supporting so thoroughly in their policy, is amazing. Truly, Mr. Gokhale hardly seems to know what discretion means. In the same way he tried to teach the young men of India, among whom he admits that the gospel of independence has gained immense ground, that violence was the only road to the realisation of their cherished ideal. Finally, we find Mr. Gokhale appealing to the people of this country to give up their ideals from personal self-interest and the danger of harassment and martyrdom which attends the profession and pursuit of the new politics. Truly has a mighty teacher arisen in

India! We could have passed by an argument based on the doubt whether our course was right and helpful to the country, but this sordid appeal to the lowest motives in humanity, selfishness and cowardice, makes one's gorge rise. And this is the man who claims, we hear, to have preceded the Nationalists as a prophet of self-sacrifice and the cult of the motherland. Well may we echo the cry of the Israelite malcontents, "These be thy gods, O Israel!"

### **The People's Proclamation**

In our last issue we commented on the importance and significance of the People's Proclamation as part of the celebration of the 16th October. It is a curious irony of Fate that, immediately afterwards, it should have been deliberately decided by our leaders to drop the Proclamation from the proceedings. We do not know in what particular quarter of that quaking morass of fears and apprehensions which is called the mind of our leaders, or in answer to what particular touch the tremor arose which has manifested itself in this amazing excision. The mutilated copy of last year's circular which is disgraced by this act of inexplicable backsliding and timidity, comes out under the signatures of Sjts. Surendranath Banerji, Motilal Ghose and Rai Jotindranath Chaudhuri. We are certainly astonished to find Moti Babu's name under such a document and we can only assume that it was inserted without getting his consent or that consent was asked and given by telegraph from Deoghar without his being informed of the omission. Originally, there was another honoured name in that place, but the gentleman who bore it declined to sign unless the omission was rectified, and Moti Babu's name seems to have been thrust in at the last moment in order to fill up the gap, — a proceeding not very complimentary to one of the first living names in Bengal. Nor do we quite understand how Rai Jotindranath Chaudhuri induced himself to be a consenting party to the omission, if indeed he knew of it. Be that as it may, the Nationalist leaders will do their duty in opposing this act of culpable weakness. But we are curious to

know how the people will take it. Their attitude will be some sign of the present altitude of the political thermometer. The tone and temper of the movement showed a distinct rise till the Hughly Conference, subsequently it seems to have been sinking. And no wonder, with such leadership. Even a nation of strong men led by the weak, blind or selfish, becomes easily infected with the vices of its leaders, and the strength of Bengal though immensely increased, is not yet the perfect and tempered steel that it must become, hard as adamant and light in the lifting.

### **The Anushilan Samiti**

The proclamation of the Anushilan Samiti in Calcutta is one of the most autocratic and unjustifiable acts that the bureaucracy have yet committed. The Calcutta Samiti has distinguished itself, since the beginning of its career, by the rigidity with which it has enforced its rule of not mixing as an association with current politics and confining itself to such activities as were not only unobjectionable, but of such a nature that even the most autocratic Government, provided it had the least sympathy with the moral and physical improvement of its subjects, must wholly approve. Its original and main motive has been the improvement of the physique in the race, and there has been no instance in which the Samiti has gone beyond its function as a physical training institution or tried to use the improved physique for any combined purpose. Beyond this the main activities have been turned to the help of the Police and the public on such occasions as the Ardhoday Yog, to the organisation of famine relief, in which the Samiti has done splendid work, and recently to other action recommended by the Government itself. We believe it has even to a certain extent enjoyed the approbation of high European officials. It is indeed an ironical comment on the demand for co-operation that the only great association born of the new movement which has shown any anxiety to depart from a line of strict independent activity and co-operate with the Government, should have been selected, at this time of peace and quiet, for proclamation on the extraordinary ground

that it interferes in some undefined and mysterious way with the administration of the law. Advocates of co-operation, take note. Meanwhile what can the man in the street conclude except that the Government is determined to allow no organisation to exist among the Bengalis which has the least trace in it of self-help, training and patriotic effort? For no explanation is vouchsafed of this arbitrary act. In an august and awful silence the gods of Belvedere hurl their omnipotent paper thunderbolts, careless of what mere men may think, confident in their self-arrogated attributes of omnipotence, omniscience and omni-benevolence, a divine, irresistible and irresponsible mystery.

### The National Fund

We have received a letter from Mr. A. C. Sen of Delhi in which he recommends that the National Fund should be utilised for a Swadeshi Museum. The necessity of such an institution has been engaging our attention for some time, and no one can dispute the immense advantages that will accrue from it; but the institution, if properly conceived and managed, needs only a small initial fund for its support in the first stages of its existence and will soon become self-supporting. It is quite unnecessary to divert to it a large sum like the National Fund. Meanwhile, if we allow divided counsels to obtain as to the disposal of the fund, the only result will be that it will remain where it is, useless and unused. We note that the opposition to the proposal unanimously passed at Hughly emanates from a few individuals whose justification for professing to speak in the name of the subscribers is not yet clear, — the Anglo-Indian papers who are interested in preventing the erection of the hall, and, among Indian papers, the *Hindu Patriot*, the *Indian Mirror*, and the *Indian Nation*, all of them papers of a very limited circulation and opposed to the national movement in its most vital features. We are not aware that any organ of the popular party, Moderate or Nationalist, has opposed the sense of the country as formulated in S. Surendranath Banerji's resolution at Hughly.

## Union Day

THE 16TH of October is generally known as the Partition Day, and it is inevitable that, so long as the administrative division stands, this feature should be emphasised. Especially now that the Reforms threaten to make the division in our administrative lives permanent and real, a mournful significance attaches to the celebration this year. It is possible that, before the day comes round again, the fatal complaisance and weakness of leaders and people may have effected the division between East and West Bengal which the hand of Lord Curzon attempted in vain. The Reform drives in the thin end of the wedge, the rulers know how to trust to time and national cowardice and inertia to do the rest. But if we can overcome the temptation as we overcame the intimidation, the 16th of October will take its place among the national festivals of the future under the name of Union Day.

The unity of Bengal was almost complete when Lord Curzon struck his blow; but there were defects, little fissures which might under untoward circumstances develop into great and increasing cracks. Lord Curzon's blow devised in a spirit of Machiavellian statesmanship, but delivered in a fit of unstatesmanlike haste and fury, instead of splitting asunder, soldered Bengali unity into a perfect whole. Bengal one and indivisible came into existence on the 16th of October. The indivisibility has yet to be confirmed by withstanding the covert and subtle pressure of the reformed Councils, but, even if for a moment there is backsliding, the young hold the future and in their hearts Bengal is one and indivisible.

The unity of India has been slowly prepared by the pressure from above and the creation of a reaction from below. It is only by that reaction giving birth to a self-conscious democracy aspirant towards oneness and freedom and reliant on its own

manhood, that the dream of a United India can be materialised. The publication of the People's Proclamation on the 16th was the first self-conscious utterance of such a democracy, as yet imperfect and inchoate but aware of its separate existence and conscious of its potential strength. That democracy is now alive in Bengal and Maharashtra, it is struggling to get existence in Punjab and Madras and, to a slighter extent, in the other provinces. When it is fully awake all over India, the unity of the whole country will be within sight. On the 16th of October, in the People's Proclamation, the first condition of a United India was created.

There is yet another unity which is as yet only dimly symbolised in the ceremony of the Rakhi, a unity which cannot come into being until a perfect comradeship in aspiration, in struggle, in suffering shall have been created throughout the length and breadth of the land, — the unity in national comradeship of the children of one mighty Mother, whatever their class or condition, — Indian fraternity based on Indian liberty and Indian equality.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

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## Facts and Opinions

### Mahomedan Representation

The question of separate representation for the Mahomedan community is one of those momentous issues raised in haste by a statesman unable to appreciate the forces with which he is dealing, which bear fruit no man expected and least of all the ill-advised Frankenstein who was first responsible for its creation. The common belief among Hindus is that the Government have decided to depress the Hindu element in the Indian people by raising the Mahomedan element, and ensure a perpetual preponderance in their own favour by leaning on a Mahomedan vote purchased by a system of preference. The denials of high-placed officials, who declare that it is only out of a careful consideration for the rights and interests of minorities that they have made special Mahomedan representation an essential feature of the Reform Scheme, have not convinced a single Hindu mind; for the obvious retort is that it is only one minority which is specially cared for and this special care is extended to it even in provinces where it is in a large majority. No provision at all has been made for the safeguarding of Hindu minorities, for the Parsis, the Sikhs, the Christians and other sections which may reasonably declare that they too are Indians and citizens of the Empire no less than the Mahomedans. The workings of

this belief in the mind of the premier community in India cannot at present be gauged. It is not till the details of the Reform Scheme are published, the elections over, the councils working and the preponderance of the pro-government vote visible, that those workings can assume a definite shape. At present irritation, heart-burning, a sullen gloom and a growing resolve to assert and organise their separate existence and work for their own hand are the first results of the separatist policy. How far Sir Pherozshah and his valiant band will be able to fight this growing discontent, remains to be seen. It is quite possible that the pro-Mahomedanism of the Reform Scheme may lead to a Hindu upheaval all over India, as fervent and momentous as the convulsion in Bengal, Madras and Maharashtra which followed Lord Curzon's Partition blunder. How far it will advantage the Mahomedans to be in active opposition to an irritated and revolted Hindu community throughout the country they live in, is a question for Mahomedans to consider. A certain section with Syed Hyder Reza at their head, have considered it and are against the separate representation altogether. Another section represented by Mr. Ali Imam are for a compromise between the full Moslem demand for separate electorates and the Hindu demand for equal treatment of all communities. Unfortunately, this compromise is merely the Government scheme which Hindu sentiment has almost unanimously condemned as unfair and partial. The only section of Hindus in its favour is the dwindling minority which follows the great Twin Brethren of Bombay; and the support given by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah to the separate representation idea is likely to cost them their influence with the moderate Hindu community everywhere outside the narrow radius of their personal influence. A third section rejoicing in the leadership of Mr. Amir Ali, are the irreconcilables of militant Islam aspiring to hold India under the British aegis as heirs of the Mogul and keepers of the gateway of India. The Reform Scheme is the second act of insanity which has germinated from the unsound policy of the bureaucracy. It will cast all India into the melting pot and complete the work of the Partition. Our own attitude is clear. We will have no part or lot in reforms which

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give no popular majority, no substantive control, no opportunity for Indian capacity and statesmanship, no seed of democratic expansion. We will not for a moment accept separate electorates or separate representation, not because we are opposed to a large Mahomedan influence in popular assemblies when they come, but because we will be no party to a distinction which recognises Hindu and Mahomedan as permanently separate political units and thus precludes the growth of a single and indivisible Indian nation. We oppose any such attempt at division whether it comes from an embarrassed Government seeking for political support or from an embittered Hindu community allowing the passions of the moment to obscure their vision of the future.

### The Growth of Turkey

The article on young Turkey and its military strength, extracted in our columns this week from the *Indian Daily News*, is one of great interest. Behind the deprecation of Turkish Chauvinism and Militarism we hear the first note of European alarm at the rise of a second Asiatic Power able to strike as well as to defend its honour and integrity against European aggression. The fact that it is the army in Turkey which stands for free institutions, is the greatest guarantee that could be given of the permanence of the new Turkey, for it assures a time of internal quiet while the country goes through the delicate and dangerous process of readjusting its whole machinery and ways of public thought and action from the habits of an irresponsible autocratic administration to those which suit free institutions and democratic ideas. No doubt, the support of the army veils a Dictatorship. But that is an inevitable stage in a great and sudden transition of this kind, and suits Asiatic countries, however perilous it may have been in other times to European countries when men could not be trusted not to misuse power for their own purposes to the detriment of their country. In Europe the present high standard of public spirit, duty and honour was the slow creation of free institutions. To Asiatics, not yet corrupted, as many of us in India have been, by the worst part of European individualism and an

unnatural education divorced from morality and patriotism, a high standard of public spirit, duty and honour comes with the first awakenings of a freer life; for the Asiatic discipline has always been largely one of self-effacement, the subordination of the individual to a community and the scrupulous adhesion to principle at the cost of personal predilection and happiness. As in Turkey now, so in Japan, it was a few strong men who, winning control of the country by the strength of great ideas backed by the sword, right supported by might, held the land safe and quiet while they revolutionised the ideas and institutions of the whole nation, forged a strength by sea and land no enemy could despise and secured from the gratitude of their race for their wisdom, selflessness and high nobility of purpose that implicit following which at first they compelled by force. The complaint that the young Turks ignore the necessity of civil reorganisation, commerce and education is a complaint without wisdom, if not without knowledge. The circumstances of Turkey demand that the first attention of her statesmen should be given to military and naval efficiency. The Revolution plucked her from the verge of an abyss of disintegration. The desperate diplomacy and cunning of Sultan Abdul Hamid had stayed her long on that verge, but she was beginning to slip slowly over when the stronger hand of Mahmud Shevket Pasha seized her and drew her back. Even so, the deposition of the cunning and skilful diplomatist of Yildiz Palace might have been the signal for a general spoliation of Turkey. Austria began a rush for the Balkans, Greece tried to hurry a crisis in Crete. The shaking of the Turkish sword in the face of the Greek and the rapid and efficient reorganisation of army and navy against Europe were both vitally necessary to the safety of the Empire. They were the calculated steps not of Chauvinism but of a defensive statesmanship.

### **China Enters**

The circle of constitutionally governed Asiatic countries increases. To Turkey, Persia and Japan, China is added. Towards the close of the ten years set apart in the Chinese programme

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for the preparation of self-government, the Chinese Government has kept its promise to grant a constitution. Provincial Assemblies have been established, are working and have shown their reality and independence by opposing Government demands. The electoral basis of an Imperial Assembly has been provided. There cannot be the slightest doubt that the steady, resolute, methodical Chinese, with their unrivalled genius for organisation, will make a success of the constitutional experiment. In all Asia now, with the exception of Siam and Afghanistan, the only countries which are denied a constitutional Government are those which have not vindicated their national freedom. Even in Afghanistan the first ineffective stirrings of life have been seen and will grow to something formidable before many years are over. We wonder whether Lord Morley and his advisers really believe that when they are surrounded by a free and democratic Asia, the great Indian race can be kept in a state of tutelage and snail-paced advancement, much less put off to a future age in the dim mists of a millennial futurity to which the penetrating vision of the noble and Radical Lord cannot pierce. The worst opponents of Indian freedom know well what this Asiatic constitutionalism means, and therefore the *Englishman* struggles, in the face of continual disappointment, to foresee the speedy collapse of Nationalism and Parliamentary Government in Persia, Turkey and even Japan as the inevitable fate of an institution foreign to the Asiatic genius, which is popularly supposed to recoil from freedom and hug most lovingly the heaviest chains.

### The Patiala Arrests

For some time past the Native States of Rajputana and Punjab have been vying with each other in promulgations and legislations of a drastic character against sedition and conspiracy. The object of these edicts seems to be to stifle all agitation or semblance of any political thought and activity that may be directed against the existing state of things not

in the States themselves but in British India. Otherwise, it is impossible to account for the Draconian severity of the language and substance of these ukases or the foolish thoroughness of some of the measures adopted, such as the prohibition of entry even to colourless papers like the *Bengalee*. The exponents of Anglo-Indian opinion point triumphantly to these measures both as a proof of aristocratic loyalty to British officialdom and as an index of the severity with which the agitation would be visited if, instead of the misplaced leniency of British bureaucrats, we were exposed to the ruthlessness of an indigenous government. As every Indian knows, these self-gratulations are insincere and meaningless. The majority of Native States are wholly under the thumb of the Resident and, with the exception of one or two independent princes, like the Gaekwar, neither Maharaja nor Council of Administration can call their souls their own. On all this comes the commotion in Patiala. The Patiala conspiracy has yet to be proved to be more real than the Midnapur specimen. But, if all is true that is being asserted in the Punjab press as to the refusal of the most ordinary privileges of defence to the numerous accused and the amazing and successful defiance of High Court orders by Mr. Warburton, the police are not going the best way to convince the public opinion on this point. The facts stated amount to a gross and shameless denial of justice. We do not blame the young Maharaja for his inability to interfere in favour of the oppressed victims of police rule. We know how helpless the princes are in the face of an Anglo-Indian Resident or employee and we wholly discredit the newspaper assertion that these strange proceedings were initiated or are willingly countenanced by him. It was first asserted that—as usual!—the police had full evidence and information in their hands. The present delay and sufferings entailed prove sufficiently that they had nothing of the kind—again, as usual. The arrested Arya Samajists may be innocent or guilty, but the procedure used against them would be tolerated in no country where law and equity were supreme.

### **The Daulatpur Dacoity**

The extraordinary story from Daulatpur of a dacoity by young men of good family, sons of Government servants, is the strangest that has yet been handled by the detective ability of a very active police — more active, if not successful, we are afraid, in cases of this kind than those in which the dacoits are of a less interesting character. The details as first published read more like a somewhat gruesome comic opera, than anything else. Dacoits who wear gold watches and gold spectacles on their hazardous expeditions, dacoits who talk English so as to give a clue to their identity, dacoits who turn up at a railway station wearing gold watches, barefooted and stained with mud, dacoits who carry in their pockets bloodcurdling oaths neatly written out for the police to read in case they are caught, are creatures of so novel and eccentric a character that they must have either come out of a farcical opera or escaped from the nearest lunatic asylum. The later accounts modify some of the more startling features of the first, but until the story for the prosecution is laid before the Courts, thoroughly known and thoroughly tested, sensational headlines and graphic details are apt to mislead.

### **Place and Patriotism**

The elevation of Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar to the Bench some short time ago was the occasion for some comments from the Moderate Press highly eulogistic of the man and the choice. Mr. Aiyar was a successful lawyer and a capable man and we have no doubt his elevation was justified. But the curious habit of ultra-Moderate politicians gravitating to the Bench is a survival of those idyllic times when a judgeship or a seat in the Legislative Council was the natural goal of the political leader who rose by opposing the Government. This harmony between place and patriotism, opposition and preferment was natural to those times for whose return the lovers of the peaceful past sigh in vain. Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar belonged to the old school

and his final consummation is natural and laudable. But our object in writing is not so much to praise Mr. Aiyar as to suggest to the Government that, if they would similarly promote Sir Pherozshah Mehta, they would be rewarding a loyal champion and at the same time conferring a boon on the country. Farther, if only done in time, it might save the Convention from going to pieces.

### **The Dying Race**

Dr. U. N. Mukherji recently published a very interesting brochure in which he tried to prove that the Hindus were a dying race and would do well to imitate the social freedom and equality of the still increasing Mahomedans. Srijut Kishorilal Sarcar has gone one better and proves to us by equally cogent statistics that not only the Hindus but the Mahomedans are a dying race, — even if the Hindus be in some places a little more rapid in the race for extinction than the followers of Islam. With all respect to the earnestness of these two gentlemen we think it would have been well if they had been less strenuous in their discouraging interpretations and chosen a less positive title. The real truth is that, owing to an immense transition being effected under peculiarly unfavourable conditions, both communities, but chiefly the more progressive Hindu, are in a critical stage in which various deep-seated maladies have come to the surface, with effects of an inevitable though lamentable character. None of these maladies is mortal and the race is not dying. But the knife of the surgeon is needed and it is to the remedy rather than the diagnosis that attention should be pointedly directed. The mere decline in the rate of increase is in itself nothing. It is a phenomenon which one now sees becoming more and more marked all the world over and it is only countries backward in development and education which keep up the old rate of increase. The unfit tend to multiply, the fit to be limited in propagation. This is an abnormal state of things which indicates something wrong in modern civilisation. But, whatever the malady is, it is not peculiar to Hindus or to India, but a worldwide disease.

### **The Death of Señor Ferrer**

The extraordinary commotion in Europe over the execution of the enthusiast and idealist Ferrer, — a judicial murder committed by Court Martial, — has revealed a force in Europe with which statesmen and Governments will have very soon to deal on pain of extinction. We have no sympathy with the philosophy or practice of Anarchism, holding, as we do, that the Anarchist philosophy is some millenniums ahead of the present possible evolution of humanity and the Anarchist practice some millenniums behind. But Señor Francisco Ferrer was no mere Anarchist. He was a man of high enthusiasms and ideas, engaged, at great sacrifice and, as it turns out, risk to himself, in freeing the Spanish mind by education from the fetters of that bigoted Clericalism which has been the ruin of Spain. For a man of this kind — a man of eminent culture and unstained character, the friend and fellow worker of distinguished men all over the occidental world, — to be shot without any reputable evidence by a military tribunal regardless of universal protest, was an outrage on civilisation and an insult to European culture. Such an incident, however, might have happened formerly with no result but a few indignant articles in the Continental Liberal Press. This time it has awakened a demonstration all over the Western world which is, we think, unprecedented in history. The solidarity and deep feeling in that demonstration means that the huge inert Leviathan, on whose patient back the aristocratic and middle class of Europe have built the structure of their polity and society, is about to move. When he really uplifts his giant bulk, what will become of the structure? Will it not tumble into pieces off his back and be swallowed up in the waters of a worldwide revolution?

### **The Budget**

It is curious that England which was, a little while ago, the most conservative and individualistic of nations, the least forward in the race towards socialism, should now be the foremost. The socialistic Radical, the forerunner of insurgent Leviathan, is in

the Cabinet and has framed a Budget. The Budget is the pivot on which English progress has turned from the beginning. The power of the purse in the hands of the Commons has been the chief lever for the gradual erection of a limited democracy. The same power is now being used for the gradual introduction of a modified socialism, and, by a curious provision of Fate, seems destined to be also the occasion for the final destruction of one at least of the two remaining restrictions on democracy, the veto of the Lords and the limitation of the suffrage. The Lords were bound to oppose the Budget, for the triumph of socialism means the destruction of the aristocracy. The Lords, therefore, have either to fight or to fall; and the pathos of their situation is that, in all probability, the choice is not theirs and that, whether they fight or not, they cannot but fall. The Lords have only continued to exist because they were discreet enough to lie low and give a minimum of trouble. As for the limitation of the suffrage, it is not at all unlikely that the daring and unscrupulous campaign of the suffragettes may end in the concession of universal suffrage. For, if women are given the vote, the proletariat will not be content to remain without it. They too can lift crowbars and hammers and break glass roofs!

### **A Great Opportunity**

The end of the great struggle between the last representative of European autocracy and the insurgent Demos, is not yet. At present the Czar holds the winning cards. The mismanagement of the Revolution by a people unaccustomed to political action has put advantages into his hands to which he has no right. But it is significant that the revolution still smoulders. As Carlyle wrote of the French Revolution, it is unquenchable and cannot be stamped down, for the fire-spouts that burst out are no slight surface conflagration but the flames of the pit of Tophet. Murder and hatred rising from below to strike at murder and tyranny striking from above, that is the Russian Revolution. Had another man than a Romanoff, the race obstinate and unteachable, sat on the throne at St. Petersburg, the victory of the autocracy after

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such imminent and deadly peril would have been surely used to prevent, by healing measures and perfectly spontaneous concessions, a repetition of the sanguinary struggle. It is probably the last opportunity Fate will concede to the Czar Nicholas and it is a great opportunity. But he will not take it and in the shadow forces are again gathering which are likely in the end to destroy him. The Czarina is sleepless in deadly anxiety for the safety of her child; the Czar, leaving her behind, enters Italy and is guarded by an army. In Russia the Ministry balances itself on the top of a frail edifice crowning the volcano that still sputters below. One wonders why they should think it worth their while to bolster up sanguinary injustice for a season at so huge a cost.

### **Buddha's Ashes**

Again the powers that be have committed a blunder. If any of the wise men who weave the tangled web of Anglo-Indian statesmanship at Simla, had a little common sense to salt their superior wisdom, they would never have allowed the strong feeling against the removal of Buddha's ashes to vent itself so long in public expression without an assurance at least of favourable consideration. We have waited long for that simple and natural act of statesmanship, but in vain. It is such a trivial matter in itself, concession would be so graceful, natural and easy; yet the harm done by perverseness and churlishness is so immense! We wonder whether our official Governors ever think. It is very easy. What would they feel if the bones of a great Englishman, say, the Duke of Wellington, were so treated! But the diseased attachment to prestige and the reputation of an assured wisdom and an inflexible power have sealed up the eyes of those in high places.

### **Students and Politics**

All India and especially Bengal owes a debt of gratitude to Mr. Hasan Imam for his strong, manly and sensible remarks on the vexed question of students and politics as President of the Beharee Students Conference at Gaya. Contrast this honest

utterance and robust recognition of unalterable facts with the fencings, refinements and unreal distinctions of Mr. Gokhale's utterance. The difference is between a man with an eye and a clear practical sense and a mere intellectual, a man of books and words and borrowed thoughts, proud of his gift of speech and subtlety of logic, but unable to penetrate a fact even when he sees it. With Mr. Hasan Imam a strong personal force enters the field of politics.

## The Assassination of Prince Ito

A GREAT man has fallen, perhaps the greatest force in the field of political action that the nineteenth century produced, the maker of Japan, the conqueror of Russia, the mighty one who first asserted Asia's superiority over Europe in Europe's own field of glory and changed in a few years the world's future. Some would say that such a death for such a man was a tragedy. We hold otherwise. Even such a death should such a man have died, in harness, fighting for his country's expansion and greatness, by the swift death in action which, our scriptures tell us, carry the hero's soul straight to the felicity of heaven. The man who in his youth lived in imminent deadly peril from the swords of his countrymen because he dared to move forward by new paths to his God-given task, dies in his old age by a foreign hand because, at the expense of justice and a nation's freedom, he still moved forward in the path of his duty. It is a difficult choice that is given to men of action in a world where love, strength and justice are not yet harmonised, and he who chooses in sincerity and acts thoroughly, whether he has chosen well or ill, gathers *punya* for himself in this world and the next. Then he was building a nation and he lived to do his work, for his death would not have profited. He was building an Empire when he died and by his death that Empire will be established. The soul of a great man, fulfilled in development but cut off in the midst of his work, enters into his following or his nation and works on a far wider scale than was possible to him in the body. Korea will gain nothing by this rash and untimely act, the greatest error in tactics it could have committed. The Japanese is the last man on earth to be deterred from his ambition or his duty by the fear of death, and the only result of this blow will be to harden Japan to her task. She has science, organisation, efficiency, ruthlessness, and

she will grind the soul out of Korea until it is indistinguishable from Japan. That is the only way to perpetuate a conquest, to kill the soul of the subject nation, and the Japanese know it. A subject nation struggling for freedom must always attract Indian sympathy, but the Koreans have not the strength of soul to attain freedom. Instead of seeking the force to rise in their own manhood, they have always committed the unpardonable sin against Asiatic integrity of striving to call in a European power against a brother Asiatic. The Koreans have right on their side, but do not know how to awaken might to vindicate the right. The Japanese cause is wrong from the standpoint of a higher morality than the merely patriotic, but they believe intensely in their religion of patriotic duty and put all their might into its observance. It is not difficult to predict with which side the victory will lie.

Prince Hirobumi Ito was the typical man of his nation, as well as its greatest statesman and leader. He went ahead of it for a while only to raise it to his level. He had all its virtues in overflowing measure and a full share of its defects and vices. Absolutely selfless in public affairs, quiet, unassuming, keeping himself in the background unless duty called him into prominence, calm, self-controlled, patient, swift, energetic, methodical, incapable of fear, wholly devoted to the nation — such is the Japanese, and such was Ito. As a private man he had the Japanese defects. Even in public affairs, he had something of the narrowness, unscrupulousness in method and preference of success to justice of the insular and imperial Japanese type. Added to these common characteristics of his people he had a genius equal to that of any statesman in history. The eye that read the hearts of men, the mouth sealed to rigid secrecy, the rare, calm and effective speech, the brain that could embrace a civilisation at a glance and take all that was needed for his purpose, the swift and yet careful intellect that could divine, choose and arrange, the power of study, the genius of invention, the talent of application, a diplomacy open-minded but never vacillating, a tireless capacity for work, — all these he had on so grand a scale that to change the world's history was to him

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a by-no-means stupendous labour. And he had the ancient Asiatic gift of self-effacement. In Europe a genius of such colossal proportions would have filled the world with the mighty bruit of his personality; but Ito worked in silence and in the shade, covering his steps, and it was only by the results of his work that the world knew him. Like many modern Japanese, Ito was a sceptic. His country was the God of his worship to whom he dedicated his life, for whom he lived and in whose service he died. Such was this great Vibhuti, who came down to earth in a petty family, an Eastern island clan, a nation apart and far behind in the world's progress, and in forty years created a nation's greatness, founded an Empire, changed a civilisation and prepared the liberation of a continent. His death was worthy of his life. For there are only two deaths which are really great and carry a soul to the highest heaven, to die in self-forgetting action, in battle, by assassination, on the scaffold for others, for one's country or for the right, and to die as the Yogin dies, by his own will, free of death and disease, departing into that from which he came. To Ito, the sceptic, the patriot, the divine worker, the death of the selfless hero was given.

## The Hindu Sabha

**A**N INDICATION of the immense changes which are coming over our country, is the sudden leaping into being of new movements and organisations which are, by their very existence, evidence of revolutions in public feeling and omens of the future. The dead bones live indeed and the long sleep of the ages is broken. The Moslem League was indicative of much, the Hindu Sabha is indicative of yet more. The Nationalist party, while in entire disagreement with the immediate objects and spirit of the League, welcomed its birth as a sign of renovated political life in the Mahomedan community. But the Mahomedan community was always coherent, united and separately self-conscious. The strength of Islam lay in its unity and cohesion, the fruit of a long discipline in equality and brotherhood, the strength of the Hindu in flexibility, progressive-ness, elasticity, a divination of necessary changes, broad ideas, growing aspirations, the fruit of a long discipline in intellectual and moral sensitiveness. The Moslem League meant that the Mahomedan was awakening to the need of change, the growth of aspiration in the world around him, — not yet to the broad ideas modern life demanded. The Hindu Sabha means that the Hindu is awakening to the need of unity and cohesion.

Does it mean more? Does it indicate a larger statesmanship, quicker impulse to action, a greater capacity for the unity and cohesion it seeks? Is the Hindu Sabha a novel body, with the power in it to effect a great object never before accomplished, the effective union of all shades of Hindu opinion from the lax Anglicised Agnostic, Hindu in nothing but birth and blood, to the intense and narrow worshipper of the institutes of Raghunandan? Or is it merely an ineffectual aspiration, like the old Congress, capable of creating a general sympathy and oneness of aim, but not of practical purpose and effective organisation? There are only two

things strong enough to unite Hinduism, a new spiritual impulse based on Vedanta, the essential oneness of man, the transience and utilitarian character of institutions, the lofty ideals of brotherhood, freedom, equality, and a recognition of the great mission and mighty future of the Hindu spiritual ideas and discipline and of the Indian race, — or else a political impulse strong enough to unite Hindus together for the preservation and advancement of their community. The Hindu Sabha could not have come into being but for the great national movement which awakened the national spirit, the sense of past greatness, the divination of a mighty future, transforming the whole spirit and character of the educated community. But we fear that in its immediate inception and work it leans for its hope of success on a lower and less powerful motive — rivalry with Mahomedan pretensions and a desire to put the mass and force of a united Hinduism against the intensity of a Mahomedan self-assertion supported by official patronage and Anglo-Indian favour. Alarm and resentment at the pro-Mahomedan policy underlying the Reform Scheme and dissatisfaction with the Bombay conventionists for their suicidal support of the Government policy entered largely into the universal support given by Punjab Hindus to the new body and its great initial success. Mortification at the success of Mahomedans in securing Anglo-Indian sympathy and favour and the exclusion of Hindus from those blissful privileges figured largely in the speech of Sir Pratul Chandra Chatterji who was hailed as the natural leader of Punjab Hinduism. These are not good omens. It is not by rivalry for Anglo-Indian favour, it is not by quarrelling for the loaves and fishes of British administration that Hinduism can rise into a united and effective force. If the Hindu Sabha takes its anchor on these petty aspirations or if it finds any part of its strength on political emulation with the Mahomedans, it will be impossible for the Nationalist party to join in a movement which would otherwise have their full sympathy and eager support.

Lala Lajpat Rai struck a higher note, that of Hindu nationalism as a necessary preliminary to a greater Indian Nationality. We distrust this ideal. Not that we are blind to facts, — not that

we do not recognise Hindu-Mahomedan rivalry as a legacy of the past enhanced and not diminished by British ascendancy, a thing that has to be faced and worked out either by mutual concession or by a struggle between nationalism and separatism. But we do not understand Hindu nationalism as a possibility under modern conditions. Hindu nationalism had a meaning in the times of Shivaji and Ramdas, when the object of national revival was to overthrow a Mahomedan domination which, once tending to Indian unity and toleration, had become oppressive and disruptive. It was possible because India was then a world to itself and the existence of two geographical units entirely Hindu, Maharashtra and Rajputana, provided it with a basis. It was necessary because the misuse of their domination by the Mahomedan element was fatal to India's future and had to be punished and corrected by the resurgence and domination of the Hindu. And because it was possible and necessary, it came into being. But under modern conditions India can only exist as a whole. A nation depends for its existence on geographical separateness and geographical compactness, on having a distinct and separate country. The existence of this geographical separateness is sure in the end to bear down all differences of race, language, religion, history. It has done so in Great Britain, in Switzerland, in Germany. It will do so in India. But geographical compactness is also necessary. In other words, the *desh* or country must be so compact that mutual communication and the organisation of a central government becomes easy or, at least, not prohibitively difficult. The absence of such compactness is the reason why great Empires are sure in the end to fall to pieces; they cannot get the support of that immortal and indestructible national self which can alone ensure permanence. This difficulty stands in the way of British Imperial Federation and is so great that any temporary success of that specious aspiration will surely result in the speedy disruption of the Empire. In addition, there must be a uniting force strong enough to take advantage of the geographical compactness and separateness, — either a wise and skilfully organised government with a persistent tradition of beneficence, impartiality and oneness with the nation, or else a living national

sense insisting on its separate inviolability and self-realisation. The secret of Roman success was in the organisation of such a government; even so, it failed, for want of geographical compactness, to create a world-wide Roman nationality. The failure of the British rule to root itself lies in its inability to become one with the nation either by the effacement of our national individuality or by the renunciation of its own separate pride and self-interest. These things are therefore necessary to Indian nationality, geographical separateness, geographical compactness and a living national spirit. The first was always ours and made India a people apart from the earliest times. The second we have attained by British rule. The third has just sprung into existence.

But the country, the *swadesh*, which must be the base and fundament of our nationality, is India, a country where Mahomedan and Hindu live intermingled and side by side. What geographical base can a Hindu nationality possess? Maharashtra and Rajasthan are no longer separate geographical units but merely provincial divisions of a single country. The very first requisite of a Hindu nationalism is wanting. The Mahomedans base their separateness and their refusal to regard themselves as Indians first and Mahomedans afterwards on the existence of great Mahomedan nations to which they feel themselves more akin, in spite of our common birth and blood, than to us. Hindus have no such resource. For good or evil, they are bound to the soil and to the soil alone. They cannot deny their Mother, neither can they mutilate her. Our ideal therefore is an Indian Nationalism, largely Hindu in its spirit and traditions, because the Hindu made the land and the people and persists, by the greatness of his past, his civilisation and his culture and his invincible virility, in holding it, but wide enough also to include the Moslem and his culture and traditions and absorb them into itself. It is possible that the Mahomedan may not recognise the inevitable future and may prefer to throw himself into the opposite scale. If so, the Hindu, with what little Mahomedan help he may get, must win Swaraj both for himself and the Mahomedan in spite of that resistance. There is a sufficient force and manhood in us to do

a greater and more difficult task than that, but we lack unity, brotherhood, intensity of single action among ourselves. It is to the creation of that unity, brotherhood and intensity that the Hindu Sabha should direct its whole efforts. Otherwise we must reject it as a disruptive and not a creative agency.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Brain of India III  
Invitation (poem)

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## Facts and Opinions

### House Searches

One wonders what would happen in any European country if the police as a recompense for their utter inefficiency and detective incapacity were armed with the power, and allowed to use it freely, of raiding the houses of respectable citizens, ransacking the property of absent occupants and leaving it unsafe and unprotected, carrying off the business books of Presses, newspapers and other commercial concerns, the private letters of individuals, books publicly sold and procurable in every bookshop, violating the sanctity of correspondence between wife and husband, searching the persons of ladies of the house even though it be by female hands, and trampling on the sanctity of the home, the dignity of the person and the self-respect which every race worthy of existence holds to be dearer than life itself. And all this in spite of the fact, exemplified a hundred times over, that these inquisitions are wholly infructuous and can serve no purpose but harassment and exasperation. Usually the searches are undertaken, if we do not err, on the vague information of disreputable hirelings used as spies and informers, the statements of lying approvers eager to save their own skins by jeopardising innocent men, and confessions to the police of arrested prisoners made either for the same purpose

or dictated by a morbid vanity and light-headed braggadocio which invents facts and details in order to give dignity to petty crime and magnitude to small and foolish undertakings. The ludicrously irrelevant and useless nature of the articles which are usually the sole reward of this odious activity are its sufficient condemnation. Even if the widespread conspiracy dreamed of by the authorities were a fact, is it conceivable that respectable men, knowing the police to be on the alert, would risk liberty and property by storing bombs, looted ornaments or treasonous correspondence in their houses? We are aware that the right of house search is a necessary weapon in the hands of authority for the suppression of crime, but it was never meant that this should be misused in order to supply the place of detective ability in the Police. House searches are unwarrantable unless the information on which they proceed is precise, reliable and highly probable. Judging from results not one of these epithets can be applied to the numerous searches which are now becoming a standing feature of life in Bengal. And if the search of the persons of ladies is to become another common feature of these domiciliary visits, we fear that the patience of a people jealously sensitive on these matters will not long endure the strain. Surely, the higher authorities ought to have sufficient good sense to draw the inevitable conclusion from experience, perceive the limitations of this weapon and, if not for the possible evil consequence of creating still greater disaffection, yet for its barren inutility, renounce its excessive use.

### **Social Reform and Politics**

There are two methods of progress, two impelling motives from which great changes and far-reaching reforms can be effected. One is the struggle of selfish interests between man and man, class and class, working out progress by ignoble strife, the forced compromise and convenient barter of the lower kind of politics. The other is the impulse and clash of mighty ideas, noble aspirations, great national or humanitarian aims, the things which

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inspire mankind in its upward march and create empires and nations. Both are freely used by the Master of the world in His careful providence and various economy. Often they are intermingled. But it cannot be doubted which is most healthful to the individual, the nation and the race. The social result worked out by a bitter and selfish struggle between upper class and lower class, Labour and Capital, is one thing; the harmony created by a mighty enthusiasm, such as led the aristocracy of Japan to lay down their exclusive privileges and, without reserve, call upon the masses to come up and share their high culture, their seats of might and their ennobling traditions, is quite another. Hindu society in the mofussil is now bitterly divided, and tends more and more to be convulsed, by the new aspirations of the lower castes and the inability of the higher to decide how they will meet the demand. It is a bad sign that the action of both sides tends more and more to be selfish and narrow, political in the worst sense of the word. To barter help in Swadeshi or faithfulness to Hinduism for social privileges, or to bribe the masses to Swadeshim by petty and calculated concessions will tend neither to the genuineness of the Swadeshi sentiment, nor the strength of the national movement, nor the dignity and purity of our religion. It is an evil and foreign principle which has entered into our system, one of the many evil results of our disastrous contact with European civilisation at a time of national weakness and disintegration and our attempt to assimilate it without first vindicating our inner liberty and establishing ourselves as free agents. A great social revolution in this ancient society ought only to come as the fruit of a mighty national, humanitarian and religious impulse. The fault of the present state of things rests largely with the waning insight and statesmanship of the Brahmins. Formerly, they would not have been wanting either in concerted action, largeness of view or skilfulness of device. It was not their wont to stand still in an inert and impossible conservatism but to recognise circumstances and meet them without sacrificing the essence of their religion or the basic principles of Hindu society.

### **The Deoghar Sadhu**

Recently some of the Bengali papers have contained detailed information of the feat of a Sadhu who buried himself for some days not, as in the well-known Punjab case, giving up his outward consciousness and entering into the jada samadhi or inert inner existence, but in full possession of his outer senses and conversing at times from his living tomb with visitors outside. The correspondent of the *Bengalee* tells us that the local people were dissatisfied with the Sadhu because the peculiar power he evinced was unattended by any moral elevation or true ascetic qualities. It is a general delusion that the power thus shown is a very great and almost supernatural siddhi and ought to be in the possession only of very highly developed souls. A false Indian tradition is partly responsible for the error; partly, it is due to the supreme ignorance of the deeper secrets of our being which belongs to the limited and self-satisfied materialistic Science of Europe now dominant in our midst. There is nothing wonderful in the feat of the Deoghar Sadhu, which was the result of the conquest of the breath, pranayam, achieved by certain physical and mental processes and not necessarily dependent on moral or spiritual progress. The kumbhak or retention of the prana, dispensing with the process of inbreathing and outbreathing, is the final achievement of the process and the kumbhak can, when thoroughly conquered, be continued for an indefinite period. Given the power of kumbhak, it is obvious that one can stay under water or earth or in a room hermetically sealed for as long as the state continues. The power of stopping the heart-beats, dispensing with the process of breathing, and other of the outworks of Yogic knowledge and achievement are being slowly established in order to break down the exclusive pride of European Science and prepare for a new order of knowledge and a greater science to which its dogmatic narrowness is bitterly and scornfully opposed.

## The Great Election

IT IS not often that we care to dwell at length on the incidents of English politics in which, as a rule, India is not concerned nor affected by the results. A Brodrick to a Hamilton, a Morley to a Brodrick succeeds, and the sublime continuity of British policy, continuous in nothing else but this one determination to maintain absolutism in India, takes care that India shall have no reason to interest herself in Imperial affairs. The present crisis in England, however, is so momentous and its results so incalculable that it is impossible to say that India will not be affected by its gigantic issues. The importance of the election turns not upon the issues of the Budget, though these are of no small magnitude, but upon the great constitutional question of the House of Lords and its veto. The veto of the House of Lords is the drag on the Parliamentary locomotive. It is the one obstacle that stands between England and a peaceful revolution. It is true that this veto has been exercised very sparingly and only when the Liberals have introduced measures of a revolutionary character or containing clauses which meant a too rapid subversion of ancient landmarks and safeguards; but this is precisely the use in the British Constitution of the otherwise useless, ineffective and somnolent Upper House. It has used the veto if not with perfect wisdom, yet with a moderation and an eye to its own safety that betokened at least a perfect discretion. In spite of this reserve the obstruction offered by the Lords to Liberal measures and their complacent acceptance of Conservative legislation has become more and more exasperating to the Liberal party and has often threatened a collision which was averted either by the submission of the Lords or the support of its obstructive policy by the electors at the polls. So long as the social preponderance of the aristocracy and the possession of land and wealth, on which that preponderance rested, was not touched, the Lords

have submitted to the gradual loss of political preponderance and the slow advance of England from an aristocratic to a middle-class rule and even from a middle-class rule to a limited democracy, limited by the existence of the Lords themselves and the restriction of the franchise. A new force, a fatal solvent of established institutions, has entered European politics with the steady slow irresistible advance of Socialism, and England, long exempt from the working of this great tide of idealistic thought, is being more and more swiftly undermined, its cherished ideals sapped, its administrative and social structure threatened by the wash of the advancing waters. The uneasiness engendered in the more richly propertied classes by this advance of the destroyer has come to a head as a result of the provisions of the Budget by which the land, emblem and guarantee of English Conservatism, of the inviolability of private property and the survival of the old world society in its most vital features, has been subjected to substantial taxation. The innovation creates a probability of continual nibbling until under the impulse of a growing Socialism, land is nationalised, its proprietors bought out, and aristocracy destroyed. The Lords have either to resist the process in its first step or make up their minds to gradual extinction.

The question for the Upper House is how they will resist. It is open to them either to reject the Budget altogether — a measure of too drastic severity, — to throw out the Land clauses, — a device which will expose the Peers to the charge of violating the unwritten Constitution for the selfish purpose of saving their own pockets and throwing the burden of taxation on the middle class and the working men, — or to amend the Budget so as to lighten the land taxes and deprive them of their more inoffensive features. The last device has the disadvantage of being no more than a palliative, while it amounts to as serious a breach of the financial privilege of the House of Commons as the others. The omens point to a rejection of the bill by the Peers, but we doubt whether they will care to incur the odium of so disturbing the finances of the country. In all probability they will amend and leave to the Ministry the responsibility of dissolving Parliament

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with no Budget sanctioned and the insecurity to the taxpayers resulting from this unprecedented and anomalous situation. The burden of choice will then fall upon the Commons, who must either submit to the destruction of the first and most essential safeguard of popular liberty in England, the popular control of taxation and the Exchequer, or take up the challenge given by the Peers. The first course is unthinkable. No Liberal Ministry especially, would care to go down to posterity as having betrayed the people of England and the future of democracy by such a sacrifice of the palladium of British liberty. Mr. Asquith may either dissolve as soon as the Lords refuse to withdraw their amendments or he may ask the King to create a number of Liberal Peers large enough to swamp the Conservative majority in the Lords, or he may at once bring in a bill for the limitation of the veto of the Upper House and dissolve upon it so as to raise definitely the question of the veto as the one real issue before the electors. The first course has this great disadvantage, that the real issues may be covered over by the clamour of the Conservative party against the socialistic trend of the new taxation and by the cry of Tariff Reform. By dint of repeated iteration the Conservatives have created an impression in many minds that the present Ministry is deeply tinged with Socialism and the Budget a deliberate attack on property. The effect this cry is having on the mind of the wealthier classes is shown by the number of defections in the Liberal ranks, — not so many, however, as might have been expected, — and the diminution of the Liberal vote at the bye-elections. The Budget opens the door to Socialism, but is in none of its provisions Socialistic, the only real novelty of importance being the land taxes which have their counterpart in countries the reverse of Socialistic. The Ministry is itself a curious conglomeration of Moderates, Radicals, and extreme Radicals, but there is not a single Socialist in its ranks and many of its members are avowedly anti-Socialistic in their temper and opinions. Nevertheless, the cry is having its effect on the susceptible British elector and, unless it is met, will imperil a great number of Liberal seats. The cry of Tariff Reform has its charm for a certain number of working men, but is not in

itself so formidable as the catchword of Property in Danger. To dissolve upon the rejection of the Budget will have the effect of preventing a clear issue from being raised and confusing the public mind by the entanglement of three separate questions, Socialism and the Budget, Free Trade or Tariff Reform, and the veto of the House of Lords. The Ministry have everything to lose, the Opposition everything to gain by this confusion of issues.

The second device is being urged upon the Prime Minister by some of his supporters who are rather shortsighted politicians than men with the outlook of the statesman. The temporary difficulty would no doubt be surmounted, but it is a matter of unfailing experience that Liberal Peers so created gravitate in a very short time to Conservatism. If these Peers had to be actually created, the Liberal Ministry would very soon be face to face again with a similar situation, and the drastic remedy of doubling the bulk of the House of Lords could not be repeated ad infinitum. On the other hand, if the Peers yielded in order to avoid so great an indignity to their rank and order, they would do so under the most rigorous compulsion and be all the more eager to hamper and distress their victors in less vital matters. Mr. Asquith would avoid a particular difficulty, but only to perpetuate the great stumbling-block of all Liberal Ministries, a permanently Conservative Upper House. On the other hand he has a chance, if he boldly seizes on this issue, of avoiding a fight on the weaker points of the Budget, of forcing to the forefront a great constitutional issue in which everything liberal or even truly conservative in England ought to be on his side, and destroying at one blow and forever this perpetual thorn in the side of Liberalism and obstacle to radical legislation.

The drastic device of swamping the Lords with newly created Liberal Peers will be too much needed shortly to be thrown away now. When in the new Parliament, the bill for the limitation of the Peers' veto has been carried through the Commons, it will have to be carried through the Lords as well before it can receive the King's sanction and become law, and, since the Lords as they are will not consent to their own nullification, it is only by the swamping device that this great resolution can

be effected. The only question is whether the bill should be brought in before or postponed till after the election. To bring in the bill before, pass it formally through the Commons without permitting much debate and immediately dissolve for a mandate from the country, would be the boldest but also the best policy for the Ministers. It would definitely raise the question as the one issue of the election and, if confined to the limitation and not the destruction of the veto, — so as to avoid the charge of destroying the constitution, — would rally the whole force of Liberalism behind Mr. Asquith. We do not know whether the course has suggested itself to the tacticians of the party, but it seems to us that it gives the only chance of a really effective and victorious electioneering campaign.

With all this, what are the chances of a Liberal victory? Very small, unless the Labour-Socialist vote is conciliated. The great feature of the recent bye-elections has been the repeated splitting of the democratic vote between Labourite and Liberal, the substantiality of the Labour vote and the consequent defeat of the Ministerial candidate and return of the Conservative in spite of a democratic majority in the constituency. For the Socialist party this is the right policy, by their independent attitude on an occasion of such vital importance to convince the Liberals that they cannot hope to exist as a power without coming to terms with the Socialist vote. But for the Liberals to accept a triangular contest would be sheer suicide. It would mean either a Conservative majority, not in the country — for the pendulum has not swung back so far — but in the House, or a Conservative Ministry with the Irish Nationalists holding the balance of power. It would be well worth Mr. Asquith's while to give the Socialist-Labour faction the 80 seats they hope to win, on condition of holding the other Liberal seats secure from competition. But an accommodation of this kind would mean an alliance with Socialism, as well as with Ireland, and some very drastic social legislation in the next Parliament. It is difficult to gauge the weight of the Moderate element in the Cabinet, and it may be strong enough to face defeat rather than permit such an alliance.

We have dealt with this subject and its issues at length, partly in order to draw the attention of our readers to the issues and methods of a great and critical election in a democratic country. The introduction of democratic institutions in India, more genuine than the present Reform Scheme, cannot be long delayed, and it will be well for those of us who think to study their working in the European country which serves as a model to others. But beyond this aspect of the elections, there is a deeper interest to us Indians in the great constitutional struggle now at hand. The abolition or limitation of the Lords' veto is a question of supreme importance to the Indian politician. When the time comes, — and it is coming surely, — that popular assemblies have to be established in India, the veto of the Lords will be the one instrument that reaction will use to stay reform for a long season. It is that instrument which has baffled Irish Nationalism. If it continues to exist, it will baffle Indian Nationalism also. Although, therefore, Liberal and Conservative are one in their attitude towards India, every Indian patriot must watch with keen interest the result of the struggle and desire, not the success of the departing Ministry, but victory for the destroyers of the Lords' veto.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Brain of India IV  
Anandamath VIII (continued)  
Who? (poem)

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## Facts and Opinions

### A Hint of Change

The end of our long waiting for the advent of strength into the hearts and minds of the people may yet be distant, but one sign of an approaching change is growing more and more manifest, the intense yearning for a field, an outlet, a path open to the pent-up activities of an awakened nation. Arising from long sleep and torpor, the nation threw itself with energy into a field of activity which seemed immeasurably vast and full of a glorious promise. One would have said that no one could stop that mighty outpouring of enthusiasm, unselfishness and heaven-aspiring force. But there was a flaw, a source of weakness. Our past defects, hesitations, timidities, weaknesses, vices, arrogance, light-headedness, selfishness, scepticism, inconsistency, our readiness to succumb to difficulties, to despair at the first check, — all these things were in us, trampled down by the inrush of higher feelings and a greater and nobler energy, but not thrown out, not utterly replaced. The nation had entered headlong into a wonderful sadhana, but without knowledge, without the deliberate sankalpa, the requisite diksha. It was the only way it could be begun. But the sadhak has to have chit-tashuddhi before he can attain realisation; he must cleanse his bosom of much perilous stuff. That cleansing is done partly by

replacing the lower feelings by the higher, cowardice by courage, hatred by love, weakness by strength, partly by working out the evil in imagination or action and rejecting it as it comes up into the mind or the life. It was the first process that took place in the beginning of the movement, it is the second that is now in progress. In the first years of the movement a nation of cowards became heroes, sceptics became blind believers, the light-minded full of serious purpose, men eaten up by selfishness martyrs and ascetics, waverers full of tenacity, the low, loose and immoral inspired by a high and generous idealism and purity. But the work was not complete. In the groundwork of the new nation the old evil stuff lingered, and therefore God trampled our work to pieces in order to have it out, so that it might be seen, recognised and rejected. It was that work the repressions and reforms have come to do, and it is almost done. Had we gone on in our first victorious rush, unhampered and undefeated, we would have entered the kingdom of Swaraj with an imperfect national character, full of temporarily repressed vices which would have come to the surface as soon as the great stimulus of a successful struggle had been removed, and the last state of the nation might have been worse than its first; at any rate there would have been infinite troubles, reverses and disasters for the liberated nation, such as are in store for a nation like Persia where the struggle for freedom has not been sufficiently intense, arduous and complicated in its features to purify the people and build its character. It is well to have done with our troubles, reverses and defeats before the end is gained, so that we may enter our kingdom pure and strong. We ought now to be able to recognise what it was that has made us fail in the hour of trial; for there can be no doubt that we have partially failed. To recognise the defects is to reject them, and with the will to rise, will come the means which will help to raise us. The spirit of the nation is rising again. Only it must be clearly recognised that the old outlets are not the right ones. Solid and thorough work, self-discipline by means of noble and orderly action, this is the path by which we shall arrive at a higher national character and evolution.

### Pretentious Shams

In an unguarded moment our friend and India's, the *Statesman* of Chowringhee, has for once blurted out the truth. While, in common with other Anglo-Indian papers, it descants in strains of dithyrambic eloquence on the magnitude of the reforms the Government in its deep, wise and impossibly sagacious generosity has given and this thrice blessed country has been privileged to receive, it inadvertently admits that the Legislative Councils, as they hitherto existed, were pretentious shams. As we point out in our article this week, the new Councils differ in no way from the old except in being more pretentious. The old were shams because they gave no control to the people while affecting to listen and give consideration to the popular voice, which was, as a matter of fact, only heard to be ignored, — except in very occasional instances which only accentuated the sense of dependence on the caprice of the official governors. The new Councils are of precisely the same character, and the only differences of importance are the non-official majority — so carefully arranged as to secure a permanent popular minority, — the increased number of the elected members, and the facilities given for debate. With a permanent popular minority and the denial of all control, this is mere heaping of guilt on the surface of the toy. The Indian papers have recognised the nugatory character of the reforms and the tone of cold dissatisfaction in their comments is very marked. When the Councils begin to work, even the Moderates will realise that the new Councils are not only void of any true principle of popular representation and control, but injurious to the interests of the people.

### The Municipalities and Reform

Under the new conditions, the Municipalities and District Boards form a substantial part of the electorate and return a certain proportion of the members. We do not think we exaggerate when we say that the only chance of any really independent popular representatives entering the new Councils

is provided by these bodies. The University member or one or two of the landholders may occasionally assert independence, but the chances, at present, are in favour of their belonging to that type of representatives who are satisfied if they can pose as representatives of the nation by merely refusing to agree with the Government in all the details of their policy and measures. The one chance of a robust and healthy opposition lies in the election of independent men by the Municipalities and, to a lesser extent, by the District Boards. They will, however, be in a hopeless minority and will always be liable to disqualification by any of the engines provided for that purpose in the rules, if they support their opposition in the Council by agitation in the country. And we have yet to see what changes will be made in the District Boards and Municipalities under the new policy. Great hopes have been entertained that, whatever may be done in the Councils, the Municipalities will be made really free and popular bodies, and, we remember, that expectation was urged at the Hughly Conference as a reason for not rejecting the reforms. We doubt whether this expectation will be any more fruitful than the hopes of a great advance towards popular institutions in the reform of the Councils. Under the new scheme the Municipalities are the only weak point in the Government armour, and we rather fancy the Government will follow the policy of thorough and mend that point as well. Time will show whether we or the Moderates are right. So far we have always been right in these matters and they have always been wrong, the new Councils being only the latest of numerous instances during the last few years.

### **Police Unrest in the Punjab**

The action of some of the statesmen of this country seems to be guided by the principle that the best way to bring about a particular object is to try and promote its opposite. They certainly desire the political unrest to cease, but their action seems to be carefully calculated to prolong it. No more irritating action could have been taken in the present state of the public mind

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than the persistence in sedition-hunting which is being practised on a large scale in the Punjab. There is not the least sign of trouble or violence or even widespread agitation of any kind in that province. The causes which excited agitation and violence formerly were purely local and, with the removal of the cause, the effect, as it was bound to do, disappeared. Since then, the Punjab has been profoundly quiet, and the opposition to the Convention Congress and the convocation of the Hindu Sabha, presided over by so inoffensive a personage as Sir Pratul Chandra Chatterji, were the only signs of life it gave. We wonder, is it the first-mentioned activity which has led to the raids, searches and arrests? The almost universal opposition to a body which has faithfully excluded the Nationalists and enjoys the support and patronage of Mr. Gokhale, may seem to the authorities a certain sign of widespread seditious feeling in the land. Is it by stirring up sedition with a police pole that the Punjab bureaucrats think they can get rid of unrest?

## The Reformed Councils

THE GREAT measure which is to carry down the name of Lord Morley to distant ages as the inaugurator of a new age in India, — so at least all the Anglo-Indian papers and not a few of the Moderates tell us, — is now before us in all its details. The mountains have again been in labour, and the mouse they have produced this time is enormous in size and worthy of the august mountains that produced him, but not the less ridiculous for all that. What is it that this much-trumpeted scheme gives to a people which is not inferior in education or intellectual calibre to the Turk, the Persian and the Chinese who already enjoy or are in sight of full self-government? There are four elements which have always to be considered in a change of this kind, first, the nature of the electorate, second, the composition of the body itself, thirdly, the freedom of election, fourthly, the scope, functions and powers of the assemblies. There is not one of these points in which the people have really gained, there is hardly one of them in which they are not worse off than under the old system.

What change has been made in the electorates? Except that they have been increased in number, we do not see that there has been any real change at all, and an increase in number is of no value in itself, but only if the number of elected members represent a force sufficient to give the people its proper weight in the legislation and administration of the country. We shall show under the third head that we have gained nothing in this direction. On the other hand not only class, as was formerly the case, but creed has been made the basis of representation and, therefore, unless the Hindus have the strength of mind to boycott a system which creates a distinction insulting as well as injurious to the community, this measure, while giving us not an atom of self-government, will be a potent engine for dividing the nation

into two hostile interests and barring the way towards the unity of India. Formerly, there were only two classes in India, the superior European and the inferior Indian; now there will be three, the supreme European, the superior Mahomedan and the inferior Hindu. This is loss number one, and it is no small one, to the Mahomedan no less than the Hindu. The official of course gains.

Even if there is no democratic or even semi-democratic basis of election — merely small established bodies which can in no sense be called the people, — something might be gained if the Councils were so composed as to give a preponderance or powerful voice to independent elected representatives. That is what the Councils profess to do and that is why so much parade is made of the non-official majority. What are the facts? In the Viceroy's Council there are to be thirty-five avowedly Government members, twenty-eight being officials and seven nominated. Of the twenty-five elected members eleven will be sent from the new Councils all over India; as we shall show from the Bengal examples, these Councils will contain a predominant pro-Government vote even among the non-official members and their representatives will be therefore pro-Government men. That makes forty-six reliable votes for the Government. Of the remaining fourteen three will be Europeans who will naturally side with the Government; that makes forty-nine. Of the remaining eleven five will be specially elected Mahomedan representatives and, as under the new system the Mahomedans are a favoured class depending for the continuance of that favour on good behaviour, that means another five reliable votes for the Government, which makes fifty-four. Of the remaining six all are representatives of the landholding class who dare not be too independent, — although they will no doubt oppose in small matters, which they can do with impunity as there is not the slightest chance of the Government being defeated. The consequence will be that on the Viceroy's Council there is not any reasonable chance of there being a single independent member representing the people. This startling result of the Reforms may not seem at first credible, but if our argument is carefully followed, it will establish itself. No doubt, one or two men like Mr. Gokhale, Sir Pherozshah Mehta

or Dr. Rash Behari Ghose will be admitted by permission, but that privilege we had on better terms under the old system.

Let us pass to the Bengal Councils and establish our position. In East Bengal there will be twenty-two nominated and two specially nominated against eighteen elected members establishing at once a standing Government majority of six. Of the eighteen who might oppose, there will be four members who in the nature of things are bound to be Europeans and four specially elected Mahomedan members, which at once raises the reliable Government vote to thirty-two; five representatives of District and Local Boards, who, from the preponderance of Mahomedans on those bodies, are bound to be Mahomedans, two representatives of landholders of whom one at least is likely to be a Mahomedan and the other, being a landholder, cannot afford to be too independent. There remain three members of Municipal bodies who are all likely to be independent, if the elections are not interfered with by indirect pressure. Therefore, out of forty-two members only three are likely to be independent members. It is needless to point out that the representative of the non-official members on the Viceroy's Council is sure to be a pro-Government man.

We pass on to West Bengal where things ought to be better. Here there are twenty-two nominated against twenty-six elected members, giving at first sight a non-Government majority of four. But we have to subtract from the apparent majority and add to the apparent minority four members from European or predominately European constituencies, four Mahomedan members and the member for the University, now practically a department of the Government. That gives a Government vote of thirty-one and a possible opposition vote of seventeen. Of these again five are representatives of the landholders who cannot be independent to any notable extent and of whom only one or two are likely to be independent at all. There are, therefore, only twelve votes of which we can have any hope, the representatives of the Boards and Municipalities. Here also the independent section of the community is hopelessly ineffective in numbers. Only four of these will be representatives of Bengal and this is one of

the most joyous results of the policy of partition and deportation plus co-operation which is the basis of the new measure. Here again the chances of an independent representative being returned to the Viceroy's Council are small on paper, nil in reality.

When we come to the freedom of the electors in choosing their representatives, we find restrictions so astonishing as at once to expose the spirit and purpose of these reforms. The Boards and Municipalities which alone represent in a faint degree the people are debarred from electing anyone not a member of these bodies. Thus at one blow it is rendered impossible for a popular leader like S<sup>r</sup>. Motilal Ghose, unless the Government choose to nominate him, to be on these amazing Councils. Farther, anyone dismissed from Government service, e.g. S<sup>r</sup>. Surendranath, sentenced at any time to imprisonment or transportation, e.g. Mr. Tilak, or bound down, e.g. Mofussil leaders like S<sup>r</sup>. Anath Bandhu Guha or S<sup>r</sup>. Hardayal Nag, the leading men of Mymensingh and Chandpur respectively, or declared by the authorities to be of undesirable antecedents, e.g. Lala Lajpat Rai, S<sup>r</sup>. Aswini Kumar Dutta, S<sup>r</sup>. Krishna Kumar Mitra and all Nationalists and agitators generally, are ipso facto incapable of representing the people under these exquisite reforms.

After all this it may seem a waste of time to go into the question of the scope, functions and powers of the Councils. They may briefly be summed up by saying that the Councils have no scope and no powers, and that they have also no functions except to talk, but by no means freely and no longer at large. We certainly do not object to the rule that no member shall talk for more than fifteen minutes at a stretch; our only regret is that the maximum could not be fifteen seconds. But since to talk inconclusively and ask questions which need not be answered unless the Government likes, is the only activity allowed to the august councillors, it seems like adding injury to insult to hedge in this windy privilege with so many restrictions. The restrictions placed on the putting of interpellations would rule out of order half the questions in the House of Commons. It is curious how carefully the Government has guarded itself against anything which might inconvenience it or put it into a corner. Even to ask

any question about the conduct or character of persons except in their official or public capacity, is banned, so that, for instance, if an official misconducts himself in a flagrant manner, so long as he can say that he has done it in his private capacity, the Government cannot be questioned as to the truth of the matter or its intentions with regard to the peccant individual. With a little legal ingenuity we think there is hardly any question, not of the baldest and most insignificant character, which could not be brought under the restricting clauses. And, to crown all, the President is given the power of disallowing any question on the ground that it will inconvenience the State, in other words himself and his Government, and he may disallow any supplementary questions without any reason whatever! Any resolution may be disallowed for a similar reason or absence of reason. When we add that Native States are held sacrosanct from discussion, the Military similarly safeguarded, and that no value need be attached to the resolutions of the Council on the Financial Statement and no resolutions at all can be proposed or passed on the Budget, we think we have said all that is necessary to paint in its true colours the glorious liberality of this most wonderful and unheard-of reform. We heartily congratulate Lord Morley, Lord Minto and their advisers on the skill with which the whole thing has been framed, the Moderates on the glorious price for which one or two of their leaders have sold the popular cause, the Hindus on their humiliation and the country generally on the disillusionment, we hope the final disillusionment, which these Councils, when they meet, will bring about far more successfully than could have been done by any Nationalist propaganda.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art I  
Anandamath IX, X  
An Image (poem)

# KARMAYOGIN

A WEEKLY REVIEW

of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Bomb Case and Anglo-India

The comments of the Anglo-Indian papers on the result of the appeal in the Alipur case are neither particularly edifying nor do they tend to remove the impression shared by us with many thoughtful Englishmen that the imperial race is being seriously demoralised by empire. From the *Englishman* we expect nothing better, and in fact we are agreeably surprised at the comparative harmlessness of its triumphant article on the day after the judgment. Its reference to the nonsense about there being no sedition in India and no party of Revolution leaves our withers unwrung. We ourselves belong to a party of peaceful revolution, for it is a rapid revolution in the system of Government in India which is the aim of our political efforts, and it is idle to object to us that there have been no peaceful revolutions and cannot be. History gives the lie to that statement, whether it proceeds from Mr. Gokhale or from Anglo-India. We have also always admitted that there is a Terrorist party, for bombs are not thrown without hands and men are not shot for political reasons unless there is Terrorism in the background. All we have contended, — and our contention is not overthrown by the judgment in the Alipur appeal, which merely proves that the conspiracy was not childish, and by no means that it was a big

or widespread organisation, — is that the attempt of the Anglo-Indian papers to blacken the whole movement, and especially the whole Nationalist party, is either an erroneous or an unscrupulous attempt, and the disposition of the police to arrest every young Swadeshi worker as a rebel and a dacoit is foolish, wrong-headed, often dishonest, and may easily become fatal to the chances of a peaceful solution of the dispute between the Government and the people. The *Englishman*, however, represents a lower grade of intellect and refinement to which these considerations are not likely to present themselves. The average respectable Englishman is better represented by the *Statesman*, and the one dominating note in the *Statesman* is that of regret that the Courts had to go through the ordinary procedure of the law and could not effect a swift, dramatic and terror-striking vindication of the inviolability of the British Government. One would have thought that a nation with the legal and political traditions of the English people would have been glad that the procedure of law had been preserved, the chances of error minimised and the State still safeguarded; and that no ground had been given for a charge of differentiating between a political and an ordinary trial to the prejudice of the accused. It is evident, however, that the type of Englishman demoralised by empire and absolute power considers that, in political cases, the Law Courts should not occupy themselves with finding out the truth, but be used as a political instrument for vengeance and striking terror into political opponents.

### The Nadiya President's Speech

We congratulate Mr. Aswini Banerji on the able and vigorous speech delivered by him as the President of the Nadiya Conference. He took up an attitude which was at once manly and free from excess or violence. For ourselves the first point we turned to was the pronouncement on the Reforms. We do not think the judgment of the country on this ill-conceived measure could have been put with greater truth and force than in the periods of good-humoured contempt and irony, scathing yet in perfectly

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good taste, in which Mr. Banerji disposed of the claims of the Reform Scheme to be a measure of popular self-government. If all public men take the same attitude, the day of a true measure of popular control will be much nearer than if we affect a qualified satisfaction with this political bauble. As Mr. Banerji forcibly pointed out, it does not provide for a popular electorate, it does not admit of the election of popular leaders, it does not create a non-Government majority, or, as we would add, even the reasonable possibility of a strong opposition on essential points. What has the country to do with a reformed Council stripped of these essentials? The jo-hookums, the self-seekers, the nonentities who wish to take advantage of the exclusion of distinguished and leading names in order to enjoy, at the expense of the country's interests, the kudos and substantial advantages of a seat on the Councils will scramble for the newly-created heaven; that is the kind of co-operation which the Government will get from the non-Musulman part of the nation under this scheme. The country remains sullen and dissatisfied.

### **Mr. Macdonald's Visit**

The tour undertaken by Mr. Ramsay Macdonald in India has been cut short by the call from England summoning him home to take his part in the great struggle which is the beginning of the end of Conservative and semi-aristocratic England. In the peaceful revolution which that struggle presages and in which it must sooner or later culminate, Mr. Macdonald's party stands to be the final winners. It is the semi-Socialistic Radical element in the Ministry attracted toward the Labour party to which the precipitation of this inevitable struggle is due. The Labour party is now predominately Socialistic and is purging itself of the old individualistic leaven which looked forward to no higher ideal than an eight-hours day, Old Age pensions and Trade Union politics. The Labour members, Messrs. Burt and Fenwick, who represent this old-world element, have received notice to quit from the Labour organisations which helped them into Parliament and much nonsense of a kind familiar to ourselves is

being talked about the ingratitude of Labour to these veterans. The only justification for the existence of these gentlemen in Parliament is that they stand for the new insurgent demos and, if they cannot keep pace with the advancing sentiment of the people who keep them in Parliament, their duty is to retire, and the ingratitude is theirs if they try to hamper the progress of their lifelong supporters by fighting the representatives of the new aspirations in the interests of a middle-class party. Mr. Macdonald belongs to the new thought, but he is, we believe, one of those who would hasten slowly to the goal. He has not the rugged personality of Mr. Keir Hardie, but combines in himself, in a way Mr. Hardie scarcely does, the old culture and the new spirit. He has as broad a sympathy and as penetrating an intelligence as Mr. Nevinson, but not the latter's quick intensity. Nevertheless, behind the slow consideration and calm thoughtfulness of his manner, one detects hidden iron and the concealed roughness of the force that has come to destroy and to build, some hint of the rugged outlines of Demogorgon, the claws of Narasingha. For every man is not only himself, he is that which he represents. Mr. Macdonald has been reserved and cautious during his visit and has spoken out only on the Reforms and Reuter, nor have his remarks on these subjects passed the limits of what any sincere Liberal would hold to be a moderate statement of the truth. Mr. Macdonald is one who does not speak out the whole of himself, he is a politician born, and born politicians do not care to outpace by too great a stride the speedily accomplishable fact. Whatever wider vistas they may see beyond, they prefer to move steadily towards them rather than to speak of them. So far as an Englishman can help India, and that under present circumstances is hardly at all, he certainly wishes to help. It is not his fault that the blindness of his countrymen and the conditions of the problem in India make men like him, perforce, little better than sympathetic spectators of the passionate struggle between established privilege and a nation in the making that the world watches now in India.

## The Alipur Judgment

THE JUDGMENT of the Appeal Court in the Alipur Case has resulted in the reduction of sentences to a greater or less extent in all but two notable instances, and on the other hand, the maintenance of the finding of the Lower Court in all but six cases, on five of which there is a difference of opinion between the Chief Justice and Justice Carnduff. So long as these cases are still *sub judice*, we reserve our general comments on the trial. At present we can only offer a few remarks on special features of the judgment. The acquittal of the Maratha, Hari Balkrishna Kane, must give universal satisfaction, as his conviction in the absence of any evidence in the least establishing his guilt would have been a gross miscarriage of justice. The rejection of Section 121 and the consequent elimination of the death sentences is also a result on which the Government and the country may both be congratulated. Even in the case of actual political assassins the infliction of the death sentences, however legally justifiable, is bad policy. Death sentences for political crimes only provide martyrs to a revolutionary cause, nerve the violent to fresh acts of vengeance and terrorism, and create through the liberation of the spirits of the dead men a psychical force making for further unrest and those passions of political revolt and fierceness to which they were attached in life. The prolongation of terrorism is undesirable in the interests of the country; for, so long as young men are attached to these methods of violence, the efforts of a more orderly though not less strenuous Nationalism to organise and spread itself must be seriously hampered. We are glad to note that the Chief Justice has in no case condemned an accused on the evidence of the watch-witnesses alone. Such evidence is always suspect in the eyes of the people of this country and the gross blunders, if they were no worse, committed by several of the police witnesses in

this case deprive their identifications of all evidential value. Once the confessions were admitted as entirely voluntary and entirely true, the fate of the confessing prisoners and of those directly implicated by them as active members of the society was a foregone conclusion. The conviction of an accused on such a serious charge when there is no clear incriminating evidence against him except the confessions of others, is no doubt permissible under ordinary jurisprudence when these confessions create a moral certainty in the mind of the judge; but if this rule sometimes prevents the escape of the guilty, it not seldom lends itself to the punishment of the innocent. Of more importance, however, and the one serious flaw we are disposed to find in the Chief Justice's judgment, is the exaggerated importance attached to familiarity and intimacy between the leaders of the conspiracy and those whose guilt was open to doubt. When there is a secret conspiracy, it is inevitable that there should be numbers of men intimately associated with the members, perhaps even co-operating with them in surface political action, who are yet in entire ignorance of the close and dangerous proceedings of their friends. It was a recognition of this obvious fact that largely governed Mr. Beachcroft's findings; but we cannot help feeling that neither he nor the Appeal Court, ignorant, like all Englishmen, of the actual workings of the National Movement, have given sufficient weight to this consideration. As a result, the benefit of the doubt has not been extended where it should have been extended. Already it was a general conviction in the public mind that one innocent man had been convicted and succumbed to the rigours of jail life, while two are hopelessly condemned to the brutal and brutifying punishments by which European society avenges itself on the breakers of its laws, — we refer to the Kabiraj brothers found by Mr. Beachcroft to be innocent of conspiracy and therefore presumably innocent tools of conspirators. There is an uneasy sense that some at least have been added to the list by the judgment in appeal. Even if it be so, however, the judges have done their best, and the European legal system has always been a lottery by which it is easy, without any fault on the part of the judge, for the guilty to escape and the innocent

to suffer. It is perhaps one of the necessary risks of joining in Nationalist movements to be liable to be confounded in one fate with secret conspirators who happen to be associates in social or legitimate political relations, and when the C.I.D. throws its nets with a generous wideness, we ought not to whine if such accidents bring us into the meshes. The State must be preserved at any cost. In any case, the whole country must be grateful to Sir Lawrence Jenkins for the courtesy, patience and fairness with which he has heard the case and given every facility to the defence, an attitude which might with advantage be copied by certain civilian judges in and outside the High Court and even by certain Judges, not civilians, in other provinces.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Stead and the Spirits  
The National Value of Art II  
Anandamath X (continued)

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Lieutenant-Governor's Mercy

The outcry of the Moderates against the exclusion of their best men has led to certain concessions by which apparently the Government hope to minimise or obviate the formidable opposition that is slowly gathering head against the new Councils. These concessions remove not a single objectionable principle from the Bill. They are evidently designed to facilitate the admission into the Council of the two men in Bengal whose opposition may prove most harmful to the chances of the exceedingly skilful Chinese puzzle called the Councils Regulations, by which the consummate tacticians of Simla hope to preserve full control for the authorities while earning the credit of a liberal and popular reform. The modification by which men who have served three years on a Municipality become eligible even if they are no longer on any such body at the time of election, seems specially designed to admit S<sub>j</sub>. Bhupendranath Bose who, with all the other well-known men of Bengal, was excluded by the careful provisions of the Scheme. But to have placated S<sub>j</sub>. Bhupendranath and at the same time disqualified the greater Moderate leader would obviously have been an infructuous concession. Accordingly, we are now given to understand that the Lieutenant-Governor has been pleased to intimate to the most powerful man in Bengal that, if he

stands for election, the disqualification under which he has been placed, will be waived as a special concession in his favour! We do not know what were the feelings of Sj. Surendranath when he was informed that this back-door had been opened to him by the indulgence of the bureaucracy to its dismissed servant. But to us the permission seems to be more humiliating and injurious than the original exclusion, — to Bengal, if not to Surendranath personally. As things stand, he cannot make use of the concession without forfeiting his already much-imperilled popularity and putting himself uselessly into a ridiculous and undignified position. If he stood now, the whole country would believe that his dissatisfaction with the Reforms was due to his personal exclusion and not to the vicious principles of the Scheme. He would enter not in his own right, but by the grace and mercy of the bureaucracy of whom he has been the lifelong opponent. And to what end? To stand isolated or with a handful of ineffective votes against a solid phalanx of officials, Government nominees, Europeans, Mahomedans and lukewarm waverers or reactionaries. Sj. Surendranath gains nothing for himself or the country by entering the Councils on these shameful terms; he gains everything by holding aloof and standing out for better conditions.

### An Ominous Presage

The *Indian Daily News* nowadays plays the *Statesman's* abandoned role of the *Friend of India*. This journal has been recently harping on the necessity of the reform of the Municipalities and throwing out suggestions of the lines on which those reforms should be framed. We cannot imagine anything more ominous, more fatal to the little of self-government that we possess, than these suggested reforms. We pointed out in our article on the Reforms that under this scheme the Municipalities were the only weak point in the Government's armour and we hazarded a prophecy that the Government would follow the policy of thorough and mend this vulnerable part. This is precisely what our Anglo-Indian "friend" earnestly and repeatedly

calls on them to do without farther delay. The principle to be enforced is that same false, vicious and antidemocratic principle of the representation of separate interests which has made the new Reforms a blow straight at the heart of progress instead of an important step in progressive development. It is true that the *Daily News* deprecates separate electorates and advocates official control veiled and occasional instead of official control insistent, naked and unashamed. But we know perfectly well that official control veiled and occasional, as in the universities, can be made as potent and effective a weapon for the suppression of independent action as official control direct and habitual. And if the European, the Mahomedan and the landlord are to predominate in the Municipalities as in the reformed Councils and the representation of the "professional classes" carefully restricted, we do not care whether it is done by separate electorates or by some other equally careful manipulation of the electoral lists. The result will be the same. The *Daily News* seems to be inspired in its anxiety for reform by two lofty motives, the predominance of the European vote, wealthy but small in numbers, and the distinction of the predominance of the professional men who, under present circumstances, can alone represent educated India. On the Councils the non-official European representation is small, not in proportion to the numbers of its constituency, but in its comparative voting power, yet this class is on the whole satisfied, because it not only gets what it knows to be disproportionately large representation but can be sure of the co-operation of the official in farthering its interests. On the Municipalities, if the direct official control disappears, it will be necessary for the European vote to be dominant so as to prevent a combination of other elements from pushing other interests to the detriment of European privilege or monopoly. The distinction which this journal, in common with other Anglo-Indian papers, draws between men with a real stake in the country and educated men, who apparently because of their education have none, sheds a flood of light on the kind of friendship which it cherishes for the people of this country.

### Chowringhee Humour

The *Statesman* as a friend was intolerable; as a humorist it is hardly less difficult to bear. There was an elephantine attempt at sardonic humour in a recent article in which it weightily urged the educated community to overlook defects and take full and generous advantage of the great opportunity from the benefits of which they have been excluded. That is the peculiar humour of these reforms. They are a Barmecide's feast, gorgeous dishes and silver covers with only unsubstantial air inside, and even from that chameleon's feast the educated classes are carefully excluded, except in a pitifully infinitesimal degree. Yet the Anglo-Indian papers are indignantly remonstrating with the educated classes for not crowding to the table where there are no seats for them and feasting themselves fat on the dainty invisible meats which others are so eager to partake of. It may be asked why others are so anxious for these aerial privileges. Well, that is because it is only the educated classes who are really hungry for substantial political food, the others are eager to see and handle the gorgeous dishes and the silver covers, to say nothing of the kudos of having dined at so rich a house and its material advantages to the individual. But the educated Hindus have had a surfeit of specious outsides and are learning to merge the interests of the individual in the good of the nation.

### The Last Resort

The resort to boycott is becoming instinctive in men's blood; not only in India but everywhere, men confronted by opposition of a nature which renders it impossible to deal with it effectively, take to boycott with an admirable spontaneity. The rapid spread of this ancient Indian device since China and India applied it for the first time on the gigantic Asiatic scale, is a sign of the times. We can naturally understand the feeling of discomfort which leads the Anglo-Indian papers to deprecate this move on the part of the Moderates. It is true that the reported agreement to boycott the Councils has been denied by representatives of

Moderate opinion, but, whether a formal resolution to the effect was recorded or not at the momentous meeting in the Indian Association's rooms, it is this policy which the Moderates are following, for the excellent reason that there is no other. As they pathetically complain, it is not they who have boycotted the Government but the Government which has boycotted them. That is not, of course, literally true. S. J. Ambikacharan Majumdar who has refused to stand as a candidate, is eligible under the Government rules; the disabilities in the way of S. J. Bhubendranath and Surendranath have been waived or removed. But this the Government has taken care to ensure, that if they enter, and evidently the Government desires that they should enter, it shall be as grandiose nonentities, stripped of all powerful backing, individual voices and nothing more. Co-operation on such conditions would be the end of the Moderate party in Bengal and the absolute destruction of the Moderates is an event, which, we confess, we could not contemplate with equanimity. We need a party which will form a convenient channel through which the Government can glide gradually down the path of concession until events have educated our bureaucracy to the point of recognising the necessity of negotiation with the Nationalists. We are therefore glad that the Government has made it imperative on the Moderates to answer boycott with boycott. We have expressed our admiration of the skill with which the Reform Regulations have been framed, but it is the skill of the keen-eyed but limited tactician cleverly manipulating forces for a small immediate gain, not of the far-seeing political strategist. On the contrary, the framers have flung away supports which they ought to have secured and secured others which are either weak or unreliable. The nonentities who are scrambling for a seat in the Council cannot hold the fort for them; the support of the landholders is lacking in sincerity and they are, besides, a force the bureaucracy themselves have stripped ruthlessly of their ancient strength and leadership, which cannot now be recovered by a seat on the Councils; the Musulmans have suddenly been raised by the amazingly shortsighted policy of Lord Morley into an eager, ambitious and pushing political force which will

demand a higher and ever higher price for its support. On the other hand the Moderates have been humiliated in the sight of all India and made a general laughing stock, and the entire Hindu community, always the mightiest in potentiality in the land and now growing conscious of its might, has been put far on the way to becoming a permanent and embittered opposition. O wonders of Anglo-Indian statesmanship!

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Men that Pass  
The National Value of Art III

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## Facts and Opinions

### The United Congress

The controversy which has arisen between the *Bengalee* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* on the subject of a united Congress does not strike us as likely to help towards the solution of this difficult question. We should ourselves have preferred to hold silence until the negotiations now proceeding between representatives of both sides in Calcutta are brought to a definite conclusion either for success or failure. But certain of the positions taken up by the *Bengalee* cannot be allowed to pass unchallenged. Our contemporary refers to the meeting in the *Amrita Bazar* Office last year as an All India Conference. He ought to know perfectly well that it was nothing of the kind. The Mahratta Nationalists were extremely anxious for a settlement and they approached the Bengal Moderates to that end through the mediation of Sj. Motilal Ghose. The terms arrived at were so humiliating that, although they gave way rather than imperil the success of the negotiations, it was with great difficulty they could bring themselves to consent, and Bengal Nationalism has never accepted the surrender on the subject of the creed. At the Hughly Conference, when the four Nationalist members of the Committee were named, great anxiety was expressed by the delegates that men should be chosen who would not repeat this

surrender. If the meeting in Bagbazar last year were an All India Conference, how is it that Bombay Moderatism refused to have anything to do with its resolutions, or that Sj. Surendranath and his following did not consider themselves bound by the decision to which they were a party and joined the Madras Congress? It was an attempt at negotiation and nothing more and, having fallen through, binds nobody. The *Bengalee* says that unless the Nationalists sign the creed, a United Congress is impossible, since no one shall be admitted to the Congress who is not satisfied with self-government within the Empire and constitutional means of agitation. This seems to us to be an indirect attempt at intimidating us by hinting that, if we do not join the Moderates on their own terms, we shall be declaring ourselves seditionists and anarchists. That is a method of bringing about unity which we think the Bengal Moderates had better leave to their friends in Bombay and Punjab; it will not work in Bengal. If by constitutional means is meant acquiescence in the Reforms, — that is the only constitution given to us, — we decline to join in using constitutional means. If peaceful means are intended, we do not know that any party advocating public political action is in favour of any but peaceful means. Nor is it a question of adhesion to or secession from the British Empire. That is an ultimate action which is too far off to form a question of practical politics or a subject of difference. The dispute is one of ideal, whether we shall aim at being a province of England or a separate nation on an equality with her carrying on our ancient Asiatic development under modern conditions. Whether such separateness and equality can be effected without breaking the English connection is a question which can only be decided by the final attempt at adjustment between Indian and British interests. We Nationalists lay stress on the ideal, which is a matter of principle, and not on the form it takes, which is a matter of expediency and detail. As far as the United Congress is concerned, the Nationalists are willing to accept the self-government of the provincial type as the object of the Congress and to make no attempt to disturb this provision until India becomes unanimous for a change, but any attempt to make

them sign a creed which violates their conscience will be resisted. There can be no farther weakening on that point, and if the Moderates demand that we shall lay down our principles on the altar to Sir Pherozshah Mehta before they will admit fellowship with us then farther negotiations are useless. Disunion must take its course.

### **The Spirit of the Negotiations**

Both the *Bengalee* and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* seem to us to misunderstand the spirit of the negotiations which are proceeding. The *Patrika* harps on the inconsistency of the Moderate leaders negotiating on one side and at the same time holding a meeting to send delegates to the Three Men's Congress at Lahore. There is no such condition underlying the negotiations. At Hughly S. Surendranath expressly reserved his liberty to attend Sir Pherozshah's Congress and there is no reason why he should not do so if he thinks that his duty or his best policy. Nor do the Nationalists ask the Bengal Moderates to refrain, though they will naturally put their own interpretation on an alliance based on the pusillanimous surrender of the Boycott Resolution. On the other hand the *Bengalee* is quite mistaken in thinking that what the Nationalists seek is admission to the Convention or that they feel themselves under any necessity to go cap in hand to Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Gokhale. On the contrary they distinctly state that the Convention is not the Congress, but they recognise that as a mere matter of convenience the reparation of its errors by the Convention is the readiest method of bringing about a compromise and they are therefore willing to take the status quo as a basis for negotiations. They recognise no obligation to conform submissively to that basis or approach the Bombay leaders as the arbiters of their destiny.

### **A Salutary Rejection**

We draw the attention of all weak-kneed Nationalists to the ban placed by the Bombay Government on the candidature of

the distinguished and able Poona Nationalist, Mr. N. C. Kelkar. Mahratta Nationalism has never been so robustly uncompromising as the Bengal school in its refusal of co-operation in the absence of control, and Mr. Kelkar, though a sincere and ardent Nationalist, a friend and constant fellow-worker of Mr. Tilak, has always preserved an independent line in this matter and considered himself at liberty to help the cause of the country on bodies controlled by the Government. It greatly helps our cause that the Government should so emphatically set its face against any mistaken diplomacy of this kind. Mr. Kelkar's only specific offence against eligibility was a sentence of fine and two months' imprisonment for contempt of court, and that is short of the time required for ineligibility. S. Surendranath, who was, by the way, sentenced to six months for a still graver contempt, has been specially exempted, unasked, by the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal from another disability. It is obvious therefore that Mr. Kelkar's real offence was his Nationalist views and his friendship with Mr. Tilak. We hope that all compromising Nationalists will take the lesson of this rebuff to heart. The object of the Government is to rally the Mahomedans and the Moderates and isolate the Nationalists. No doubt they mean by the Moderates the Loyalist section of that party, but they are evidently wishful not to entirely alienate the Nationalist Moderates, if they can do so while excluding them from all real weight on the Councils. But by what reasoning any Nationalist can imagine that he will escape the operation of the excluding clauses, we are at a loss to understand. We may also ask our Mahratta brothers what advantage they have gained by being less rigid than ourselves. They are, if anything, more rigorously persecuted than we are in Bengal. Weakness of any kind does not pay in dealing with the Briton.

### **The English Revolution**

The note of revolution which was struck with resounding force by Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Winston Churchill in the quarrel with the Lords, is now ringing louder in England and has been

taken up in soberer but not less emphatic tones by Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey. There can be no doubt that there was dissension in the Cabinet over the Budget and that the concessions made by the Government in the process of passing it were forced upon Mr. Lloyd George and certainly not to the taste of that fiery and uncompromising Celt. But the reactionary attempt of the House of Lords to control finance, has evidently closed up the ranks by driving the Moderates over to the cause of revolution. It is evidently felt by the Liberals that, with an Upper Chamber more and more shamelessly and constantly a mere tool of the Conservative leaders, it is impossible for any Liberal Government to accept office unless it has a mandate to end or mend the Lords. We cannot believe that a similar feeling will not actuate the great mass of Liberals all over Great Britain and heal all differences. Already the Labour Executive has decided to make the victory easier for the Government by not dividing the forward vote in a considerable number of constituencies and we have no doubt this is the outward sign of a secret compact between the Labour party and the Liberals by which the return of a powerful Socialist party has been secured. Even the extreme Socialists, who usually are against all dealing with the middle class and whose motto is "A plague on both your houses", are calling on the Socialists of all shades to support the Government in abolishing the House of Lords. If Mr. Asquith had followed the line we suggested as possible in a previous number and introduced a moderate but effective bill for nullifying the Lords' veto, he would certainly have gained a number of Moderate votes which will now be denied to him, but it is doubtful whether the gain of the entire Socialist vote, secured by keeping himself free to end the House of Lords, is not, in the present condition of English politics, a compensation far exceeding the loss. Already Tariff Reform is receding into the background and promises to be a subordinate issue. The battle is over the constitutional, not the fiscal issue. By their anxiety to bring Unionist Labour candidates into the field and the eager talk of Conservative leaders about the necessity of reforming the Lords, the party of reaction show that they perfectly understand from what quarters disaster

threatens. Now that the Liberal party is pledged to destroy the Lords' veto, the English Revolution is assured and it will be not a middle class but a Socialist and Labour revolution. This result is assured whether the Liberals win or lose in the present battle. One campaign does not decide the fortunes of such a war.

### **Aristocratic Quibbling**

When we speculated that the Lords would be more likely to amend the Budget and leave their opponents the onus of throwing the finances of the whole country into confusion, we underestimated the want of wit of which this highly venerable but somewhat brainless House is capable. This want of wit has shown itself in an unseasonable and wholly futile excess of refined cunning. The House of Lords felt that its great weakness, when its conduct went before the country for its verdict, would be the odium of its unconstitutional attempt to interfere with the control of the finances by the people. To mend the unconstitutional appearance of their act, they have taken up this position, that they have no right to amend but they have the right to reject the Budget. It appears to be a right which they have sometimes been unwise enough to claim, but never unwise enough to enforce. The aristocratic hairsplitter who discovered this quibble, seems to have forgotten that, however pleasing the distinction may be to his ingenuity, the mass of the voters will not care one straw to examine fine distinctions which claim the whole and disclaim the part. They will simply say that the right of rejection means the right of baffling the representatives of the people and paralysing finance. The other device of the Lords is to avoid the appearance of disputing the people's right by putting the rejection in the form of a referendum to the people, a procedure which the British constitution does not include in itself and which is entirely new. Unfortunately they have made too much noise about the woes of the Dukes and Mr. Balfour has made the damaging admission that it is only the liquor and the land clauses to which he objects, so that it is too late to pretend that it is anxiety for the liberties of the people and

not solicitude for their own pockets and the pockets of their allies, the publicans, that has dictated their action. The indecent crowding of Lords who never before attended a single sitting, to reject the Budget, was also a tactical error. On the whole the action of the House of Lords has greatly helped Mr. Asquith and we may await with some confidence the result of a struggle in which India is deeply interested.

## The Transvaal Indians

THE VISIT of Mr. Polak has excited once more a closer interest in the Transvaal question and associations are being formed for the agitation of the question. It will therefore be opportune to consider the practical aspect of the struggle in the Transvaal and the possibility of help from India. There can be no two opinions outside South Africa, and possibly Hare Street, as to the moral aspects of the question; for it must be remembered that the Indians in the Transvaal are not claiming any political rights, but merely treatment as human beings first, and, next, equality before the law. It is open to the South Africans to exclude Indians altogether, but, once they are admitted, they are morally bound to refrain from a treatment of them which is an extreme and unpardonable outrage on humanity. To degrade any part of the human race to the level of cattle is in the present stage of progress an insult and an offence to the whole of mankind. It would be equally reprehensible to whatever race the humanity so degraded belonged, but the fact that these men are Indians has made their sufferings a national question to us and a standing reproach to the British people who, out of selfish fear of offending their own kith and kin, allow this outrage to be committed on their own subjects whom they have deprived of all means of self-protection. The great glory of the Transvaal Indians is that while men under such circumstances have always sunk into the condition to which they have been condemned and needed others to help them out of the mire, these sons of Bharatavarsha, inheritors of an unexampled moral and spiritual tradition, have vindicated the superiority of the Indian people and its civilisation to all other peoples in the globe and all other civilisations by the spirit in which they have refused to recognise the dominance of brute force over the human soul. Stripped of all means of resistance,

a helpless handful in a foreign land, unaided by India, put off with empty professions of sympathy by English statesmen, they, ignored by humanity, are fighting humanity's battle in the pure strength of the spirit, with no weapon but the moral force of their voluntary sufferings and utter self-sacrifice. Mr. Polak has well said that the Indian nation is being built up in South Africa. The phrase is true in this sense that the supreme example of the moral and spiritual strength which must be behind the formation of the new nation, has been shown first not in India but in South Africa. The passive resistance which we had not the courage and unselfishness to carry out in India, they have carried to the utmost in the Transvaal under far more arduous circumstances, with far less right to hope for success. Whether they win or lose in the struggle, they have contributed far more than their share to the future greatness of their country.

We must consider their chances of success, and though we do not wish to speak words of discouragement, it will not do to hide from ourselves the enormous difficulties in the way. For success, either the Government in England must interfere and compel the Transvaal to do right, or the Transvaal must be stirred by shame and by the interest of the poorer part of the Boer community to reverse the laws, or the Indian Government must intervene to protect its subjects. The first course is unthinkable. It would mean a quarrel with the newly conciliated Transvaal, the marring of the work of which the Liberal Government is justly proud, and a resentment in South Africa which the English ministry will not face for the sake of all India, much less of a handful of Indian coolies and shopkeepers. The poorer Boers will be only inconvenienced, not seriously hurt by the extinction of the Indian shopkeeper, and, in any case, they are not a class who are wont to act politically. The Transvaal Government is not likely to yield to any sense of shame. The Boers are a stark race, stubborn to the death, and the grit they showed in the face of the British Empire, they are also likely to show in this very minor trouble. Nor are they likely to have forgotten the action of the Indians who rewarded the

comparative leniency of the Boer Government previous to the war by helping actively in the British attack on the liberty of the Transvaal. With their slow minds and tenacious memories they are a people not swift to forget and forgive; we do not rely greatly on their present professions of friendship to the Power that took from them their freedom, and they are wholly unlikely to put from their minds the unpardonable intrusion of the Indian residents into a quarrel in which they had no concern or status.

There remains the Indian Government, and what can the Indian Government do? It can forbid, as has been suggested, Indian cooly recruitment for Natal. This would undoubtedly be a great blow to the planters and they would throw their whole influence into the Indian scale. But, on the other hand, the mass of the Natal whites are full of race prejudice and their desire is for that impossible dream, a white South Africa. A more effective measure would be the suspension of trade relations by the boycott of Colonial goods and the cessation of the importation of Indian raw materials into South Africa. But that is a step which will never be taken. Even if the Indian Government were willing to use any and every means, the decision does not rest with them but with the Government in England, which will not consent to offending the colonies. The Indian Government would no doubt like to see an end of the situation in the Transvaal as it weakens such moral hold as they still have over India, and they would prefer a favourable termination because the return of ruined Indians from the Transvaal will bring home a mass of bitterness, burning sense of wrong and standing discontent trained in the most strenuous methods of passive resistance. And many of them are Mahomedans.

The one favourable factor in favour of the Transvaal Indians is their own spiritual force and the chance of its altering the conditions by sheer moral weight. It is India's duty to aid them by financial succour which they sorely need and the rich men of the country can easily afford, by the heartening effect of public and frequently expressed moral sympathy and by educating the whole people of India literate and

illiterate in an accurate knowledge of what is happening in the Transvaal. This is the only help India can give to her children over the seas so long as she is not master of her own destinies.

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The National Value of Art IV  
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The Birth of Sin (poem)

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### Sir Pherozshah's Resignation

The resignation of Sir Pherozshah Mehta took all India by surprise. It was as much a cause of astonishment to his faithful friends and henchmen as to the outside world. The speculation and bewilderment have been increased by the solemn mystery in which the Dictator of the Convention has shrouded his reasons for a step so suddenly and painfully embarrassing to the body he created and now rules and protects. A multitude of reasons have been severally alleged for this sudden move in the game by ingenious speculators, but they seem mostly to be figments of the imagination. It was an ingenious guess that Sir Pherozshah has been appointed, as a reward for his great services to the Government, on the India Council and could, therefore, take no farther part in party politics. But until the appointment, if real, is announced, such self-denial is not obligatory, and surely Lord Morley would be quite willing to give his choice ten days' grace in order that he might pilot through this crisis in its fortunes a body so useful to the Government as the Convention that is striving this year to meet at Lahore. We ourselves lean to the idea that it is the complications ensuing on the unmasking of the Reforms that are chiefly responsible for the move. The Reforms are exasperating to Hindu sentiment, destructive to popular interests and a blow

even to the Loyalist Hindus who were loudest in acclaiming the advent of the millennium. The Bombay leaders cannot accept the Reforms without exasperating the people or refuse them without offending the Government. They are in that embarrassing position which is vulgarly called being in a cleft stick. It is not surprising in a tactician of Sir Pherozshah's eminence that, at such a critical juncture, he should prefer to guide the deliberations of the Lahore Convention from behind the veil rather than stand forward and become personally responsible for whatever he may think it necessary to compel the Convention to do. The Bengal Conventionists are already in danger of drifting away from the moorings and the new Regulations have, we believe, created the imminence of another dissension among the remaining faithful. The resignation of Sir Pherozshah makes it easier for the Bengal Moderates to attend the Lahore Congress, and that may not have been absent from the thoughts of the master tactician. But we never thought that Sir Pherozshah would care so much for the co-operation of the Bengalis as to allow Srijut Surendranath to be President, as certain sanguine gentlemen in Bengal seem to have expected. Failing Sir Pherozshah and Mr. Gokhale, who for obvious reasons cannot be put forward so soon after the Benares Presidentship, Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya was evidently the man, and we find accordingly that he has been designated for the succession by the obedient coterie at Bombay. We await with interest the upshot of this very attractive entanglement and the method by which the Convention will try to wriggle out of the very difficult hole into which Lord Morley has thrust it.

### **The Council Elections**

The elections for the Reformed Councils, so far as they have proceeded, entirely justify the description of the new bodies which we gave in our article on the Reforms. The elections for the United Provinces give a fair sample of the results which are sure to obtain all over India. With the exception of two or three gentlemen of the type of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, there is none on the Council to represent the educated wealthy, much

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less the people at large; all the rest are Europeans, Mahomedans and grandees. It is a Council of Notables, not a reformed Legislative Council representing both the Government and the people. In Bengal two gentlemen have been elected who represent the most lukewarm element in the popular party, for Sj. Baikunthanath Sen and Mr. K. B. Dutt stand not for the new movement in Bengal so much as for the old antiquated Congress politics which Bengal, even in its Moderate element, has left far behind. Behar sends one independent man in Mr. Deepnarain Singh. All the rest are of the dignified classes who either have no patriotic feelings or dare not express them. It is possible that Sir Edward Baker, in order to remove the stigma of unrepresentative subserviency from his Council, may try to nominate two or three who will help to keep Sj. Baikunthanath and his friend in countenance, but that purely personal grace will not mend matters. The Bengal Council is likely to be an even more select and unrepresentative body than we expected. We counted the District Boards as possible constituencies for representatives of opposition and independent opinion, but, for the most part, they might almost as well have been preserves for the aristocracy. In East Bengal it is evident that the Councils will be a Mahomedan and European body.

### **British Unfitness for Liberty**

By all Anglo-Indian papers it was triumphantly announced as a conclusive proof of the unfitness of the Indian people for self-government that the Surat Congress should have been broken up by the storming of the platform when passions were highly excited and relations between parties at breaking-point. Every ordinary sign of excitement at a public meeting is telegraphed to England under some such graphic title as "Uproarious proceedings at the Provincial Conference". But if rowdyism is a sign of unfitness for liberty, there is no country so unfit as England itself and logically, as lovers of England, our Anglo-Indian friends ought to pray that Germany, which knows how to sternly stop such disturbances, or Russia, which knows how to punish them,

should take charge of England and teach her people respect for law and order. The excitement of the great revolutionary struggle now proceeding in England has already in these few days induced such lawlessness and disorder that it is becoming almost impossible for Conservative speakers to command a public hearing. At first it was the Liberal Minister, Mr. Ure, whose meetings were systematically interrupted and broken up by organised Conservative rowdyism. Since then the Radicals have retaliated with much greater effect, first, with "good-humoured" interruption, then with more formidable tumult and, finally, we see the temper rising to absolute ferocity. Not only do we read in one telegram of four Conservative meetings which were of a disorderly nature, while Lord Kesteven and Lord Harris were refused a hearing, but the windows at Mr. Ure's last meeting were broken with a battering-ram and several of his audience were cut; and the other day a Conservative meeting was broken up, the agent left senseless by his assailants and the candidate only saved by a skilful flight. Nor were the worst excesses of which our young men were accused in the prosecution of the Boycott and picketing, anywhere near the violence and recklessness of which Englishwomen have been systematically guilty during the last few months. Clearly it is time that a more capable nation conquered and took charge of England.

### **The Lahore Convention**

The prospects of the Lahore Convention seem to be exceedingly clouded. In the matter of the Presidentship the fiat has gone forth from Bombay that Pandit Madan Mohan shall be President and, unless the dissatisfaction with the Mehta leadership has extended itself to the subservient Congress Committees, it is likely that the Bombay nomination will give the lead to the rest of the Conventionist coteries, excepting perhaps Burma and Bengal. The Convention is now at a critical stage of its destinies. Disowned by the Punjab, troubled by strained relations between Bombay and Bengal, it has received the crowning blow from the Government which supports it; its policy has been discredited

before the country and once more it has been proved to a disgusted people that the methods of the Conventionists lead to nothing but rebuffs, humiliation and political retrogression in the name of reform. If this body is to survive, there is need of a strong hand and skilful guidance, otherwise the present session is likely to be the last. Already the Convention is becoming the refuge of an out-of-date and vanishing coterie who no longer command the confidence of the country. By its very constitution the Convention has cut itself off from the people and a few men meeting in conclave elect the delegates in the name of an indifferent or hostile public. The dying past in vain strives to entrench itself in this insecure and crumbling fortress. Every day will serve to undermine it more and more and the Nationalists are content to let time and inevitable tendency do their work for them. Only by a radical self-purification and change of policy can the Convention hope to survive.

## The Moderate Manifesto

THE PRACTICAL exclusion of the educated classes, other than Mahomedans, landholders and titled grandees, from the new Councils and the preference of Mahomedans to Hindus has rung the death-knell of the old Moderate politics in India. If the Moderate party is to survive, it has to shift its base and alter its tactics. If its leaders ignore the strong dissatisfaction and disillusionment felt by educated Hindus all over India or if they tamely acquiesce in a reform which seems to have been deliberately framed in order to transfer political preponderance from Hindus to Mahomedans and from the representatives of the educated class to the landed aristocracy, they will very soon find themselves leaders without a following. The Moderate party at present is held together merely by the prestige and personal influence of the small secret Junta of influential men who lead it, not by any settled convictions or intelligent policy. The personalities of Mr. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta in Bombay, of S. J. Surendranath Banerji and S. J. Bhupendranath Bose in Bengal, of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in the United Provinces, of Mr. Krishnaswamy Aiyar in Madras constitute Moderatism in their respective provinces. What these old and respected leaders decide in their close and secret deliberations is accepted, no longer without cavilling, but still with a somewhat reluctant acquiescence by their party. But the public mind has now been too deeply stirred for the leaders to ignore the opinion of the country. The resignation by Sir Pherozshah Mehta of his Presidentship of the Lahore Convention following so soon after the publication of the Regulations, the speech of Mr. Gokhale at the Deccan Sabha and the manifesto issued by the Calcutta Moderates are the first signs of the embarrassment felt by the heads of the party. There can be no doubt that they have

allowed themselves to be tools in the hands of the officials and were not prepared for being thrown overboard as the sole recompense.

The speech of Mr. Gokhale shows the line along which the Bombay Moderate leaders desire to pilot their followers. It is the line chalked out for them by Lord Minto and other Anglo-Indian advisers. A great deal of feeling has been created against Mr. Gokhale throughout the country by his justification of the "stern and relentless" measures employed by the Government against the Nationalist party and the Boycott movement and by the Bombay Government's use of the new repressive legislation to crush a personal adversary in Mr. Gokhale's interests. The Moderate leader has with a belated adroitness used the disqualification of the Nationalist, Mr. N. C. Kelkar, to rehabilitate himself, if that be possible, by championing the cause of a political opponent. We do not know whether Mahratta sentiment will be shallow enough to be misled by this manoeuvre. The disqualification of Mr. Kelkar is an incident we welcome as a gain to our cause. On the other hand, apart from the empty formula of protest and a formal recognition of the sentiment of the country against the defects of the measure, the speech is merely a repetition of Lord Minto's appeal to give this vicious, injurious and insulting measure a fair chance, — on the very shadowy possibility to which the Moderate leaders still profess to cling, that all this alloy will be changed to pure gold in the next three years. Mr. Gokhale is still the political henchman of Lord Minto and echoes his sentiments with a pathetic fidelity.

The manifesto of the Moderate leaders in Calcutta is of more importance. The Bengal veterans have not yet lost caste by publicly turning against their countrymen and approving Government repression; they still keep some touch with public sentiment and have not yielded body and soul to the rallying call of Lord Morley. Even so fervid an anti-Nationalist as Dr. Rash Behari Ghose, to the great discontent and surprise of the *Englishman*, has signed the document. The manifesto shows a clear sense of the shortcomings of the measure of reform which was acclaimed with such gratitude by these

same able politicians when the skeleton had not been filled in with its present generous padding. It is to be regretted that a false note has been struck by the reference to the modification of one clause and the complaint that the "relief" thus afforded was insignificant and many distinguished men would still be barred out of the Council. Are the distinguished men of Bengal paupers cringing for personal doles that this kind of language should be used or this kind of argument advanced? We cannot congratulate the framer of the manifesto either on the form or the matter of this unhappy sentence. The recognition of class and creed as a basis of representation, the exclusion of popular interests in favour of the dignified elements in the community, the illusory nature of the non-official majority, the limitation of the functions of the Councils to criticism without control and the denial of freedom of election are the real gravamen of the charges against Lord Morley's measure, and the barring out of certain distinguished men is a mere incident which can certainly be used in newspaper articles and speeches as an indication of motive, but ought not to have been introduced into a grave document of this nature. The effective representation of the people, the preservation of sound democratic principles of representation in the formation of the electorates and freedom of election are the objects disinterested and patriotic men should hold before them, not the privilege of entry into the Councils for distinguished men.

But while the manifesto contains a full and exhaustive statement of the objections to the Reform, it is silent as the grave with regard to the practical methods which the Moderate leaders propose to adopt in order to bring about real reform. Will they follow the Bombay lead? Will they strike out a line of their own? At the close of the manifesto there is a pious expression of indomitable hope characteristic of the Moderate party, the party of obstinate illusions; the signatories, it seems, do not despair of the Government seeing the error of their ways and modifying the regulations so as to restore Lord Morley's original scheme. There is something

heroic in this desperate absence of despair. It reminds us of the most heroic passage in Roman history when, after the massacre of Cannae, the beaten general and cause of the disaster returned an almost solitary fugitive to Rome, preferring flight to a soldier's death, and the whole Roman senate came out to meet him and thank him that he had not despaired of his country. What is it that the Moderate leaders hope? Do they hope that the regulations will be so modified as to admit all the distinguished men whom they are interested in seeing at their back in the Councils? Or do they hope that the fundamental defects we have enumerated will be removed by a sort of spontaneous repentance and confession of original sin on the part of the Government? If so, what other basis have they for their incurable hopefulness except the faculty of the chameleon for living on unsubstantial air? The modifications of which they speak are not modifications, but a radical alteration of the whole spirit and details of the measure.

We also do not despair of a wholesome change in the attitude of the Government, but we do not believe in political miracles. There is no progress in politics except by the play of cause and effect, and if we want a particular effect, we must first create the suitable and effective cause. The only cause that can bring about so radical a change in the attitude of the Government is the failure of this misbegotten scheme and the necessity of substituting one better conceived and more liberal. And the only way to bring about the failure and the consequent necessity is to focus the whole opposition of the Hindu interest and the popular interest, with whatever Mahomedan assistance we can get, in a movement of abstention from the present Councils and an active agitation by effective means for the recognition of the great democratic principles that have been ignored and the formation of a new scheme after consultation with the popular leaders. This, it seems to us, is a legitimate sphere of activity for a strong and self-respecting Moderate party. But if they stultify themselves by accepting in any way a

measure designed to reduce them to nullity or impotence, they will commit suicide. Their empty protests against the defects of the Bill will be recognised as meaningless, for they will have deprived themselves of their only leverage for remedying the defects. The country has no room any longer for a party of mere sanguine expectancy and helpless dependence on the will of superior power. Moderatism at present is a mass of ill-defined aspirations, ungrounded hopes and helpless methods leading to perpetual and repeated disappointment, increasing weakness and deepening self-discontent. No party vowed to these uninspiring methods and depressing experiences can hope to survive at a time when political life is becoming more and more vivid and real. The Moderates must give up their vague unpracticality and adopt a definite aim, a distinct programme, effective methods.

We do not know whether the Moderate leaders could ever bring themselves so far as to stand out for a real measure of control as distinguished from a wider power of criticism. But there is no reason why they should not make up their minds to fight for a popular electorate based on education, exclusive of class and religious distinctions, free election and an elective majority, and refuse to be satisfied with less. In that case, the Nationalist party would represent a more advanced force standing out for a measure of effective control and a democratic electorate based on literacy, in addition to the Moderate demands. If, on the other hand, the Moderates would also accept control as a necessary factor of any political settlement, Moderate and Nationalist would again come into line and stand on a common platform, the only distinction being that one party would accept the settlement as a satisfactory solution for the present, while the other would regard it merely as an instrument for developing autonomy. But while the exclusory clauses of the Moderate Convention's Constitution remain, this drawing together is not possible, or, if it were possible, could not be sincere and effective. Those clauses are a sign and pledge of the Mehta-

Morley alliance and ratify the policy of which Mr. Gokhale's Poona speech was the expression, the policy of rallying the Moderates to the Government's support and crushing the Nationalists.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art V  
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Epiphany (poem)

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## Facts and Opinions

### The United Congress Negotiations

The persistence of the *Bengalee* in shielding Moderate obstinacy under cover of an appeal to the wholly inconclusive proceedings of the private Conference in the *Amrita Bazar* Office last year shows both the paucity of possible arguments for the Moderate position and the readiness of its chief organ to ignore facts of which it has been reminded more than once and which it cannot deny. The difference between the conference last year and the recent negotiations is radical. That conference was between Conventionists and non-Conventionists, the recent negotiations were between Moderates and Nationalists. The *Amrita Bazar* Office Conference was an attempt made by certain leaders in Bengal and Maharashtra to secure admission for the Nationalists to the Convention. The United Congress Committee was confined to Bengal and sat to consider whether Bengal Moderates and Nationalists could not agree together before inviting the Conventionists of other provinces to accept the terms offered by United Bengal. Last year's Conference was a confabulation of leading men representing their own opinions only, this year's negotiations were conducted by men elected for the purpose by the Provincial Conference representing the whole of Bengal. At the Conference in Bagbazar it was the middle section of opinion,

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neither Moderate nor Nationalist, of which Sj. Motilal Ghose, Rai Jotindranath Chaudhuri, and some of the older leaders in the Mofussil are the most influential members, which engineered a compromise in the absence of the Nationalist leaders. Sj. Tilak was a prisoner in Mandalay jail, Sj. Aurobindo Ghose under trial at Alipur, Sj. Khaparde and Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal absent in England. The compromise was reluctantly accepted by many of the Nationalists present, — as we have ascertained by correspondence with some of the chief Nationalists who attended, — and only because it was pressed on them that these were the only terms on which the Moderate party would admit of the idea of union. It was not accepted at all by the Bengal Nationalists and it has been recently admitted by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* that letters were received from the Mofussil repudiating the surrender on the question of the creed. How is it that the *Bengalee* persists in ignoring these facts? The compromise was rejected by the Moderates themselves, Bombay refusing utterly to recognise the four Calcutta resolutions as a possible part of any treaty, and this was recognised by the Moderates this year; for at the first meeting of the United Congress Committee it was distinctly intimated to the Nationalist members that the four resolutions must not be pressed as a condition of union. In other words the one concession for which some of the leading Nationalists induced themselves to waive their rooted objections to constitution and creed, is expunged and the Nationalists are expected to be bound by a rejected compromise by which the Moderates refuse to be bound. They are expected to adhere to the concessions they made last year, while the only concession made to them is withdrawn. This fact is quite sufficient by itself to put the *Bengalee's* argument out of court. We repeat that the recent negotiations had nothing to do with last year's abortive compromise, rejected as it was by both parties immediately after it was made. Their sole object was to ascertain whether the Moderates would accept substantial concessions from the Nationalists without asking the latter to sacrifice their conscience and their principles. Apparently they are not. Therefore union is impossible.

### A New Sophism

Another and very singular argument is advanced by the *Bengalee* which evinces a similar disregard of facts and of the real significance of facts. It is alleged that both sides in Bengal are agreed as to the four resolutions, that the creed is part of the four resolutions, that the creed was accepted by the Nationalists at Pabna and therefore they ought not to object to sign it as a condition of entering the Congress. In the first place, if the four resolutions are to be so binding on the Nationalists that they must be ready to sign one of them at the call of the Moderates, then they must be made equally binding on the Moderates and we call on them to sign a declaration of acceptance of the Boycott as a condition of entry into a United Congress. Just as the Moderates from Bombay accepted the Boycott resolution at Calcutta in deference to the weight of public opinion, so we accepted the Colonial self-government resolution as the opinion of the majority and are no more bound to subscribe to it personally than Sir Pherozshah Mehta is bound to subscribe to the Boycott. The four resolutions merely framed a compromise between the two political schools, not a declaration of Nationalist faith. As for Bengal, it is well known that the whole of Bengal does not accept Colonial self-government as the ultimate goal of political aspiration. At Pabna it was only to avoid a discussion dangerous to unity that the Nationalists contented themselves, in spite of the majority they had, with placing their dissent on record through the mouth of Sj. Manoranjan Guha. The *Bengalee* cannot have forgotten that incident. It was revived again at Hughly when the Moderates insisted on whittling down the Boycott to a mere commercial measure as a price of their adherence to the Conference and Sj. Aurobindo Ghose desired to bring forward an amendment, which he would subsequently withdraw, in order to mark that the Nationalists did not accept the resolution as the opinion of the country. The Moderate leaders threatened to withdraw if this was done and Sj. Aurobindo Ghose was requested to confine himself to the precedent established by Sj. Manoranjan Guha at Pabna. He then distinctly expressed his doubt whether

this would be sufficient to make the Nationalist attitude clear to the country and the advantage taken of our complaisance by the *Bengalee* to misrepresent the Nationalist attitude at Pabna shows that his apprehensions were perfectly justified. If this is the light in which the Moderates choose to put the Nationalist willingness to compromise, it may be necessary at the next Conference for our party not only to move an amendment but to put it to the vote regardless of Moderate threats of secession.

### Futile Espionage

We wonder whether it is really impossible to maintain a great Empire without demoralising oneself and the country by means of an unworthy system of espionage. Since the initiation of the Swadeshi movement the army of spies and informers have grown as plentiful as insects round a bright light. Formerly men of some distinction had the honour of being watched in their houses, dogged in their goings, honoured by the private inspection of their correspondence. But nowadays it is enough to be suspected of patriotism to have the inefficient hirelings of the Police, if not the worthy guardians of the Law themselves, sticking like burs to one's heels. Is anything gained by these excessive and no doubt costly precautions? If we are to judge by the sorry specimens who have besieged us for the last six months, a more incapable creature than the ordinary Indian spy does not exist. He has an engaging simplicity of artifice which at once betrays his savoury vocation, and if he does not carry "spy" written legibly on his forehead, as a multitude of them do, he is so transparent in his methods that he might just as well be labelled, "Due at Royd Street." Nor do we quite see what is gained by watching a man's house or his office with an open brazenness. The office of the *Dharma* has recently been favoured with the loitering of watchers who spend their days gazing lovingly at the building and making affectionate and importunate enquiries as to the movements and habits of the editor. This open love-making strikes us as a little indecent; it would be better done behind a veil. And what do the authorities hope to gain by these

unique researches? Do they hope to see either bombs or packets of sedition being carried into the building? Or is a leader of public agitation likely to convert his newspaper office or his house into an open resort of secret conspirators? Even a bureaucracy ought to credit its political opponents with some little common sense, even if they cannot credit them with honesty of motive and frankness of action.

### **Convention Voyagers**

We understand that some seven or eight faithful hearts are meditating the journey to Lahore to assist Mr. Madan Mohan Malaviya in carrying out Sir Pherozshah's orders. We wish them a good voyage and a speedy repentance. One wonders, by the way, where the delegates of the Convention are going to start up from at the last moment. We watch in vain for the news of numerous elections all over the country. Secret conclaves, hushed-up quarrels, sittings with silent visitors, and, finally, secret elections seem to be the best features of convention politics! Or are the delegates ashamed of publishing their names?

## Creed and Constitution

THE ATTEMPT to bring about the unity of the two parties in Bengal as a preliminary to the holding of a United Congress has split on the twin rocks of creed and constitution. We will place before the country as succinctly as possible the issues which were posited during the negotiations and state clearly the Nationalist attitude, leaving it to Bengal to judge between us and the upholders of the Convention's creed and constitution. We ask our countrymen to consider whether the concessions we made were not large and substantial and the single concession offered to us worthless and nugatory, whether the reservations we made were not justifiable and necessary, except on the view that principles are of no value in politics, and, if they come to the conclusion that the proposals we made were fair and moderate, we ask them to absolve us of all responsibility for the failure of the negotiations.

The terms offered by the Moderate party were based on a compromise framed at the *Amrita Bazar* Office last year which has since been rejected by the Moderates in one of its most important features, namely, the insistence on the acceptance of the four Calcutta resolutions as an indispensable condition of union. The Moderate proposal was that the Nationalists should sign the creed unconditionally and accept the Conventionist constitution, but that the Bombay leaders should be asked to consent to the formation of a Committee this year at Lahore to revise the Constitution and pass it as revised at the next session. The terms of the revision would naturally be left to that Committee and if it were equally composed of Nationalists and Moderates, there would have been some value in the concession. But by a rule of the Moderate constitution all Associations not of three years' standing would be debarred from sending delegates. The formation of the Nationalists into

a distinct party was only completed in the year 1906, that is precisely three years ago, and the rule was evidently framed in order to help in making impossible the election of Nationalist delegates. At the time the rule was framed there was not and could not be any association of our party with the requisite qualification, and such bodies as would have been qualified now, have mostly perished in the storm of repression which broke on the Nationalists after the unnatural alliance between coercive conciliation and an Indian progressive party previous to the Surat Congress, — an alliance not then declared, but sufficiently proved by the conduct and utterances of Sir Pherozshah Mehta and Mr. Gokhale then and after. It is evident, therefore, that if we accepted the Moderate constitution apart from its utter illegality, we should be consenting to our own exclusion by an electoral device worthy of Lord Morley himself, even though the front door might be nominally open to us. Only an insignificant number of Nationalists would be able to qualify as delegates and the Revision Committee would be a Moderate Committee and the revision a mere modification of unessential details. The concession therefore was nugatory, as illusory as the Reforms offered to us by bureaucratic benignity. On the other hand, the Nationalists were expected to sign a creed which they could not uphold as their own conscientious belief, to recognise an unconstitutional constitution and to leave the four resolutions to the chances of a Moderate Subjects Committee and the possible prohibition of their amendments by a Mehta or Malaviya.

The Nationalist members of the Committee rejected these impossible demands and submitted proposals of their own on each of the three main points at issue. They consented to accept the first Article of the Moderate Constitution which declared the objects of the Congress to be self-government and the acquisition of the rights of British citizenship; they refused to accept the second Article which requires every representative elected by the people to subscribe personally to these objects as a pre-condition of entering the pandal as a delegate. They refused to accept the Constitution as a Constitution, but they consented

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to accept it as a set of provisional rules allowed by mutual agreement to govern Congress proceedings until a real Constitution was passed next year, provided that the rule limiting the right of election to Associations of three years' standing which accepted the creed, should be made inoperative by the same mutual agreement. They agreed not to press the four resolutions as a precondition of union, provided they received an assurance that they should not be debarred from bringing them in the Subjects Committee and, if necessary, in the Congress itself. The Moderates rejected the proposal; they demanded unconditional acceptance and subscription to the creed as the indispensable basis of union. Yet the Nationalists had really conceded everything which the other party could reasonably expect. They accepted a limited self-government as the object of the Congress, although they refused to accept it as their own, they accepted the Moderate Constitution with the exception of one subclause which meant the exclusion of Nationalist delegates; and made no farther stipulation that it should be changed in any way previous to being passed as the real legal Constitution of the Congress; they consented to leave over the question of the four resolutions, reserving only their constitutional right to move them in Subjects Committee and in Congress. We ask, could anything have been fairer, more generous, more thoroughly pervaded by the desire to bring about unity even at the cost of substantial, indeed immense concessions?

Our attitude with regard to the creed has been consistent throughout. We accepted the Colonial self-government resolution at Calcutta in 1906 because we saw that it was the opinion of the majority. We accepted it at Pabna and Hughly because it was the opinion of an influential minority whom we did not wish to alienate. If we had been asked to subscribe to it as a creed or even as the objects of the Congress in 1906, we should have at once and emphatically refused. At Pabna the Moderates did not venture to demand any such subscription from the delegates, they did not ask it at Hughly. They knew very well that the demand would have been indignantly repudiated by Bengal. We now go farther and consent to accept it as the objects of

the Congress, to be only altered when all India wishes to alter it, for that is the provision in the Moderate Constitution. We propose to accept it and adhere to it in the same spirit, either as the opinion of the majority or as a necessary concession to secure the adhesion of an influential minority. It is a political accommodation, nothing else. To consent to Article II, which is a clause of exclusion limiting popular election, is a very different matter. The Moderate argument was that it is not a creed we are asked to sign, but merely a declaration of acceptance of the objects of the Congress and that it need not in any way limit or modify our speech and action except for the few hours spent in the Congress pandal. Apart from the very doubtful political honesty of such a distinction, we do not believe that it is the view of the creed held in other parts of India and in practice it could not work. The District Associations and the political Associations electing delegates to the Congress are expected by the Moderate Constitution to subscribe to the Congress creed or statement of objects and, if they utter or allow their prominent members to utter sentiments or pass resolutions inconsistent with it, the Congress would have a right to feel embarrassed and stigmatise the departure as double dealing. This is the reason why we have always opposed the limitation of the aims or beliefs of the Congress by any hard and fast rule. We would oppose it even if the creed were a declaration of the Nationalist faith. Such a limitation deprives the Congress of its free and representative character, it hampers aspiration and public opinion, it puts a premium on political hypocrisy. Even if we allow the argument of the Bengal Moderates, our fundamental objection to Article II is not removed. It is an exclusory clause, it limits the right of the people to elect any representative they choose, it sets up an authority over the electorate in the same way as the exclusory clauses of the Government Reform Councils Regulations, it is a sort of Congress Test Act arbitrary and undemocratic. The true democratic principle is that the man elected by the people must be recognised as a delegate, whatever his opinions. We shall always oppose any restriction of the freedom of election by the Government; how can we consistently do so, if we recognise

a restriction in a popular assembly of our own making? And if this principle of exclusion is once admitted, where is it to stop? What guarantees us against the future introduction of a new clause demanding the signing of a declaration renouncing Boycott and passive resistance as a precondition of entrance into the pandal?

It will be seen therefore that from whatever point of view it is taken, the refusal to accept Article II of the Convention rules was not only reasonable, but the Nationalists could not have taken any other course without committing political and moral suicide. The reasonableness of our position on the two other points is self-evident and need not be argued. The refusal of these liberal concessions even by the Bengal Moderates shows that the holding of a united Congress is impossible. The argument that the Convention cannot accept such terms, only shows that the Convention can never be the basis of a united Congress and that, while it exists, a united Congress is out of the question. Before, therefore, any farther steps can be taken in that direction, we must await the collapse of the Convention which we believe to be not far distant. The Nationalist party have stated the terms on which alone they will consent to a compromise, and they will not lower them, neither will they renew negotiations until either the Convention is dead and buried or the Moderate leaders give up their attachment to the Convention creed and constitution.

## To My Countrymen

**T**WO DECISIVE incidents have happened which make it compulsory on the Nationalist party to abandon their attitude of reserve and expectancy and once more assume their legitimate place in the struggle for Indian liberties. The Reforms, so long trumpeted as the beginning of a new era of constitutional progress in India, have been thoroughly revealed to the public intelligence by the publication of the Councils Regulations and the results of the elections showing the inevitable nature and composition of the new Councils. The negotiations for the union of Moderates and Nationalists in a United Congress have failed owing to the insistence of the former on the Nationalists subscribing to a Moderate profession of faith.

The survival of Moderate politics in India depended on two factors, the genuineness and success of the promised Reforms and the use made by the Conventionists of the opportunity given them by the practical suppression of Nationalist public activity. The field was clear for them to establish the effectiveness of the Moderate policy and the living force of the Moderate party. Had the Reforms been a genuine initiation of constitutional progress, the Moderate tactics might have received some justification from events. Or had the Moderates given proof of the power of carrying on a robust and vigorous agitation for popular rights, their strength and vitality as a political force might have been established, even if their effectiveness had been disproved. The Reforms have shown that nothing can be expected from persistence in Moderate politics except retrogression, disappointment and humiliation. The experience of the last year has shown that, without the Nationalists at their back, the Moderates are impotent for opposition and robust agitation. The political life of India in their hands has languished and fallen silent.

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By the incontrovertible logic of events it has appeared that the success and vigour of the great movement inaugurated in 1905 was due to the union of Moderate and Nationalist on the platform of self-help and passive resistance. It was in order to provide an opportunity for the reestablishment of this union, broken at Surat, that the Nationalists gathered in force at Hughly in order to secure some basis and means of negotiation which might lead to united effort. The hand which we held out, has been rejected. The policy of Lord Morley has been to rally the Moderates and coerce the Nationalists; the policy of the Moderate party led by Mr. Gokhale and Sir Pherozshah Mehta has been to play into the hands of that policy and give it free course and a chance of success. This alliance has failed of its object; the beggarly reward the Moderates have received, has been confined to the smallest and least popular elements in their party. But the rejection of the alliance with their own countrymen by the insistence on creed and constitution shows that the Moderates mean to persist in their course even when all motive and political justification for it have disappeared. Discomfited and humiliated by the Government, they can still find no way to retrieve their position nor any clear and rational course to suggest to the Indian people whom they misled into a misunderstanding of the very limited promises held out by Lord Morley.

Separated from the great volume of Nationalist feeling in the country, wilfully shutting its doors to popularity and strength by the formation of electorates as close and limited as those of the Reformed Councils, self-doomed to persistence in a policy which has led to signal disaster, the Convention is destined to perish of inanition and popular indifference, dislike and opposition. If the Nationalists stand back any longer, either the national movement will disappear or the void created will be filled by a sinister and violent activity. Neither result can be tolerated by men desirous of their country's development and freedom.

The period of waiting is over. We have two things made clear to us, first, that the future of the nation is in our hands, and, secondly, that from the Moderate party we can expect no

cordial co-operation in building it. Whatever we do, we must do ourselves, in our own strength and courage. Let us then take up the work God has given us, like courageous, steadfast and patriotic men willing to sacrifice greatly and venture greatly because the mission also is great. If there are any unnerved by the fear of repression, let them stand aside. If there are any who think that by flattering Anglo-India or coquetting with English Liberalism they can dispense with the need of effort and the inevitability of peril, let them stand aside. If there are any who are ready to be satisfied with mean gains or unsubstantial concessions, let them stand aside. But all who deserve the name of Nationalists, must now come forward and take up their burden.

The fear of the law is for those who break the law. Our aims are great and honourable, free from stain or reproach, our methods are peaceful, though resolute and strenuous. We shall not break the law and, therefore, we need not fear the law. But if a corrupt police, unscrupulous officials or a partial judiciary make use of the honourable publicity of our political methods to harass the men who stand in front by illegal ukases, suborned and perjured evidence or unjust decisions, shall we shrink from the toll that we have to pay on our march to freedom? Shall we cower behind a petty secrecy or a dishonourable inactivity? We must have our associations, our organisations, our means of propaganda, and, if these are suppressed by arbitrary proclamations, we shall have done our duty by our motherland and not on us will rest any responsibility for the madness which crushes down open and lawful political activity in order to give a desperate and sullen nation into the hands of those fiercely enthusiastic and unscrupulous forces that have arisen among us inside and outside India. So long as any loophole is left for peaceful effort, we will not renounce the struggle. If the conditions are made difficult and almost impossible, can they be worse than those our countrymen have to contend against in the Transvaal? Or shall we, the flower of Indian culture and education, show less capacity and self-devotion than the coolies and shopkeepers who are there rejoicing to suffer for the honour of their nation and the welfare of their community?

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What is it for which we strive? The perfect self-fulfilment of India and the independence which is the condition of self-fulfilment are our ultimate goal. In the meanwhile such imperfect self-development and such incomplete self-government as are possible in less favourable circumstances, must be attained as a preliminary to the more distant realisation. What we seek is to evolve self-government either through our own institutions or through those provided for us by the law of the land. No such evolution is possible by the latter means without some measure of administrative control. We demand, therefore, not the monstrous and misbegotten scheme which has just been brought into being, but a measure of reform based upon those democratic principles which are ignored in Lord Morley's Reforms, — a literate electorate without distinction of creed, nationality or caste, freedom of election unhampered by exclusory clauses, an effective voice in legislation and finance and some check upon an arbitrary executive. We demand also the gradual devolution of executive government out of the hands of the bureaucracy into those of the people. Until these demands are granted, we shall use the pressure of that refusal of co-operation which is termed passive resistance. We shall exercise that pressure within the limits allowed us by the law, but apart from that limitation the extent to which we shall use it, depends on expediency and the amount of resistance we have to overcome.

On our own side we have great and pressing problems to solve. National education languishes for want of moral stimulus, financial support, and emancipated brains keen and bold enough to grapple with the difficulties that hamper its organisation and progress. The movement of arbitration, successful in its inception, has been dropped as a result of repression. The Swadeshi-Boycott movement still moves by its own impetus, but its forward march has no longer the rapidity and organised irresistibility of forceful purpose which once swept it forward. Social problems are pressing upon us which we can no longer ignore. We must take up the organisation of knowledge in our country, neglected throughout the last century. We must free our social and economic development from the incubus of the

litigious resort to the ruinously expensive British Courts. We must once more seek to push forward the movement toward economic self-sufficiency, industrial independence.

These are the objects for which we have to organise the national strength of India. On us falls the burden, in us alone there is the moral ardour, faith and readiness for sacrifice which can attempt and go far to accomplish the task. But the first requisite is the organisation of the Nationalist party. I invite that party in all the great centres of the country to take up the work and assist the leaders who will shortly meet to consider steps for the initiation of Nationalist activity. It is desirable to establish a Nationalist Council and hold a meeting of the body in March or April of the next year. It is necessary also to establish Nationalist Associations throughout the country. When we have done this, we shall be able to formulate our programme and assume our proper place in the political life of India.

AUROBINDO GHOSE

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The National Value of Art VI

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Perishing Convention

The Convention has met at Lahore and the fact that it could meet at all, has been hailed as a great triumph by the Anglo-Indian Press. But the success of this misbegotten body in avoiding immediate extinction has only served to show the marks of decay in every part of its being, and the loud chorus of eulogies streaming up from Anglo-India will not help to prolong its days. The miserable paucity of its numbers, the absence of great ovations to its leaders, the surroundings of stifling coldness, indifference and disapproval in the midst of which its orators perorated and resolved, have been too striking to be concealed. Even the *Statesman*, which is anxious to pass off this fiasco as a signal triumph for Moderatism and dwells on the enthusiasm and earnestness in the Bradlaugh Hall, — an enthusiasm and earnestness other reporters were unable to discover, — is obliged to admit the smallness of the circle to which these creditable feelings were confined. To this body calling itself the Indian National Congress how many delegates did the Indian nation send? The magnificent total of three hundred. From Bengal Sjs. Surendranath, Bhupendranath and A. Chaudhuri with less than half-a-dozen followers enriched Lahore with their presence; Madras could muster only twelve; the Central Provinces sent so

few that the reporters are ashamed to mention the number. The United Provinces sent, according to the *Amrita Bazar Patrika's* correspondent, about thirty; the Bombay number is not mentioned, but even the *Statesman* does not go beyond eighty; the rest came from the Punjab. Even the Anglo-Indian champion of Conventionism, estimating largely and on the basis of hopes and expectations, cannot raise the total to four hundred. The same paper takes refuge in the "huge concourse" of spectators, but, when it comes to actual facts, the huge concourse melts away into some hundreds of spectators, an estimate supported by the statement in the *Bengalee* that there were considerably more spectators than delegates. It is admitted that Bradlaugh Hall which cannot seat more than three thousand was far from being filled, the *Statesman* observing two wings of the Hall to be quite empty and other accounts reporting the Hall to be half empty. An allowance of some thousand spectators to watch the performances of the gallant three hundred in this Thermopylae of Moderatism, will be as liberal as the facts will allow. Could there be more damning evidence of the unpopularity of this pretentious body of well-to-do oligarchs electing themselves semi-secretly in close electorates of a handful of men and yet daring to call themselves the nation's Congress? The farce is almost over. The falsity of their pretensions has been shown up signally. The Convention will not dare again to meet in the Punjab; it will not come to Bengal; Nagpur, Amraoti and the Maharashtra are barred to it; and if the attendance from Madras is any sign, it will not be easy for it to command a following or an audience again in the Southern Presidency. What remains to Conventionism? Bombay city, Gujerat and the United Provinces are still open to them for a season. The abstention of a disgusted nation has passed sentence of death on this parody of the Indian National Congress.

### **The Convention President's Address**

The most remarkable feature of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's address is not what he said, but what he omitted to

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say. If the accounts telegraphed can be trusted, he said nothing about self-government, nothing about Swadeshi, — the Boycott, of course, the Convention has boycotted, — nothing about the Bengal deportees, only a few words about the Transvaal. The speech was really a speech about the Reforms and every other great question of Indian politics was ignored or neglected. The attitude of the Convention on the Reforms is marked by that open insincerity which is the hallmark of Moderate politics. The Convention resolution is made up of two parts, an ecstatic tribute of praise and gratitude to the two Lords Morley and Minto, for their earnest and “arduous” endeavours, (note the grotesque absurdity of the language), in extending to the people of this country a “fairly liberal” measure of constitutional reform, and a detailed and damning indictment of the measure for restrictions and provisions which are “excessive and unfair”, “unjust, invidious and humiliating”, “arbitrary and unreasonable”, and for the “general distrust” of the educated classes and the “ineffective and unreal” composition of the non-official majority. If there is any meaning in language, the second part of the resolution gives the lie direct to the first. The language used is far stronger than any the *Karmayogin* has ever permitted itself to employ in its condemnation of the Reforms and, if the condemnation is at all justified by facts, the Reforms are a reactionary and not a progressive piece of legislation. And yet who is the chief mouthpiece of the Convention and the most damaging critic of the Reforms? A gentleman who has set the seal of approval on Lord Morley’s measure by entering the Council of his province as an elected member. Actions speak more strongly than words, and the Government of India care little for criticism in detail so long as they get acceptance of the whole. From the Viceroy down to the obscurest Anglo-Indian scribbler the appeal to the Moderates is to criticise details hereafter, if they choose, but to accept the Reforms, the perpetual division of the two Indian communities, the humiliation of the Hindus, the extrusion of the educated classes from their old leading position, the denial of the only true basis of self-government, — to let, as the *Indian Daily News* persuasively

puts it, by-gones be by-gones. Anglo-India pats Moderatism on the back and says in effect: "What if we have kicked you downstairs? Can't you be a good fellow and sit quietly on the bottom step until we take it in our heads to pull you up a little farther?" And Moderatism must comply if it wishes to be tolerated.

### **The Alleged Breach of Faith**

The Moderate critics are never tired of harping on the difference between Lord Morley's scheme and the Regulations and alleging or hinting that promises have been made to the ear which have been broken in the act. The *Statesman* very naturally resents the implied charge of breach of faith. We do not know what private hopes the Secretary of State may have held out to Mr. Gokhale or S. Surendranath Banerji, but, judging from Lord Morley's public utterances, we do not think the charge of a breach of faith can be for a moment sustained. He has never pretended that his reform was the granting of a democratic constitution or the first step towards Parliamentary self-government. On the contrary he distinctly stated that if he had thought his measure to be anything of the kind he would have immediately withdrawn it. All that he promised was a scheme by which Indian public opinion could be more liberally consulted, and there were from the beginning distinct indications that the Government would put its own meaning on the phrase and draw a distinction between Indian opinion and Indian educated opinion. If the Moderates chose to interpret this limited concession as the granting of a constitution and a new Magna Charta, neither Lord Morley nor Lord Minto are to blame for a deliberate and gratuitous self-deception and deception of the people. The complaint that the non-official majority is ineffective and unreal, means simply that it is not a popular majority. We do not think the Government ever promised a popular majority; they promised a non-official majority and they have given it. If the Moderates chose to believe that the Government would go out of its way to make the non-official majority a popular one, they have themselves to thank

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for this pitiful self-delusion, against which the Nationalists have been warning the country for some time past. The truth is that they have been utterly worsted in their diplomatic relations with British Liberalism and they are now trying to exculpate themselves before the public by throwing the blame on their allies. No English statesman can be condemned for trying to get the best of a diplomatic bargain of this kind; the loser must blame his own folly, not the good faith of the other party. Did not the Bengal Moderates recently propose a similar bargain to the Nationalists in the United Congress Committee's negotiations? And, if the Nationalists had been fools enough to agree, would they have been justified afterwards in quarrelling with the good faith of the Moderates merely because they themselves had chosen to enter the Convention on conditions which would have meant hopeless ineffectiveness in that body and political suicide outside? If infants in diplomacy choose to cherish an obstinate admiration for their own Machiavellian cleverness or mere bookmen who do not understand the A.B.C. of practical politics, elect to play the game with past masters of political statecraft, the result is a foregone conclusion. We have exposed over and over again the hollowness of the pretensions of this measure to figure as a great step forward in Indian administration or the beginning of a new progressive era in Indian politics, but we did not need the publication of the Regulations to open our eyes to this hollowness. Lord Morley's own statements, the nature of things and of humanity and the clauses of the Reform Bill itself were a sufficient guide to anyone with even an elementary knowledge of politics.

### **The Nasik Murder**

The tale of assassinations is evidently not at an end; and it is difficult to believe that it will be until a more normal condition of things has been restored. The sporadic and occasional character of these regrettable incidents is sufficient to prove that they are not the work of a widespread Terrorist organisation, but of individuals or small groups raw in organisation

and irresolute in action. The Anglo-Indian superstition of a great Revolutionary organisation like the Russian Revolutionary Committee is a romantic delusion. The facts are entirely inconsistent with it. What we see is that, where there is sporadic repression of a severe kind on the part of the authorities, there is sporadic retaliation on the part of a few youthful conspirators, perfectly random in its aim and objective. The Nasik murder is an act of terrorist reprisal for the dangerously severe sentence passed on the revolutionary versifier Savarkar. It is natural that there should have been many meetings in Maharashtra to denounce the assassination, but such denunciations do not carry us very far. They have no effect whatever on the minds of the men who are convinced that to slay and be slain is their duty to their country. The disease is one that can only be dealt with by removing its roots, not by denouncing its symptoms. The Anglo-Indian papers find the root in our criticism of Government action and policy and suggest the silencing of the Press as the best means of removing the root. If the Government believe in this antiquated diagnosis, they may certainly try the expedient suggested. Our idea is that it will only drive the roots deeper. We have ourselves, while strongly opposing and criticising the actions and policy of the bureaucracy, abstained from commenting on specific acts of repression, as we had no wish to inflame public feeling; but to silence Nationalism means to help Terrorism. Our view is that the only way to get rid of the disease is to disprove Mr. Gokhale's baneful teaching that violence is the only means of securing independence, to give the people hope in a peaceful and effective means of progress towards that ideal, which is now the openly or secretly cherished ideal of every Indian, and to that end to organise peaceful opposition and progress within the law. If the Government can retrace their steps and remove the ban from lawful passive resistance and self-help and the Nationalist party, while holding its ultimate political aim, will define its immediate objective within limits which a Radical Government can hereafter consider, we believe politics in India will assume a normal course under

normal conditions. We propose to do our part; we will see whether the Government think it worth their while to respond. They ought to be able to understand by this time that Nationalism and not Moderatism is the effective political force in India.

### **Transvaal and Bengal**

There are two crying grievances which have done more than anything else to embitter popular feeling against the authorities and in both cases the populations most directly affected have resorted to passive resistance as the only remedy open to them. The first is the gross and systematic oppression now being practised on the Indians in the Transvaal, the other the repression of national aspirations towards unity and self-development in Bengal, typified by Partition and Deportation. Nothing can be more inconsistent than the attitude taken by the Moderate Convention towards these two questions. They have telegraphed their sympathy with the heroic passive resistance of the Transvaal Indians; they have shown their sympathy with Bengal by boycotting our boycott. Eighteen thousand rupees were promised for the Transvaal Indians in the one scene of enthusiasm which relieved the depressed dullness of the proceedings, and although we have little hope that this spasmodic activity will be followed up by steady support, it is better than nothing. On the other hand the Bengal questions were left to be moved by Bengalis, the Partition to S<sup>j</sup>. Bhupendranath, the Deportations to Mr. A. Chaudhuri. A deputation was appointed by the Convention to proceed to lay the question of Partition once more before Lord Morley; and of whom, think you, the deputation is to consist? S<sup>j</sup>. Surendranath Banerji and S<sup>j</sup>. Bhupendranath Bose. Not a single Moderate deputy is forthcoming from the whole of India to support Bengal even to this extent in its bitter and arduous struggle. Yet men are not ashamed to go from Bengal as self-elected delegates to a Convention which has disowned and dishonoured Bengal and which Bengal has disowned.

### **Our Cheap Edition**

The difficulty felt by many students and educated men of small means in buying the *Karmayogin* at its ordinary price of two annas, has been so much pressed on our attention that we have found it necessary to bring out a cheaper edition at one anna a copy. It is not an easy thing in this country to establish a weekly review of this standard written in English, and it has therefore been necessary for us at the outset to place a price on the paper which should ensure its being self-supporting even with a limited circulation. The *Karmayogin*, however, is now sufficiently successful to allow of a concession of this kind being made without financial injury. The subscribers to the dearer edition will be compensated by the superior get-up and paper, while the cheaper edition will remove the grievance of the large number who have hitherto been debarred from reading the review by their scanty means.

## National Education

FROM the beginning of the national movement, in spite of its enthusiasm, force, innate greatness, a defect has made itself apparent, a fatality of insufficient effectiveness has pursued it, which showed that there was a serious flaw somewhere in this brilliant opening of a new era. The nature of that flaw has been made manifest by the period of trial in which, for a time, the real force which made for success has been temporarily withdrawn, so that the weaknesses still inherent in the nation might be discovered and removed. The great flaw was the attempt to combine the new with the old, to subject the conduct of the resurgence of India to the aged, the cautious, the hesitating, men out of sympathy with the spirit of the new age, unable to grasp the needs of the future, afraid to apply the bold and radical methods which could alone transform the nation, sweep out the rottenness in our former corrupt nature and, by purifying Bengal, purify India. It is now apparent that it was the Nationalist element which by its energy, courage, boldness of thought, readiness to accept the conditions of progress, gave the movement its force and vitality. Wherever that force has been withdrawn, the movement has collapsed. The older men have shown themselves utterly unable either to supply the moral force that would sustain the forward march of the nation or the brain-power to grapple with national problems. In Swadeshi the force of sentiment supplied, and the persistence of the great mass of silent nationalism in resisting any attempt to draw back from boycott has preserved, the movement to prefer indigenous and boycott foreign goods, but the withdrawal of active Nationalist endeavour has resulted in the stoppage of progress. Swadeshi maintains itself, it no longer advances. National Education languishes because the active force has been withdrawn from it; it

does not absolutely perish because a certain amount of Nationalist self-devotion has entrenched itself in this last stronghold and holds it against great odds under the most discouraging circumstances. A certain amount only, — because part of the active enthusiasm and self-sacrifice which created the movement, has been deliberately extruded from it in obedience to fear or even baser motives, part has abandoned it in disgust at the degeneration of the system in incapable hands and the rest is now finding its self-devotion baffled and deprived of the chance of success by the same incapacity and weakness at headquarters.

The National Council of Education, as it is at present composed, has convicted itself of entire incapacity whether to grasp the meaning of the movement or to preserve or create the conditions of its success. To the majority of the members it is merely an interesting academical experiment in which they can embody some of their pet hobbies or satisfy a general vague dissatisfaction with the established University system. To others the only valuable part of it is the technical instruction given in its workshops. The two or three who at all regard it as part of a great national movement, are unnerved by fear, scepticism and distrust and, by introducing the principles of Chanakya into its public policy, are depriving it of the first condition of its continued existence. It is folly to expect that the nation at large will either pay heavily or make great sacrifices merely to support an interesting academic experiment, still less to allow a few learned men to spoil the intellectual development of the race by indulging their hobbies at the public expense. That the people will not support a mere technical education divorced from that general humanistic training which is essential to national culture, has been sufficiently proved by the failure of Mr. Palit's Technical College to command adequate financial support. Unless this movement is carried on, as it was undertaken, as part of a great movement of national resurgence, unless it is made, visibly to all, a nursery of patriotism and a mighty instrument of national culture, it cannot succeed. It is foolish to expect men to make great sacrifices while discouraging their hope and enthusiasm.

It is not intellectual recognition of duty that compels sustained self-sacrifice in masses of men; it is hope, it is the lofty ardour of a great cause, it is the enthusiasm of a noble and courageous effort. It is amazing that men calling themselves educated and presuming to dabble with public movements should be blind to the fact that the success or failure of National Education is intimately bound up with and, indeed, entirely depends upon the fortunes of the great resurgence which gave it birth. They seem to labour under the delusion that it was an academical and not a national impulse which induced men to support this great effort, and they seek to save the institution from a premature death by exiling from it the enthusiasm that made it possible. They cannot ignore the service done by that enthusiasm, but they regard it merely as the ladder by which they climbed and are busy trying to kick it down. They are really shutting off the steam, yet expect the locomotive to go on.

The successful organisation of the Bengal National College in Calcutta was the work of its able and enthusiastic Superintendent aided by a body of young and self-sacrificing workers. The National Council which nominally controlled, in reality only hampered it; all that the Council contributed to the system, was its defects. The schools in the Mofussil were created by the enthusiasm of the Nationalist party, the propaganda of its leaders and the ardent self-devotion of little bands of workers who gave their self-sacrifice and enthusiasm to lay the foundations. The Nationalist Council has never lifted a single finger to help the Mofussil schools beyond doling out unsubstantial grants to maintain them merely as necessary feeders of the Calcutta institution. But unless a movement of this kind is supported by wise organisation and energetic propagandism emanating from an active central authority, it must soon sink under the weight of unsolved problems, unsurmounted difficulties and unamended defects. The curriculum of the Council is extraordinarily elaborate and expensive, and involves a great outlay for the formation of library, laboratory and workshops, and, arranged as it is on the vicious Western system of driving many subjects at a time into the growing intellect, is slow, cumbrous, a strain on the

mind of the students, wasteful of time, impossible without an unusual number of good teachers. The financial problem created is one of crushing difficulty, yet the Council think they have done their duty when they have created the problem and do not seem even to dream that there is any call on them to solve it. Even for the Calcutta College in whose maintenance they are more keenly interested, they can only make feeble and spasmodic efforts when, as annually happens, there is a deficit in the budget. The academical problem of teaching so many subjects in so short a time without outdoing the exploits of the Calcutta University as a brain-killing and life-shortening machine, does not seem to occur to these lofty and secluded minds. They are content with creating the problem and maintaining it by their system of examinations. Even if funds were forthcoming, there would still be the necessity of providing a regular and plentiful supply of teachers trained in an entirely new system of instruction. This urgent problem the Council has systematically ignored, and not even the elementary steps of establishing a Teachers' Training Class in Calcutta and issuing a series of suitable books in the vernacular has been attempted. The only problems which the Council seems willing to grapple with are, first, the problem of supporting National Education without incurring the wrath of the officials and, secondly, the problem of evading the spirit of the clause which forbids it to subject itself to any form of Government control, while observing the letter so as to prevent the invalidation of its endowments.

But if the National Council is content to fail in its duty, the country cannot be content to allow this great educational enterprise to perish. We do not know how or by whom the Council is elected. It seems to have followed the example of so many bodies in India which have started as democratic institutions and ended as close corporations self-electing and self-elected. But if it is impossible to alter the component character of this body and put into it keener blood and clearer brains, some other centre of effort must be created which will undertake to grapple with the problems of National Education, the supply of trained and self-devoted teachers and of books which will guide them

in the imparting of knowledge on new lines, the reawakening of interest, hope and enthusiasm in the country, the provision of the necessary funds to the mofussil schools, the forcing on the Council by the pressure of public opinion of a more rational and a more national system of teaching. But the first condition of success is the reawakening of the national movement all along the line, and this can only be done by the organisation and resolute activity of the Nationalist party.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Stead and Maskelyne  
Anandamath XII

# KARMAYOGIN

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of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

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## Facts and Opinions

### Sir Edward Baker's Admissions

Of all the present rulers of India Sir Edward Baker is the only one who really puts any value on public opinion. He has committed indiscretions of a startling character, he has loyally carried out a policy with which he can have no heartfelt sympathy, but his anxiety to conciliate public opinion even under these adverse circumstances betrays the uneasiness of a man who knows the force of that power even in a subject country and feels that the ruling class are not going the best way to carry that opinion with them. While all the other provincial Governors have confined their inaugural speeches to the most empty platitudes, he alone has sought to speak as a man would who feels the difficulties of a perplexing situation. But we do not think he has helped the Government by his speech. It is in fact a series of damaging admissions. He admits that the exclusion of the Calcutta men by the restrictions attending Municipal election is deliberate, and he cannot be ignorant that this means the exclusion of the leading brains and the most influential personalities in the country. He admits that the Government have taken care to preclude the chance of being face to face with a numerically strong and robust opposition in the Council. If so, the Councils are not a mirror of the political forces in the country, not a free popular

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assembly, but a carefully limited council of notables friendly to the existing state of things. Whether the Government are to blame or not for guarding their interests by this manipulation of electorates, is quite another question. All we say is that they have so guarded themselves and, as a result, these Councils may be the kind of advisory body the Government want, they are not the popular assemblies, mirrors of public opinion and instruments of rapid political development, which the people want. Sir Edward Baker says that no Government can be expected to run the risk of putting itself into a permanent minority, — such a state of things cannot be allowed for a day. We quite agree. That is what we have been telling the people for a very long time. Unfortunately, very different hopes and expectations were raised in the minds of Moderate politicians and communicated by them to the people at large. If the eulogies of the Reform Scheme and the benevolent intentions of Government had been couched in less glowing language, with less of misleading fervour, the present disappointment, irritation and revolt would have been avoided. It is much the best thing for a Government circumstanced like ours to be quite frank and say from the beginning, “This much we mean to give; farther you must not expect us to go.”

### **Calcutta and Mofussil**

The point which Sir Edward Baker, in common with all Anglo-Indian publicists, makes of the distinction between Calcutta and the Mofussil, is quite justifiable if the Councils are to be only a superior edition of the local Municipalities out of all relation with the political actualities of the country. It is an indisputable fact that a great deal of the best in the life of Bengal gravitates towards the capital and the Partition of Bengal has made no difference in this powerful tendency. Calcutta is to Bengal what Paris is to France. It is from Calcutta that Bengal takes its opinions, its inspirations, its leaders, its tone, its programme of action. One very important reason of this almost inalienable leadership is the greater independence which men enjoy in Calcutta, another is the higher organisation of life, resources, activity in this great

centre of humanity. So long as these causes exist, the supremacy of Calcutta will remain. The object of the electoral rules is to destroy the supremacy of the Calcutta men, whose independence and freedom of speech and action are distasteful to the instincts of the dominant bureaucrat. The attempt to decentralise the political life of Bengal is not new. In the earlier days of the new movement the Nationalist leaders made strenuous appeals to the Mofussil centres to liberate themselves from Calcutta domination and become equal partners in a better organised provincial activity. They thought it possible then because, in the first surge of the movement, the Mofussil centres in East Bengal had developed a young political vitality and independence far in excess of the old vitality and independence of Calcutta. But even in these favourable circumstances it was found that, though the districts far outran the capital in the swiftness and thoroughness of their activity, they always waited for an intellectual initiative and sanction from the leaders in Calcutta. Barisal under Sj. Aswini Kumar Dutta was the exception. What the people themselves could not accomplish under the most favourable circumstances, the Government is not likely to effect merely by excluding the Calcutta leaders from the Council. The very conditions of the problem forbid it. They can only disturb the present equilibrium by making political life in the Mofussil as free and well-organised as the life of Calcutta. By their own action they have destroyed such freedom and organisation as had been created. Nor can they make their Councils the instrument of so vital a change unless they also make them the centre of the political life of Bengal. This they can only do by a large literate electorate, free elections and effectiveness of the popular vote. But, at present, that is not what the bureaucrats desire. They do not desire a free and vigorous political life evenly distributed throughout the country, — that is the Nationalist ideal. They desire to foster a faint political life confined to the dignified and subservient elements in the country while killing the independent popular life, which finds its centre in this city, by an official boycott. They forget that artificial means are helpless against natural forces.

### The Non-Official Majority

Sir Edward complains strongly of the attribution of motives to the Government in the matter of the non-official majority. He argues in effect that the non-official majority cannot be described as unreal or a sham merely because the electorates are so arranged as to return a majority of men favourable to Government. The majority is a non-official majority, but it is not a popular majority. Sir Edward answers that it was never intended to be a popular majority. It was meant only to represent the "honest" public opinion which is capable in most things of seeing eye to eye with the Government; all the rest of public opinion is not honest and therefore unfit for representation. A most delightful specimen of bureaucratic logic! The plain question rising above all sophisms is this, is the Government aware or is it not that the great body of educated opinion in India demand a change in the system of Government involving popular control in the administration, a change which Lord Morley, with all Anglo-India to echo him, has declared impossible? If the Government doubts it, dare they take a plebiscite of literate opinion on the question? They dare not, because they know what the result will be. Is not this knowledge the reason for so manipulating the electorates that they shall mainly represent special interests easily influenced by the Government and not the mass of the literate population? We do not charge the Government with a breach of faith or a departure from their original promises. We do say that the Reforms are purely a diplomatic move to strengthen the Government and weaken the popular interest. Sir Edward stigmatises the popular sentiment which sees an opposition of interest all along the line between the bureaucracy and the people, as dishonest and unfit for self-government. What of the very fundamental opposition of interest we have pointed out? It is easy to fling epithets; it is not so easy to disprove facts. We do not wish to be unfair to anyone and we acknowledge that Sir Edward Baker has shown a liberality of purpose far superior to that of any other provincial ruler. If there were a chance of any of the Councils being a genuine popular assembly, Sir Edward's

creation would have the best chance. But it is not that and cannot be. If he is satisfied with its present composition, his admiration is not shared by the people of this country. He says in effect that it is quite as dignified as any previous Council. We agree, even more so. But it is not dignity to which popular sentiment is advancing, it is democracy. If the Councils do not provide a channel for the advance of that sentiment, it will seek other means of self-accomplishment.

### **Sir Louis Dane on Terrorism**

The amazing lecture given by the Satrap of the Punjab to the Maharaja of Darbhanga and the other gentlemen who were ill-advised enough to approach him with their expressions of loyalty and of abhorrence at the Nasik murder, is a sample of the kind of thing Moderate politicians may expect when they approach the bureaucracy with their "co-operation". What it is precisely that the various Satraps want of their long-suffering allies, we cannot conjecture. Some seem to want, like Sir George Clarke, the entire cessation of political agitation, because the political agitator is the spiritual granduncle of the political assassin. Others seem to want the entire Indian community to leave their ordinary avocations and turn detectives, in order to supply the deficiencies of that costly police force through which the bureaucracy governs the country. But Sir Louis Dane's diatribe seems difficult to account for except on the supposition that he is a disciple of Hare Street and believes that the whole population of India, from the Maharaja of Darbhanga to the grocer and the shoemaker, know the personality, intentions, plans and secret operations of the Terrorists and conceal them from the Government out of innate cussedness or invincible sympathy with the assassins. It is difficult to have patience with the insensate folly which persists in these delusions and, by lumping all political agitation into one category, does its best to bring about the calamity which it imagines. The fewer rulers like Sir Louis there are in this country, the better for the nation and the Government; for they are the best allies that Terrorism has.

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### The Menace of Deportation

Once more rumours of deportation are rife, proceeding this time from those pillars of authority, the police. It seems that these gentlemen have bruited it abroad that twenty-four men prominent and unprominent are within the next six or seven days to be deported from Bengal, and so successfully has the noise of the coming *coup d'état* been circulated that the rumour of it comes to us from a distant corner of Behar. It appears that the name of S<sup>r</sup>. Aurobindo Ghose crowns the police list of those who are to be spirited away to the bureaucratic Bastilles. The offence for which this inclusion is made, is, apparently, that he criticises the Government, by which we presume it is meant that he publicly opposes the Reforms. It is difficult to judge how much value is to be attached to the rumour, but we presume that at least a proposal has been made. If we are not mistaken, this will make the third time that the deportation of the Nationalist leader has been proposed by the persistence of the police. The third time is supposed to be lucky, and let us hope it will be the last. The Government ought to make up its mind one way or the other, and the country should know, whether they will or will not tolerate opposition within the law; and this will decide it. Meanwhile, why does the thunderbolt linger? Or is there again a hitch in London?

## A Practicable Boycott

**B**OYCOTT is an ideal, like freedom; it means independence in industry and commerce, as freedom means independence in administration, legislation and finance. But it is not always possible to accomplish the whole of the ideal by the first effort towards it. So long as we cherish the ideal whole and unbroken, we are at liberty to consult the demands of practicability and realise it, not at one rush, but by successive approximations, each being the vantage-ground for a fresh rush forward. This does not imply slow progress, the leisurely and gentlemanlike spreading out of the struggle for freedom through five or six centuries in order to avoid the perils of the struggle; it is rather the necessary condition of rapid progress. The force of the hunger for the whole ideal, of impatience with half realisations must remain behind, but the means of each advance must be secured by that which went before.

When the boycott movement first began, it was the opinion of Mr. Tilak and other Nationalist leaders that the exclusion of foreign goods should be directed against British products first of all. The immediate exclusion of all foreign goods was obviously impracticable. But very soon it became evident that the voice of the whole nation in Bengal and Maharashtra was for the more comprehensive movement, and the leaders wisely put aside their own opinion and made themselves simply executors of the national will. Wisely, because at such times there is something divinely inspired in the motions of the national mind which exceeds the human wisdom and statecraft of the individual. It was and remains true that the exclusion of all foreign goods is an impracticable measure in the present economical condition of India. But the comprehensive boycott movement was necessary, — first, in order that the ideal might be stamped deep into the consciousness of the people; and that has been done by the

very acts of repression which were largely designed, as admitted by Mr. Hobhouse, to crush the Swadeshi Boycott movement; — secondly, in order that the idea of India's separate and self-sufficient existence as a nation might thoroughly replace the habit of dependence and contented economical servitude which English education and the effacement of political life had induced. That work also is done. The idea of Swadeshi has entered into the very marrow of our thought and feeling. It is therefore time now to consider the practical measures by which boycott may be made gradually and steadily successful.

Boycott is essentially a form of voluntary protection and it cannot do more than protection does towards the creation of industries. Protection serves two ends; it prevents the infant industry from being strangled in its weak unestablished state by full-grown and powerful competitors, it gives a stimulus to it by assuring it a market. It cannot supply the place of enterprise, business capacity, naturally favourable conditions. It can however mitigate the incidence of natural conditions, not entirely but comparatively unfavourable, by throwing a countervailing disadvantage into the scale of the more favourably circumstanced competing country. This is the limit of the utility of protection; it is also the limit of the utility of boycott. What boycott could do for the cloth industry, it has done, but for the producer to lean entirely on boycott and expect it to take the place of business enterprise, energy, capacity, the improvement of his goods, is to lay a burden on the national spirit which it is neither possible nor desirable that it should bear. The nation agrees to purchase an inferior indigenous article in place of a superior foreign article, not with the intention that the producer should be excused the necessity of improvement and should be able to force the inferior article on us to all eternity, but solely to give him time to improve his methods, his processes, his machinery, his dexterity in spite of the competition of his superior rival. It saves him from extinction, it gives him a period of grace; he must use it to reach and outdistance the excellence of his rival's methods and production, and if he neglects this duty he does it at his peril and it is not open to him to cry out against the want of patriotism

in the people because they withdraw a support which he has abused. The nation, again, agrees to deny itself necessities or restrict the quantity of its purchase, not with the intention of permanently lowering its standard of comfort and living a barer and more meagre life, but in order to give time for capital and enterprise to increase the supply, so that eventually the wants of the nation may be supplied from within. If it is found that there is not an expansion of industry commensurate with the self-denial in the nation and that only a few businessmen are exploiting the national sentiment for their own personal profit, it is idle to expect the boycott to survive. We have noticed signs of a most unhealthy spirit of mutual trade jealousy among Swadeshi mill-owners, who seem to be under the impression that they are natural rivals for the patronage of the consumer. No single Indian producer can monopolise the supply necessary for national consumption, nor can even the whole body of Indian producers combined, at present, meet the demand. One Indian mill-owner gets nothing by the decline of another; on the contrary, his prosperity is bound up in the prosperity of all other Indian mills; for the maintenance of the boycott, which saved the mill industry at a crisis of its destinies, depends on the increased supply of Swadeshi cloth. Instead of attempting to rise by pressing each other down, it would be far better for the Indian producers to follow the example of English manufacturers and combine for the welfare of the national industry.

The first condition of a successful boycott, therefore, is the organisation of national industry with a view, first, to the improvement and extension of that which exists, secondly, to the opening up of new lines of enterprise. This is largely a work for the producer himself, but there is one duty which the leaders of the national movement can perform and that is to organise information. The nature of the industries that can be profitably opened in India, the unfavourable circumstances, the favourable, the means of obviating or mitigating the former, utilising and improving the latter, the conditions of success, the cost of outlay and management, this is the information that capital and enterprise need; the Swadeshi articles that can be procured, the

place of their manufacture, their price, quality and supply, this is the information needed by the consumer. To organise all this information would be to give a great stimulus to the advance of Swadeshi.

The second condition of a successful boycott is the organisation of supply. It is not possible for everyone to hunt Swadeshi articles to their source and purchase them. There must be a supplying agency which brings the goods to a near and convenient market and, as far as possible, to the doors of the people. The difficulty of supply is grievously felt in many parts of Bengal; but there is no one whose duty it is to consider the difficulty and meet it. Swadeshi is in danger of being stifled under the mass of spurious goods, foreign masking as indigenous, which the dishonest methods of European commerce pour into the country. There is no one to consider the problem of baffling this flank attack and devise methods of assuring the consumer that he gets the article which he wants. The organisation of a genuine and sufficient supply is the second condition of a practicable boycott.

These measures will help the growth of Swadeshi, but by themselves they can only partially serve the wider national aim which is the heart of the great movement commenced in 1905, the industrial independence of the Indian people. There is no doubt that the great mass of the Indian people cherish this aspiration and would willingly follow any practicable means of bringing it into the list of accomplished ideals. Previous to the great movement in Bengal this idea had been twice put into motion and produced a certain result, but the idea then was absolute abstention from all purchase of articles not genuinely Indian. Such a self-denial may be possible for the individual, it is not possible for great masses of men. The good sense of the nation therefore qualified the vow of abstinence by the proviso that it should be "as far as possible". This, however, is a vague and fluid phrase. It has to be made precise if the movement is to advance from its purely idealistic character and put on the garb of practicability. Some attempt has been made to define it. The boycott of cloth, salt and sugar was made absolute; machinery,

medicines, objects of art and literature were exempted. But this was largely an empirical division based neither on a consideration of immediate possibility, nor on a reasoned policy. As a matter of fact the boycott of foreign sugar has hopelessly broken down, the boycott of cloth has had a partial success qualified by the necessity of taking yarn for Swadeshi cloth from England. A more practical definition is necessary.

The first principle we would suggest is to make a clear division between articles of necessity, interpreting the word in a broad sense, and articles of luxury and to have an absolute interdict of the latter unless they are of indigenous manufacture. The first reason for the interdict is that many articles of luxury are produced in India, but find it difficult to maintain themselves because they depend on the patronage of the rich, who are wedded to European vulgarity and want of taste in the appointments of their life. The poorer classes cannot indulge in luxuries; the middle class, in the present condition of the country, should not. An organised preference of Swadeshi arts and crafts by the rich would revive and stimulate a great source of national wealth and reopen a field of national capacity. Articles of necessity can be divided into those indispensable for life and a decent existence and those necessary for our work and business. In the former we can always prefer an inferior but usable indigenous article, in the latter no such self-denying ordinance can be imposed. I cannot be called upon to use an article or implement which cripples my business or puts me at a serious disadvantage with my competitor, merely because it is produced in the country, just as in my own home I cannot be called upon to use a pen which will not write, a lamp which will not give light, a cup which cracks and breaks after a few days' use. But if the home article is usable or if the business implement is only slightly inferior to its foreign rival, then it would be unpatriotic and a violation of the boycott oath to prefer the foreign to the indigenous production. On these lines we believe a rational and workable meaning could be put on the proviso "as far as possible" which would not put too great a strain on human nature and could yet form the basis of an effective and practical protection of Indian

industry. A similar concession would have to be made in the case of Swadeshi articles which are too dear for the purse of the poorer classes, but there is no reason why the richer members of the community should not extend their protection to those industries which are compelled for the present to exceed greatly the foreign cost of production and yet have a future before them.

It will be evident therefore that, however far we may carry the boycott individually, there are limits which the mass of men cannot exceed. A considerable number of foreign articles must be purchased even for home consumption, still more for work and business. The question is, cannot this inevitable resort to the foreigner be so regulated as to assist materially the progress of the boycott and prepare the future industrial independence of the nation? This is the subject we propose to consider in our next issue.

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Patiala Case

The Patiala case has developed a real objective, which is the destruction of the Arya Samaj, the men arrested being merely pawns in the game. The speech of the Counsel for the prosecution, Mr. Grey, in no way sets out an ordinary case against individuals, nor is there any passage in it which gives any light as to particular evidence against the persons on their trial, but from beginning to end it is an arraignment of the Arya Samaj as a body whose whole object, semi-open rather than secret, is the subversion of British rule. Mr. Norton, taking advantage of the presence of S<sup>r</sup>. Aurobindo Ghose in the dock, attempted to build up in the Alipur case an elaborate indictment of the whole national movement as a gigantic conspiracy, but he did not neglect the individual cases and made some attempt to conceal the extrajudicial object of his oratory by a continual reference to actual evidence, relevant or irrelevant, in the case. Mr. Grey has not given himself that trouble. The political character of his advocacy is open and avowed. But he follows his Calcutta precursor in the ludicrous jumps of his logic from trivial premises to gigantically incongruous conclusions, in his heroic attempt to make bricks out of straw. His chief arguments are that the Arya Samajists read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee*,

— to say nothing of the long defunct *Bande Mataram*, — and that some of the prominent members of the Arya Samaj are politicians and yet remain members of the Arya Samaj. The perfectly general interpretations by Swami Dayananda of the Vedic view of politics, are the basis of his attack, and even the vehement character of the great reformer's polemics against other religions, the orthodox Hindu included, are pressed into the service of this unique argument. And all this is used to prejudice men under trial on a serious charge. Mr. Norton trifled with the traditions of the British bar by his pressing of trivial and doubtful evidence against the accused in the Alipur case, but it seems to us that Mr. Grey has departed still farther from those lofty traditions. And what if the Patiala Court decides that the Arya Samaj is a seditious body, seditious in origin, seditious in intention, seditious in action? Will the Government proscribe as an illegal association this wealthy, powerful and highly organised community containing more than half the brains and activity of the Punjab? Already the charge has been made that by giving special privileges to the Mahomedans, the Government have abandoned definitely the principle of religious neutrality on which their rule has hitherto been founded. The present Governor of the Punjab is possibly capable of such a step, — after the whitewashing of the Police in the Gulab Bano case and his speech to the Loyalist deputation, we can believe him capable of any rash and headstrong step. Fortunately, there is little likelihood that Mr. Grey's oratory will be any more effective than Mr. Norton's.

### The Arya Samaj and Politics

We have received a communication from a member of the Samaj in which he puts to us certain pointed questions relating to the aims, character and works of the Samaj and of its founder's teachings. We have not that direct and firsthand knowledge which would enable us to answer these questions with any authority. But on the general question our views are known. Aryaism is not an independent religion. It is avowedly an

attempt to revive the Vedic religion in its pristine purity. The Vedic religion is a national religion, and it embraces in its scope all the various activities of the national life. Swami Dayananda as a restorer of Vedicism included the theory of politics in his scope and revealed the intensely national character of the Hindu religion and morality. His work was avowedly a work of national regeneration. In dealing with the theory of politics as based on the Vedic religion he had naturally to include the truth that independence is the true and normal condition of a nation and all lapse into subjection must be a sin and degeneration, temporary in its nature. No man can deny this great truth. Freedom is the goal of humanity and Aryaism was in its nature a gospel of freedom, individual freedom, social freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom in all things, and the accomplishment of such an all-pervading liberation cannot come about without bringing national freedom in its train. If to perceive these truths of Vedism and of nature is to be political and seditious, then Swami Dayananda's teaching was political and seditious and the religion he preached may be stigmatised as political and seditious. But if sedition be limited to its proper meaning, an attempt by illegal and violent means to bring about the fall of the established authority or prepare by word or action lawless opposition and revolution, then there is no sedition in the Swami's preaching or in the belief and actions of the Arya Samaj. They use the perfectly legitimate means of strengthening the national life at all points and their objective is national regeneration through an active and free religion, not political revolution. Individual members may be Loyalists, Moderates, Nationalists, even Terrorists, but a religious body is not responsible for the political opinions of its individual members. The religious teaching of Swami Dayananda was inspired by national motives, not political; and the aims of the Arya Samaj are national, not political.

### **The Arya Disclaimer**

The leaders of the Arya Samaj have issued a manifesto disclaiming the political motives attributed to them by the Counsel for

the Prosecution in his extraordinary opening address at Patiala. But is there any use in these repeated disclaimers? To a certain type of official mind, not in the minority in this country, every movement, body, organ of opinion or centre of activity that makes for national strength, efficiency or manhood is by that very fact suspect and indeed self-convicted as seditious and its very existence a crime to be punished by the law. The Governor of the Punjab is either himself an official of this class or swayed by advisers of that temper. Under such circumstances it is enough to issue once for all a strong and dignified repudiation of the charge and then proceed calmly with the great work the Samaj has undertaken, serenely strong and unperturbed in good fortune or evil fortune, good report or evil report, confident in God's grace and the spiritual force communicated by the founder. This is the only course worthy of a manly community professing a robust and virile religion. Anxious repetition of unheeded disclaimers seems to us undignified and futile.

### What Is Seditious?

The question, what is sedition, one of those Chinese puzzles which it seems impossible to solve, nevertheless presses for solution. In Nagpur it has been established that to laugh at the holder of a Government title is sedition. In the Swaraj Case Justice Chandavarkar has declared it to be the law that to condemn terrorism in strong language and trace it to its source is sedition. At Patiala it is contended that to read the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and the *Punjabee* is sedition. We are not quite sure that at Patiala the prosecuting counsel did not hint that to bring Christianity or Mahomedanism into contempt or hatred is sedition. And we have these remarkable cases in the Punjab, where to translate Seeley's *Expansion of England* or Mr. Bryan's opinion of British rule in India seems to have a fair chance of being established as sedition. Mr. Stead's *Review of Reviews* is now known to be a seditious publication. We are not sure, either, that the *Indian Daily News* is not even worse, for it is continually trying to bring the police, who are

an indispensable part of the Government established by law, into contempt and hatred, and the incorrigible persistence of its efforts is sufficient proof of motive, if not of conspiracy. Now one of the charges against a Punjab accused is that he wrote impugning the character of the subordinate police service — just like the *Indian Daily News* or Sir Andrew Fraser. We would suggest that Sir Andrew Fraser should be arrested in England and brought here to answer to the outraged police for the remarks passed by the Police Commission. The reasoning is perfectly fair. Any strong criticism, especially if it is persistent, lowers the reputation of the Government and creates in people a tendency to belittle, that is to say, have a contempt for authority established by law. It is still worse if the Government is accused of injustice, say, in the matter of the deportations or the Gulab Bano case; for that inevitably creates hatred. Therefore strong criticism of the Government is sedition. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* and *Punjabee* strongly criticise the Government. Therefore they are seditious papers and their readers seditious conspirators. Every official is a member of the Government established by law; therefore to criticise strongly an official or a policeman, still more, officials or policemen as a class, is sedition. Christianity is the religion of the Government established by law; to criticise Christianity is to bring Christians into contempt; the Government are Christians; therefore to criticise Christianity is to bring the Government established by law into contempt. That is sedition. Therefore to criticise Christianity is sedition. To say that repression fosters Terrorism may be true, but it is seditious. To suggest a Press censorship, seriously or ironically, is to bring the administration of the law of sedition into contempt, that is, to bring the administrators into contempt; and the administrators are the Government established by law. Therefore Mr. Stead's Open Letter to Lord Morley is seditious. We are almost afraid to go on, lest, finally, we should end by proving that the *Englishman* itself is an intolerably seditious rag, — for does it not try to bring Sir Edward Baker and the Government generally into contempt by intimating genially that they are liars, idiots and good-for-

nothing weaklings, — in connection with the Reforms and their unwillingness to put the whole population of India into prison? Would it not save trouble to prohibit speech or writing in India altogether?

## A Thing that Happened

IT IS not the policy of the *Karmayogin* to dwell on incidents whether of the present administration of the country or of the relations between the ruling caste and the people. To criticise persistently the frequent instances of highhandedness and maladministration inevitable under a regime like the present does not lead to the redress of grievances; all that it does is to create a prejudice against the reigning bureaucracy. The basis of our claim to Swaraj is not that the English bureaucracy is a bad or tyrannical Government; a bureaucracy is always inclined to be arrogant, self-sufficient, self-righteous and unsympathetic, to ignore the abuses with which it abounds, and a bureaucracy foreign and irresponsible to the people is likely to exhibit these characteristics in an exaggerated form. But even if we were ruled by a bureaucracy of angels, we should still lay claim to Swaraj and move towards national self-sufficiency and independence. On the same principle we do not notice or lay stress on the collisions between Englishmen and Indians which are an inevitable result of the anomalous and unnatural relations existing between the races. It is the relations themselves we seek to alter from the root instead of dealing with the symptoms. But the incident at Goalundo detailed in this week's *Dharma* is one which the country has to take notice of, unless we are to suppose that the movement of 1905 was the last flaring up of national strength and spirit previous to extinction and that the extinction has now come. We have received a letter from the sufferer translated into English, it is from his own account that we summarise the facts.

A Brahmin Pandit with the title of Kavyatirtha, ignorant of English, was proceeding with two Bengali ladies from Myensingh to Calcutta on Sunday the 2nd January by the Kali-gunge mail steamer, and reached Goalundo at 11 o'clock at night, too late to catch the Calcutta train. He and some other

passengers decided to spend the night in the steamer. While he was going down to look after his luggage, a European came up to him, caught his wrapper, twisted it tightly round his neck and said in Hindustani, "Who are you?" Getting no answer to his request for an explanation except the repetition of the question, he replied that he was a passenger. Thereupon without farther parley the Englishman proceeded to drag the unresisting Pandit to another steamer lying alongside. On the way the latter appealed to the sub-agent of the Steamer Company, a certain Sarat Babu, but, after a word from the Saheb, was told that he must accompany the aggressor to the Company's agent, with a name which the Pandit caught as Joyce. It was not, however, to the Agent, but into a first-class cabin where there were three other Europeans and two English women, that the Brahmin was dragged and the door closed behind him. No sooner was he in the hands of this company than he was charged with having abused the Englishman whom he had never seen before in his life, and a savage blow dealt him in the left eye which cut the skin and set blood flowing freely. Blows after blows were rained on head and body, the head being cruelly battered, the lips cut open and some of the teeth loosened. His appeals for mercy were answered by a shower of kicks with booted feet on his head and the English women joined in the pastime by beating him furiously on the thigh with a dog chain. The unfortunate Bengali was by this time sick, stunned and almost senseless with the beating. The pain of the blows falling on his already bruised and battered head was intense and the iron chain drew blood with each cut. Fortunately he happened to fall against the door and it flew open. With difficulty he managed to crawl to the staircase; but at this moment the Englishman drew a revolver and, pointing it at him, cried out "Shala, I will shoot you." In terror of his life the Brahmin managed anyhow to plunge down the stairs and dropped almost senseless at the bottom. His eyes were clotted with blood, but he caught a glimpse of Sarat Babu coming near him with a European whom he conjectured to be the Agent Mr. Joyce. A few words were spoken between the two. Afterwards Sarat Babu returned and told the Pandit that he

could expect no redress from the Company, but he might bring a criminal suit if he cared to do so. The farther happenings of that night need not be entered into, except to note the extraordinary conduct of the Company's officers who almost immediately separated the two steamers and took the Kaligunge mail into midstream where they kept it until the Europeans had escaped in their steamer to Naraingunge. It was only possible to discover from the luggage labels that they belonged to a jute factory in Nakail near Aralia. There were some Bengali passengers present, including a pleader from Jessore and an employee of the Sealdah District Superintendent's Audit office but, though they sympathised with and cared for their compatriot after he had escaped with his life, there was none to assist him at the moment of the outrage, nor could even the piteous cries of the ladies awake a spark of resolution anywhere in those present. The Samitis of young men are disbanded, the cry of *Bande Mataram* has sunk to rest, and royally-minded individuals like the perpetrators of this murderous assault can finish their imperial pastime unhindered.

We feel a great difficulty in dealing with this case. We are not in the habit of dealing in violent language, yet to write coolly of it is a little difficult. And if we describe the assault as an infamous atrocity or describe these English gentlemen and ladies as cowardly ruffians and fiendish assassins, we have to recollect that such phrases are properly applied to Indian Terrorists and we may be prosecuted under Sec. 153A if we apply them to Europeans who, after all, did nothing but amuse themselves. Moreover, any indication of the proper deserts of these people, however carefully expressed, might expose us to forfeiture of our Press and prosecution under the new laws. If we point out that such things seem to happen with impunity under the present conditions in India, Sec. 124A is lying in wait, ready to trip us up, and the Andamans or twenty years' hard labour with handcuffs and fetters loom before our uneasy apprehensions. We do not know whether, considering how the Seditious law is being interpreted in Bombay, Nagpur and the Punjab, even mentioning this incident may not bring us within its provisions. It is impossible, however, to pass it over in silence, and we proceed, therefore, to

make a few observations, treading amid the pitfalls of the law as carefully as we can.

First, we have a word to the Government of East Bengal. It is very busy dealing with romantic dacoities, shapeless conspiracies, vague shadows of Terrorism, Arms Act Cases, meetings of Reform Councils overstocked with landholders and Mahomedans. We do not know whether it has any time or interest to spare for little sordid unromantic incidents of this kind. If it has any spare time, it might do worse in its own interests than glance once at that night's doings at Goalundo. It is obviously impossible to appeal to the law. Even if the identity of the assailants were fixed, the culprits would at once bring a trumped-up countercharge, say, of robbery, dacoity, Anarchism or any handy accusation, and the word of a hundred Bengalis, of whatever position or honourable antecedents, would not weigh with any but an exceptional Judge, against that of a single Englishman, whatever his antecedents or education. The only probable result would be to add a term of imprisonment to the Pandit's misfortunes. Even to reveal his name might expose him to the gentle mercies of the local Police in his District. All we can do, therefore, is to advertise the Shillong Government of what has happened and give them the chance of action.

Then, we have one word to say to the nation. The assault was motiveless and seems to have been committed merely because the Pandit was a Bengali and the Europeans felt in the mood to hammer a Bengali, perhaps out of the race-hatred which organs like the *Englishman* are busy fomenting with perfect impunity. There is no other explanation of the facts. The thing has happened and we wish to say at once that nothing in our remarks must be held to mean that we advise retaliation. But incidents like these never happen to a brave, patriotic and self-respecting nation; they happen only to those who cower and fear and, by their character, justify men who think themselves entitled to treat them like slaves. When the Bengalis showed themselves in the first ardour of 1905 a brave, patriotic and self-respecting nation, these incidents ceased to happen. If they are now reviving with features of a studied atrocity absent from

similar brutalities in the past, it must be because we are ceasing to deserve those appellations. The nation is cowering in silence under the terror of repressive laws, all symptoms of national life are discouraged by the leaders and the elders as dangerous and untimely. Those who dare to speak words of hope and courage to the people, are denounced by your vernacular journals, shut out by carefully devised creeds and regulations from the body you still call the National Congress, boycotted by some of your District Conferences. If the Government see anarchists and dacoits in every bush, you see deportations and house-searches in every *lal-pagri*. You cower in your homes, speak your opinions in hushed whispers, allow the national spirit to die out and your Mother to go down again into the black pit from which we raised her. And this incident at Goalundo is the first ominous warning God gives you of the inevitable result.

There is only one way to uphold a nation's honour and to compel outrages upon it to cease automatically, — and that is to show that we are a nation and not a herd. If by any means within the law, the perpetrators of this outrage can be made to feel that Bengalis cannot be half-battered to death with impunity, it should doubtless be done. But no personal anger, no violent language or violent actions are needed. The reawakening of the national spirit ready to act fearlessly and blamelessly — for self-defence and prevention of a crime are blameless, — on every emergency great or small, will of itself be sufficient.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Anandamath XII (continued)

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### Lajpat Rai's Letters

The case of Parmanand, the Arya Samaj teacher, whom with a singular pusillanimity the D.A.V. College authorities have dismissed before anything was proved against him, has been of more than usual interest because of the parade with which Lajpat Rai's letters to him were brought forward. The letters were innocent enough on the face of them, but prejudice and suspicion were deliberately manufactured out of the connection with Krishnavarma, the expression "revolutionary", the use of the word "boys", and an anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in connection with the Punjab Government's ill-advised land legislation. The bubble has been speedily pricked by the simple statement of facts in the *Punjabee* and by Lajpat Rai's own evidence. That Lajpat Rai was acquainted with Shyamji Krishnavarma when he was in England, was known already; so were many men who worked with him, Sir Henry Cotton among others, when he was only an enthusiastic Home Ruler and violently opposed to violence. The project of a Nationalist Servants of India Society well-equipped with a library and other appointments for political education was well advertised and known to the whole country previous to the first deportations. The anticipation of the agrarian outbreak in the letter expresses

an apprehension, not a desire, and merely shows that Lajpat Rai was uneasy at the rate at which the discontent was swelling and feared that it might lead to an outbreak prematurely forestalling the use of a peaceful pressure on the Government. It is remarkable how throughout his career the honesty and consistency of Lala Lajpat Rai's adherence to a peaceful but strenuous Nationalism has been vindicated at every step, and this last revelation of his private and even secret letters is an ordeal of fire out of which he has triumphantly emerged with his consistency and his innocence wholly established.

### **A Nervous Samaj**

It is with great regret that we find ourselves compelled to enlarge on the hint we gave in our last issue and comment adversely on the methods by which the Arya Samaj is attempting to save itself from the displeasure of the Government. It is well that it should have disclaimed sedition and repudiated the charge of being not a religious but a political body. But to run nervously to all and sundry for a testimonial of respectability, to sue for a certificate of loyalty to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and express gratitude for an ungracious, ambiguous and minatory letter of reply, to prejudice by dismissal a man whose guilt has yet to be proved, are actions which show that Swami Dayananda's religion may have emancipated the intellects of the leading Samajists but has done little to elevate their character. We must also express our amazement at the action of the Samaj in accepting the resignation by Lala Lajpat Rai of his offices on the various governing bodies of the Samaj. There are two men who are the glory of the Samaj and by whose adherence and prominence it commands the respect and admiration of all India, Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Munshiram. By its action with regard to the former, the Samaj will lose heavily, it has already lost heavily, in public estimation. In his generous anxiety for the body to which he has devoted the greater part of his life-work, Lala Lajpat Rai offered to it the chance of freeing itself from the attacks its enemies founded upon his connection with

it. It was an offer which he was bound to make, but the Samaj ought to have refused. Lajpat Rai's only offence is that he has worked and suffered for his country. By its action the Samaj has announced to the whole world that no man must dare to feel and act, however blamelessly, for his country if he wishes to be recognised by the Samaj. If so, Aryaism will perish from the face of India and leave no trace behind. The world has no use any longer for religious bodies which exclude courage, manliness, generosity, justice and patriotism from their moral practice.

### **The Banerji Vigilance Committees**

The novel departure initiated by the fertile mind of Sriji Suren-dranath Banerji at Barrackpur in the creation of Vigilance Committees to check the nocturnal lovers of bomb and bullet practice on the E.B.S.R. has created great interest and amusement among his countrymen. There are many who are ungenerous enough to attribute this anti-Anarchical zeal less to loyalty and a noble "co-operative" instinct than to the fact that our great leader has himself to travel daily over the zone of danger. Even if it were so, the sneer is ungenerous. We all love our lives, we have all to travel occasionally by the E.B.S.R. in first or second class and we cannot ignore the fact that random bullets and explosive cocoanuts are not respecters of persons and, if they find the head even of a Nationalist leader in the way, will not be polite enough to walk round it. We shall all therefore be grateful to our old man eloquent, if he can ensure our common safety. But for ourselves, we do not see how he can effect his laudable object. It would be possible for Sriji Surendranath and the other estimable burgesses of Barrackpur to patrol the railway at night, but the weather is still cold, sleep is pleasant, bullets and cocoanuts perilous missiles, and, if anything happens, the police are quite capable of suspecting and arresting the too vigilant patrons of the public peace. One might revive the "National Volunteers" for the purpose; but the Samitis are disbanded, students forbidden to take part in politics or do anything that would interfere with their studies. They are

not likely to be enthusiastic for this kind of volunteer work under these conditions. And, if such organisations were created, it would be more likely to alarm than gratify a suspicious and nervous Government which might see in it a disingenuous device for reviving the proclaimed Samitis. The only other resource is for these novel vigilance men to turn detectives, discover the Terrorists and give information to the police, which they can only do by becoming agents provocateurs and so worming themselves into the confidence of their quarry. That is a kind of dirty work no Indian gentleman is likely to undertake even with the prospect of vindicating his loyalty, escaping house-searches and deportation and earning the encomiums of the *Englishman*.

### Postal Precautions

Sj. Aurobindo Ghose has recently received an anonymous letter giving him the momentous information that a certain Gopal Chandra Ray of the C.I.D. with several assistants is busy watching 6 College Square and the Post Office and copying all the letters and postcards that come in his name without exception. Sj. Aurobindo has not the honour of the noble Gopal's acquaintance, nor is he even aware whether this gentleman has any corporeal existence. The letter may be a hoax; or it may be sent by one of the "assistants", weary to death of copying letters and postcards and of the inclement and uncomfortable business of an open air watch fanned by the breezes of Goldighi in this season. It does not matter to the gentleman honoured by these attentions whether the whole police force occupy Goldighi for inquisitorial purposes or whether numerous editions of his correspondence are turned out for the use of posterity by the disinterested labours of the C.I.D. Still, he has suggested to us certain proposals to be placed before the Government in this connection and we proceed to make them. In the first place, for the sake of humanity, a comfortable stall might be put up in the Square for the vigilant cow-keeper and his herd whence they could watch more happily and quite as effectively. Secondly, if

the Government would kindly instruct the Post Office not to lose one-tenth of Aurobindo Babu's letters after copying them and delay the greater part of the others, there would probably be no harm done to the Empire. Thirdly, Sj. Aurobindo Ghose begs us to inform the authorities that he was never greatly in the habit of writing letters before and, after the exposure of his private correspondence with his friends and family by the prosecution in the Alipur case, he has almost dropped the practice, except in urgent matters of business. It is possible, therefore, for this part of the investigation to be carried on very cheaply, and the Government must not be deceived by any representations on part of Gopal or others that a big staff is wanted. Further, we are instructed to inform all intending correspondents of the above-mentioned facts so that they may not be disturbed or anxious about Sj. Aurobindo's health if they get no answer to their letters. Secondly, it would be advisable for them, when writing to him, to forward a copy of the letter to the Secretary to the Bengal Government or to Mr. Denham of the C.I.D. Thirdly, if any one wishes to send by post specimens of bombs, revolvers, or anything explosive or picric, or plans and estimates for a conspiracy or insurrection great or small, he had better send it either by hand or through the editors of the *Statesman* or *Englishman*. No reply need be expected.

### Detective Wiles

While we are on this subject, we might suggest to the C.I.D. to train up a few spies and informers, send them for the completion of their education to France and then appoint them as teachers in the College in India. Just now they do their work very clumsily. We may instance the case of a Eurasian or European gentleman rejoicing in an Irish name or alias and a false address, who left his card on Sj. Aurobindo Ghose and then opened fire with a letter requesting the loan of a revolver, brand new and serviceable, without which the Irish gentleman could not live any longer. Neither is it a good opening for acquaintance to come for financial help to a man known to be himself the possessor of

a very small income. To request advice how to serve the country or to become religious is a more plausible opening, but it ought to be followed up and sustained plausibly. Even the wearing of the saffron robe need not be a passport to effusive friendship, unless there is something behind, and not always even then. We may also refer to the romantic story of the Dead Letter Office return published the other day by Sj. Prabhaschandra Deb in the *Hitabadi*. This precious script was curiously enough addressed to Grey Street, without any number, in Prabhas Babu's handwriting and with his signature so exactly reproduced as to defy discrimination even by an expert. As both Prabhas Babu and the police are well aware that there is now no connection between Sj. Aurobindo and any number in Grey Street, it was obviously the writer's intention that it should go to the Dead Letter Office and from there to the C.I.D. Prabhas Babu's suggestion was not, as the *Hitabadi* reported, to send it to the Calcutta Police for inquiry, but to return it to the Dead Letter Office. Sj. Aurobindo preferred to consign it to the waste paper basket as a more fitting repository. We cannot imagine any earthly use in these clumsy devices. Even Mr. Norton would find it difficult to make anything of a forgery, however exact, more hopelessly suspicious even than the "sweets" letter.

## The New Policy

**A** POLICY of conciliation, a policy of trust in the people, a policy liberal, progressive, sure if slow,—that was the forecast made by the Moderate astrologers when the Reform comet sailed into our startled heavens. The prophets and augurs of the Anglo-Indian Press friendly to Moderate India—friendly on condition of our giving up all aspirations that go beyond the Reforms—prophesied high, loud and often to the same purpose, and if, like the Roman augurs, they winked and smiled mysteriously at each other when they met, the outside world was not supposed to know anything of their private opinions. Even the disillusionment caused by the publication of the Councils Rules has not prevented this party of wise and able politicians from supporting by participation the Reforms which they condemned, and belauding the intention of the Anglo-Indian reformers while swearing dismally and violently at their practice. Bad as it is, we must co-operate so as to make the best of the new measure. To make the best of a bad measure is to make it a success and so prevent or delay the coming of a better. This at least is our idea of the matter, but we belong to a party not of wise and able politicians who take the full profit of that which they condemn as disastrous and injurious, but of men who have the misfortune still to believe in logic, principle and experience. To be logical is to be a mere theorist, to cling to principle is to be a doctrinaire and to be guided by experience, the world's and our own, is to be unpractical. Only those whose theory is confused and practice self-contradictory and haphazard, can be wise politicians and capable of guiding the country aright. From this standpoint the proclamation of all India as seditious is, doubtless, the first step in the new policy, the policy of conciliation and

liberalism. It is the sign-manual of the great reformer, Lord Morley, upon his work, the loud-tongued harbinger of the golden Age.

No particular motive can be alleged for this sudden proclamation, nor is any alleged. The people are left to speculate in the dark as to the mystic motives of Lords Minto and Morley in this remarkable step forward, or to get what light and comfort they can from the speculations of our Anglo-Indian friends and advisers, who seem to be as much in the dark as ourselves and can only profess their blind religious faith in the necessity and beneficence of the measure and appeal to all patriotic Indians to co-operate in coercing the national movement into silence. If India had been full of meetings of a seditious or doubtful nature, the necessity of the measure could have been established. Even if the national life were pulsating swiftly though blamelessly, its "aetiology",— if we may use a word which may possibly be condemned by Mr. Petman or Mr. Grey as seditious,— could have been understood, though not its necessity. But at present, with the exception of an occasional scantily attended meeting in the Calcutta squares, the only political meetings held are those in which abhorrence of Terrorism is expressed or Vigilance Committees of leading citizens organised to patrol the E.B.S.R. at night even in this chilly weather, and those in which the Deccan Sabha drinks deep of the political sermons and homilies of Lord Morley's personal friend, Mr. Gokhale. Was it to stop these that the proclamation of all India became necessary?

It has been freely alleged that the prevalence of bombs and Terrorism in Bombay, Punjab and Bengal is the justification of the measure, on the ground that open sedition leads to secret assassination, Nationalism to Terrorism. It is obvious that to attempt to meet secret conspiracy by prohibiting public agitation is a remedy open to the charge of absurdity. The secret conspirator rejoices in silence, the Terrorist finds his opportunity in darkness. Is not the liberty of free speech and free writing denied to the Russian people by more rigorous penalties, a more effective espionage, a far more absolute police rule than any that can be attempted in India? Yet where do the bomb and the

revolver, the Terrorist and the secret conspirator flourish more than in Russia? The conspirator has his own means of propaganda which the law finds it difficult to touch. The argument, however, is that it is only in an atmosphere of dissatisfaction, disaffection and sedition that the propaganda of the conspirator can be effective, and Nationalism creates that atmosphere. Criticism of the Government leads to dissatisfaction with the Government, dissatisfaction leads to the aspiration for a better form of Government, aspiration of this kind when baulked leads to disaffection, disaffection leads to secret conspiracy and assassination. Therefore stop all means of criticising the Government and the first cause being removed, the final effect will disappear. That this is the actual train of reasoning, conscious or unconscious, in the minds of those who advise, initiate or approve a policy of repression is beyond doubt. It is evident in all they say or write.

Unfortunately the statement of the premises in this chain is incomplete and the conclusion is therefore vitiated. The first premise may be granted at once. In a country well satisfied with its lot, a nation at ease and aware of prosperity and progress, the propaganda of the secret conspirator must necessarily fail. In India itself, if we are to believe the *Times*, secret societies have existed for upwards of forty or fifty years. How is it that they had no success and no one was aware of their existence until the reaction after Lord Ripon's regime culminated in the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon? Dissatisfaction is not created by public criticism, it is created by the adverse facts on which public criticism fastens, and it crystallises either in public criticism or in secret discontent. The public criticism creates public agitation, the secret discontent creates secret conspiracy. Both are born of the same circumstances, but the lines of development are entirely different, nor is there much sympathy between them. The public agitator dreads the secret conspirator, the secret conspirator despises the public agitator, even when they are moving towards the same end. The man most detested and denounced by the Indian revolutionary organisations now active at Paris, Geneva and Berlin, is Sj. Bipin Chandra Pal, the prophet and

first preacher of passive resistance. Yet the object of both is almost identical, the Nationalist agitator insisting on perfect autonomy, the revolutionist on separation, both being merely different forms of independence. The question for the authorities is whether they will try to ignore or silence the public criticism or remove the cause of dissatisfaction. If they ignore without silencing public criticism, the dissatisfaction grows in volume until it becomes the aspiration for a better form of Government. They must then either satisfy that aspiration or silence it, they can no longer ignore it. This game of ignoring the obvious is, like the first crude attempt of Nationalism in India to ignore the Government, foredoomed to failure; it only postpones and intensifies the problem, it does not get rid of it. Yet this was the policy long followed by the Indian Government towards the Congress movement. On the other hand, they may silence the public criticism or trample on it. If they trample on it, the aspiration becomes disaffection not necessarily to the sovereign, but to the form and system of Government then obtaining, with a cry for absolute transformation. This was what happened in India in 1905. Trampling on public opinion without silencing its expression is mere madness; it leads to the genesis of great revolutionary movements, injures the Government, endangers public peace and order, and helps nobody. This method does not even postpone the necessity of a solution, it hastens it by intensifying the problem to breaking-point. Yet this was the policy of Lord Curzon. He not only permitted the expression of public discontent, but he fostered it by arguing with and trying to persuade it; yet he invariably trampled on the thing he permitted. It is statesmanship of this kind which ruins empires and destroys great nations. There is another kind of policy, and that is to play with the monster of discontent, to chide it, whip it and yet throw it sops while taking advantage of the monster's preoccupation with the sop to wind the chain round its neck tighter and tighter. This is also bad policy. The whip enrages, the sop does not soothe but irritates, the tightening of the chain only shortens the distance between the tamer and the brute; — for the difficulty is that, the tamer has to hold the chain, he

cannot tie it to something else and get out of springing distance.

Eventually, either discontent has to be satisfied or silenced. If it is satisfied, the whole difficulty disappears and perfectly amicable relations are restored. That was the policy pursued by England with regard to its colonies after the severe lesson learned in America, with the result that the bond between the colonies and Great Britain still defies the efforts of Time and Circumstance to loosen or snap them. But if discontent is not to be satisfied, the question then for the ruler is whether he prefers it to crystallise in public agitation and peaceful but possibly effective resistance, or in secret conspiracy, terrorism and eventually armed insurrection. It must be one of the two, for to expect an immense impulse like the national impulse to sink to rest without being either crushed or satisfied, is to expect impossible miracles. The Anglo-Indian appeal to the political leaders to be satisfied and cease from agitation is a singularly foolish and futile one. If the political leaders were to comply, even the most popular and trusted of them, they would cease to be leaders the next day. The dwindling numbers that attend the Convention sittings are a signal proof of this very obvious fact; that diminution has been effected, it must be remembered, without public agitation, without any organisation or activity of the Nationalist party, by the mere operation of a law of Nature. The aspiration, however created, is there and it is a fire mounting out of the bowels of the earth, which no man's hand can extinguish. The political leaders know that they cannot quench it, if they would; the Government thinks it can. And the method it seems to favour, if the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act and the prosecutions of papers and publications or their leaders all over India are any sign, is to silence public criticism.

If our view of the question is right, it is evident that to paralyse public agitation is to foster Terrorism, and we can only suppose that the Government think Terrorism easier to deal with than public agitation. This seems to us a grievous error. If experience shows anything, it is that Terrorism is never extinguished except by the removal of its causes. The difference between Terrorism and open rebellion is that open rebellion

often effects its object, but can easily be crushed, while Terrorism does not effect its object, but cannot be crushed. The only thing that Terrorism can do is to compel the Government to satisfy partially the more moderate demands of peaceful agitation as the lesser of two evils, and this is a result which the Terrorist looks on with contempt. He is always extreme and fanatical and will not be satisfied with anything less than immediate freedom gained by violence. He is confident of his result, he is passionately and intolerantly attached to his method. Irish Terrorism only disappeared because of the expectation of Home Rule by the alliance with British Liberalism; Russian Terrorism is still kept alive by the impotence of the Duma; Anarchism flourishes because the Governments of Europe have not found any way of circumventing it. Terrorism may perish of inanition; coercion is its food and its fuel.

The policy now being followed by Lord Minto's Government has neither immediate justification nor ultimate wisdom. It is the old futile round which reluctant authority has always trod when unable to reconcile itself to inevitable concession. It is a wasteful, ruinous and futile process. For if the Government were to declare tomorrow that it would no longer tolerate public opposition and deport all the leaders of public and peaceful agitation in the country, it would only stimulate more formidable and unscrupulous forces and substitute a violent, dangerous and agonising process for one which, even if a little painful, is helpful, economical and constructive.

# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### The High Court Assassination

The startling assassination of Deputy Superintendent Shams-ul-Alam on Monday in the precincts of the High Court, publicly, in daylight, under the eyes of many and in a crowded building, breaks the silence which had settled on the country, in a fashion which all will deplore. The deceased officer was perhaps the ablest, most energetic and most zealous member of the Bengal detective force. It was his misfortune that he took the leading part not only in the Alipur Bomb Case in which he zealously and untiringly assisted the Crown solicitors, but in the investigation of the Haludbari and Netra dacoities. The nature of his duties exposed him to the resentment of the small Terrorist bodies whose continued existence in Bengal is proved by this last daring and reckless crime. Under such circumstances a man carries his life in his hand and it seems only a matter of time when it will be struck from him. We have no doubt that the Government will suitably recognise his services by a handsome provision for his family. As for the crime itself, it is one of the boldest of the many bold acts of violence for which the Terrorists have been responsible. We wish we could agree with some of our contemporaries that the perpetrators of these deplorable outrages are dastards and cowards; for, if it were so, Terrorism would be a thing to be

abhorred, but not feared. On the contrary, the Indian Terrorist seems to be usually a man fanatical in his determination and daring, to prefer public places and crowded buildings for his field and to scorn secrecy and a fair chance of escape. It is this remarkable feature which has distinguished alike the crimes at Nasik, London, Calcutta, to say nothing of the assassination of Gossain in jail. With such men it is difficult to deal. Neither fear nor reasoning, disapprobation nor isolation can have any effect on them. Nor will the Government of this country allow us to use what we believe to be the only effective means of combating the spread of the virus among the people. All we can do is to sit with folded hands and listen to the senseless objurgations of the Anglo-Indian Press, waiting for a time when the peaceful expression and organisation of our national aspirations will no longer be penalised. It is then that Terrorism will vanish from the country and the nightmare be as if it never had been.

### **Anglo-Indian Prescriptions**

The Anglo-Indian papers publish their usual senseless prescriptions for the cure of the evil. The *Englishman* informs us that it is at last tired of these outrages and asks in a tone full of genuine weariness when the Government will take the steps which Hare Street has always been advising. It seems to us that the Government have gone fairly far in that direction. The only remaining steps are to silence the Press entirely, abolish the necessity of investigation and trial and deport every public man in India. And when by removing everything and everyone that still encourages the people to persevere in peaceful political agitation, Russia has been reproduced in India and all is hushed except the noise of the endless duel between the omnipotent policeman and the secret assassin, the *Englishman* will be satisfied, — but the country will not be at peace. The *Indian Daily News* more sensibly suggests police activity in detecting secret organisations, — although its remarks would have sounded better without an implied prejudice of the Nasik case. If the police were to employ the sound detective methods employed in England and France, it would

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take them a little longer to effect a coup, but there would be some chance of real success. It is not by indiscriminate arrests, harassing house-searches undertaken on the word of informers paid so much for each piece of information true or false, and interminable detention of undertrial prisoners in jail that these formidable secret societies will be uprooted. Such processes are more likely to swell their numbers and add to their strength. The *Statesman* is particularly wroth with the people of this country for their objection to police methods and goes so far as to lay the blame for the murder of Shams-ul-Alam on these objections. If we had only submitted cheerfully to police harassment, all this would not have happened! The bitter ineptitude of our contemporary grows daily more pronounced and takes more and more refuge in ridiculously inconsequent arguments. Is it the objectionable methods or our objections to them that are to blame? We may safely say that, whatever influences may have been at work in the mind of the assassin, the occasional criticisms of vexatious house-search in the Bengali journals had nothing to do with his action. The *Statesman* does not scruple, like other Anglo-Indian papers, to question the sincerity of the condemnations of Terrorist outrage which are nowadays universal throughout the country, and to support its insinuations it has to go as far back as the Gossain murder and the demonstrations that followed it. Those demonstrations were not an approval of Terrorism as a policy, but an outburst of gratitude to the man who removed a dangerous and reckless perjurer whose evil breath was scattering ruin and peril over innocent homes and noble and blameless heads throughout Bengal. We do not praise or justify that outburst, — for murder is murder, whatever its motives, — but it is not fair to give it a complexion other than the one it really wore. If it had really been true that a whole nation approved of Terrorism and supported the assassin by secret or open sympathy, it would be a more damning indictment of British statesmanship in India than any seditious pen could have framed. The Chowringhee paper's libellous insinuation that the secret societies are not secret and their members are known to the public, has only to be mentioned in order to show the spirit of

this gratuitous adviser of the Indian people. Nor can one peruse without a smile the suggestion that the Hindu community should use the weapon of social ostracism against the Terrorists. Whom are we to outcaste, the hanged or transported assassin, or his innocent relatives?

### House Search

While we are on the subject we may as well make explicit the rationale of our objection to house search as it is used in Bengal. No citizen can object to the legitimate and necessary use of house search as an aid to the detection of crime; it is only to its misuse that objection can be made. We say that it is misuse to harass a man and his family merely because the police have a suspicion against him which they cannot establish or find any ground of evidence for — on the remote chance of finding incriminating correspondence or arms in his possession. It is a misuse to take this step on the information of characterless paid informers whose advantage it is to invent false clues so as to justify their existence and earn their living. It is a misuse to farther harass the householder by carrying off from his house half his library and his whole family correspondence and every other article to which the police take a fancy and which are often returned to him after infinite trouble and in a hopelessly damaged condition. A house search is never undertaken in civilised countries except on information of the truth of which there is moral certainty or such a strong probability as to justify this extreme step. To find out the truth of an information without immediately turning a household upside down on the chance of its veracity is not an impossible feat for detective ability in countries where all statements are not taken for gospel truth merely because they issue from the sacred lips of a policeman, and where police perjury or forgery is sure of swift punishment. Where a detective force is put on its mettle by being expected to prove every statement and take the consequences of illegal methods, they do manage to detect crime very effectively, while the chances of the innocent suffering are greatly minimised. In other countries there are

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or have been Anarchist outrages, Terrorist propaganda, secret societies, but nowhere, except in Russia, are such methods used as are considered quite ordinary in India, nor, if used, would they be tolerated by the European citizen. If the police would confine themselves to legitimate detective activity, they would receive the full support of the public and the occasional trouble of a house search, caused by the existence of a suspected relative or dependent, would be patiently borne, — though it is absurd of the *Statesman* to expect a householder to be cheerful under such untoward circumstances. This is the rationale of our views in the matter, and we do not think there is anything in them either unreasonable, obstructive or inconsistent with civic duty.

### The Elections

The Elections at the time of writing seem to point to the return of a Liberal Ministry dependent first on Labour, then on Irish votes for its very existence. At the end of last week after being long in a slight minority, the combined Liberal-Labour party exceeded the Conservatives by 14, but the Liberal vote, apart from the Labour representatives, was still well behind the Unionist numbers. The vicissitudes of this crisis have been utterly unlike those of any previous election. Instead of an even ebb and flow such as we find on former occasions, well-distributed all over the country, we see the United Kingdom ranged into two adverse parties on a great revolutionary issue, according to geographical, almost racial distribution. Wales, Scotland and the North are for the new age, the Centre and the South for the past. In the Southern, Midland and Eastern counties the Unionists have achieved a tremendous victory and we think there is hardly a constituency in which the Liberal majority has not been either materially, often hugely reduced or turned into a minority.

In the North, even in Yorkshire, still more in Westmoreland, the Unionists have achieved a few victories, but the verdict of the North as a whole has gone heavily against the Lords and for the Liberals. Wales is still overwhelmingly Radical in spite of one or two Conservative gains. In Scotland the Liberal party has

been amazingly successful and increased its majorities in many places, maintained them in most and balanced occasional losses by compensating victories. The Celt everywhere has declared for revolution, as was to be expected from that ardent, mobile and imaginative race; the frank, adventurous Scandinavian blood of the North may account for its progressive sympathies; but the rest of England is the home of the conservative, slow-natured Anglo-Saxon always distrustful of new adventures and daring innovations. The struggle seems to us to have been not so much one of opinions as of blood and instinct. It is notable that the Conservative victories have been attained not so much by the reduction and transference of the Liberal vote as by a rush of Conservative electors to the polls who did not vote in previous elections. The unparalleled heaviness of the polling shows how deeply the people have been stirred and feel the magnitude and importance of the issues.

## The Viceroy's Speech

THE SPEECH of Lord Minto on the occasion of the first meeting of the Viceroy's Council under the new regime is a very important pronouncement; and the most momentous of the passages in the pronouncement are two, the one in which he disposes finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Moderates, the other in which he threatens to dispose finally of any lingering hopes in the minds of the Nationalists. It has been a Moderate legend which still labours to survive, that the intention of Lords Morley and Minto in the Reforms was to lay the foundations of representative self-government in India. This legend was perseveringly reiterated in direct contradiction of the Secretary of State's famous pronouncement that, so far as his vision could pierce into the future, the personal and absolute element in Indian administration must for ever remain. Lord Minto has now stamped his foot on the Moderate legend and crushed it into atoms. We quote the important passages in which he accomplishes this ruthless destruction.

“We have distinctly maintained that representative Government in its Western sense is totally inapplicable to the Indian Empire and would be uncongenial to the traditions of Eastern populations — that Indian conditions do not admit of popular representation — that the safety and welfare of the country must depend on the supremacy of British administration — and that that supremacy can, *in no circumstances*, be delegated to any kind of representative assembly.... We have aimed at the reform and enlargement of our Councils but not at the creation of Parliaments. I emphasise what I have just said in view of the opinions to which advanced Indian politicians appear not infrequently to commit themselves.”

In the face of speech so plain and uncompromising it will

be difficult indeed to keep up the fiction that it is only the regulations which are objectionable and, if only the regulations are changed, we can with a clear conscience accept and participate in the Reforms. The Act and the Regulations are not different in aim or parentage; they have one origin, one object, one policy. Lord Minto has emphatically stated that the initiative in the Reforms was from beginning to end his own, and the facts bear out the truth of his statement. His inaugural speech has put a seal of finality on the death-doom of Moderatism of which the publication of the Councils' rules was the pronouncement. The objective of Moderatism is colonial self-government, the means, the grace and goodwill of the British rulers, and the two British rulers whom they have hailed as apostles and fathers of Reform have declared explicitly that in no future age, however distant, and in no circumstances, however changed, can the official supremacy be delegated to any kind of representative assembly however safely constituted. Not even, therefore, a Russian Duma, that simulacrum of a Parliament, is to be granted to India even in remote and millennial futurity.

The other passage is the reference to the licence of a revolutionary Press as a means of combating Terrorism. The revolutionary Press has long since disappeared and, therefore, we can only suppose that Lord Minto means the Nationalist Press and that this pronouncement heralds fresh coercive legislation. The platform has been silenced, the Press must follow. Then Thought alone will remain free from the prohibitions of the law and even that may be coerced by the deportation and exile of anyone whom the Police may suspect of entertaining liberal opinions. Just as the first-quoted passage ensures the extinction of all Moderate activity, so this menace portends the extinction of all Nationalist activity. We do not know that we shall be altogether sorry. If the *Englishman* is tired of assassinations, we also are tired of the thankless and apparently unsuccessful task of regulating popular discontent and pointing out legitimate paths to national aspiration on the one hand and attempting to save the officials from themselves on the other. We have only persevered in it from a strong sense of our duty to the country.

But we are beginning to feel that Fate is more powerful than the strongest human effort. We feel the menace in the air from above and below and foresee the clash of iron and inexorable forces in whose collision all hope of a peaceful Nationalism will disappear, if not for ever, yet for a long, a disastrously long season.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

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# KARMAYOGIN

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## Facts and Opinions

### The Party of Revolution

Be the fault whose you will, ours or the Government's, the existence of an organised party of armed Revolution in Indian politics is now a recognised factor of the situation. The enormous strides with which events have advanced and a sky full of trouble but also of hope been overcast and grown full of gloom and menace, can be measured by the rapidity with which this party has developed. It is only five years since the national movement sprang into being. The cry was then for self-help and passive resistance. Boycott, Swadeshi, Arbitration, National Education, were the hope of the future, the means of self-regeneration. In five years everything has been struck to the earth. Boycott has almost disappeared, Swadeshi languishes under sentence of arrest, Arbitration died still-born, National Education is committing suicide. A tremendous disintegration has taken place and we look amazed on the ruins of the work our labour and our sacrifice erected. It is a huge defeat, an astonishing catastrophe. And on those ruins grim, wild-eyed, pitiless to itself and to others, mocking at death and defeat with its raucous and careless laughter Revolution rises repeating the language of the old-world insurgents, cherishing a desperate hope which modern conditions deny, grasping at the weapons

which the Slav and the Celt have brought into political warfare. The seeds which the *Yugantar* sowed in its brief, violent and meteoric career have borne fruit in unexpected quarters and new-born journals repeat in foreign lands and in the English tongue the incitations to revolt and slaughter which have been put down in India by the strong hand of the law. Money is forthcoming to support a journalism which must obviously be all cost and no profit, young men exile themselves from their native land by openly joining the party of violence and in India itself repeated blows have been struck paralysing the hope and the effort to revive the activity of that broader and calmer Nationalism which, recognising modern conditions, still commands the allegiance of the bulk of the nation.

### Its Growth

What is the precise nature, propaganda and strength of this party, which by so small an expenditure of energy has produced such surprising results? When the *Yugantar*, abandoning its habit of philosophic Revolutionism, first began to enter the field of practical politics, to sneer at passive resistance and gird at its chief exponents, no one thought that its change of attitude portended anything serious. Men read the paper for the amazing brilliance, grace and sustained force of its style, a new thing in Bengali journalism, and from the natural attraction men feel for strong writing and bold thought even when they do not agree with it. Afterwards the reckless fight of the *Yugantar* for existence attracted a more dangerous admiration and from that time the journal changed from a thing of literary interest into a political force. Even then it was taken as a practical guide only among a section of young men small in numbers and without means or influence. But things have changed since then. A void has been created by the conviction, deportation, self-imposed exile or silence of the great Nationalist speakers, writers, organisers, and the dangerous opinions and activities then created have rushed in to occupy the vacuum. The Nationalism we advocate is a thing difficult to grasp and follow, needing continual intellectual

exposition to keep its hold on the mind, continual inspiration and encouragement to combat the impatience natural to humanity; its methods are comparatively new in politics and can only justify themselves to human conservatism by distinguished and sustained success. The preaching of the new revolutionary party is familiar to human imagination, supported by the records of some of the most inspiring episodes in history, in consonance with the impatience, violence and passion for concrete results which revolutionary epochs generate. The growing strength of this party is not difficult to explain; it is extremely difficult to combat.

### **Its Extent**

This party has two sides, the propaganda carried on in foreign countries, and the Terrorist activity always recrudescing in our midst. The latter is the most formidable in the present, the former the most dangerous in the future. The foreign propaganda was first located in London and confined to the single paper, the *Indian Sociologist*, first an organ of Shyamji Krishnavarma's Home Rule Society and opposed to all methods of violence. The conversion of Krishnavarma to the Terrorism he once fiercely condemned, has been a very important factor in the growth of the new party. The propaganda has been driven from London only to spring at once into a ubiquitous activity abroad. From Paris Krishnavarma publishes the *Indian Sociologist*; from Berlin a new organ, significantly self-styled the *Talwar*, issues; in Geneva a paper naming itself the *Bande Mataram* busies itself with decrying the policy of the defunct *Bande Mataram* and denouncing its originator and former Editor; a paper called the *Free Hindustan* maintains itself in America. Wealthy men and women stand behind these organs, the Kathiawar Krishnavarma, the Parsi lady Mrs. Kama and possibly others who do not advertise their names. Young men of all nationalities in India seem to have joined these organisations and occasional pamphlets find their way into India in spite of the vigilance of the Post Office by means familiar to European revolutionism.

In India any violent propaganda is impossible; violent action takes its place and the swift succession of attempted or successful outrages in Gujerat, Maharashtra, Punjab and Bengal shows that if the movement is not organised, as in these foreign countries, it is equally widespread. The very existence of such a conspiracy must paralyse all other forms and methods of national aspiration by driving the Government and the Anglo-Indian community into the suppression of everything that goes beyond contented acceptance of that which exists. The revolutionists know this well and they have played their game with great skill and success.

### Ourselves

Every established Government is bound to eradicate a movement of this kind and it will naturally use any means it thinks effective. We recognise this necessity, but we have no faith in the means the Government and the Anglo-Indians seem to favour. We are dead against covering over an evil by pretentious, sounding and hollow speech and measures; we do not believe in a remedial system which suppresses symptoms and leaves the roots untouched. All we can do is to stand aside and let the physician try his system — and this we propose to do from henceforward. We have written this week in order to explain our action and our attitude, but we shall abstain in future from comment on current Indian politics or criticism of Government and its measures until more favourable and normal conditions return. We only reserve to ourselves the liberty of writing once to point out the immense difference between Indian conditions in modern times and the historical precedents on which the revolutionists rely, — for which we had not sufficient space in this issue. With this exception the rest is silence. The *Karmayogin* was originally started as a weekly review intended to encourage the habit of deep and close thinking on all subjects and widen the intellectual range of the people, giving an especial importance to religion and the growth of spirituality. The disproportionate space allowed to current politics was necessitated by the absence of any political

organ devoted to that propaganda of peaceful Nationalism in which we saw the only way to healthy political development in India. Now that that way is barred by the legislator and the Terrorist, we return to our original intention.

## The Necessity of the Situation

A VERY serious crisis has been induced in Indian politics by the revival of Terrorist outrages and the increasing evidences of the existence of an armed and militant revolutionary party determined to fight force by force. The effect on the Government seems to have been of a character very little complimentary to British statesmanship. Faced by this menace to peace and security the only device they can think of is to make peaceful agitation impossible. Their first step has been to proclaim all India as seditious. Their second is to announce the introduction of fresh legislation making yet more stringent the already all-embracing law of sedition. By these two measures free speech on press or platform will practically be interdicted, since the perils of truthfulness will be so great that men will prefer to take refuge either in a lying hypocrisy or in silence. Frankness, honesty, self-respecting and truthful opposition in Indian politics are at an end. The spirit which dictates the resort to these measures, will inevitably manifest itself also in the proclamation as illegal of all societies or organisations openly formed for the purpose of training the strength of the nation by solid and self-respecting political and educational work towards a free and noble future. By the law which gives the Government that power of arbitrary suppression associated work is rendered impossible, though not as yet penalised. If free speech, if free writing, if free association is made impossible under the law, it is tantamount to declaring a peaceful Nationalism illegal and criminal.

The effect of the recent assassinations on the Moderate party has been to throw them into a panic and demoralisation painful for any lover of Indian manhood to witness. It is quite possible for an Indian politician at this crisis to consider in a spirit of worthy gravity and serious recognition of the issues involved the

best way of combating the evil, even if it involves co-operation with a Government which persists in the repression of the national hopes and aspirations and seeks to compel co-operation by pressure instead of by winning the hearts of the people. But that is not the spirit shown by Moderate organs and by Moderate leaders. All that we can see is a desperate and cowardly *sauve qui peut*, an attempt by every man to save himself and to burrow under a heap of meaningless words. Wild denunciations of the revolutionary instruments as fiends, dastards, cowards, with loads of other epithets which defeat their purpose by their grotesque violence; strange panegyrics of the deceased police officer as a patriot, saint, martyr by those who formerly never discovered his transcendent merits or had a good word to say for the police; meetings to arrange steps for the suppression of Anarchism loudly advertised by leaders who know that they are powerless to take any effective steps in the present state of the country; Vigilance Committees which can at best pay for the hired vigils of watchmen easily avoidable by a skilful nocturnal assassin; — are these the speech and action of responsible and serious political leaders or the ravings and spasmodic gesticulations of a terrified instinct of self-preservation?

The Nationalist party can take no share in these degrading performances. On the other hand its own remedies, its own activities are doubly inhibited, inhibited from below by the paralysing effect of successful or attempted assassinations, inhibited from above by panic-stricken suspicion, panic-stricken repression. We have not disguised our policy, we have openly advertised our plans of party reconstruction and reorganisation, we have sought to speak and act candidly before the Government and the country, not extenuating the errors of the Government, not inflaming the minds of the people. The first answer to our propaganda was given by the revolutionary party in the blow struck at Nasik, the second by the Government in the extension of the Seditious Meetings Act to all India. We still felt it our duty to persevere, leaving the results of our activity to a higher Power. The assassination in the High Court and the announcement of a stringent Press legislation convinces us that any farther

prosecution of the public activities we contemplated, will be vain and unseasonable. Until, therefore, a more settled state of things supervenes and normal conditions can be restored, we propose to refrain from farther political action. The Government and the Anglo-Indian community seem to be agreed that by some process of political chemistry unknown to us the propagation of peaceful Nationalism generates armed and militant revolutionism and that the best way to get rid of the latter is to suppress the former. We will give them the chance by suppressing ourselves so far as current Indian politics are concerned. We have no wish to embarrass the action of the Government or to accentuate the difficulties of the situation. The Government have no doubt a policy of their own and a theory of the best means of suppressing violent revolutionary activities. We have no faith in their policy and no confidence in their theory, but since it is theirs and the responsibility for preserving peace rests on them, let them put their policy freely and thoroughly into action. We advise our fellow Nationalists also to stand back and give an unhampered course for a while to Anglo-Indian statesmanship in its endeavours to grapple with this hydra-headed evil.

But before we resort to silence, we will speak out once freely and loudly to the Government, the Anglo-Indian community and the people. We will deliver our souls once so that no responsibility for anything that may happen in the future may be laid at our doors by posterity. To the Government we have only one word to say. We are well aware that they desire not the cooperation of the Nationalist party, but its annihilation. They trace the genesis of the present difficulties to the propaganda of the Nationalist leaders and an unstatesmanlike resentment is allowed to overpower their judgment and their insight. Choosing to be misled by a police whose incapacity and liability to corruption has been loudly proclaimed by their own Commissions presided over by their own officials, they have formed the rooted opinion that the leaders of Nationalism are secretly conspiring to subvert British rule, and neither the openness of our proceedings nor the utter failure of the police to substantiate these allegations have been able to destroy the illusion. The open

espionage, menace and detective machinations to which we are subjected, are sufficient proof of its persistence. Nevertheless, it is due to the Government that we should speak the truth and it is open to them to consider or reject it at their pleasure. The one, the only remedy for the difficulties which beset them in India, is to cease from shutting their eyes on unpleasant facts, to recognise the depth, force and extent of the movement in India, the radical change that has come over the thoughts and hearts of the people and the impossibility of digging out that which wells up from the depths by the spades of repression. They are face to face with aspirations and agitations which are not only Indian but Asiatic, not only Asiatic but worldwide. They cannot do away by force with these opinions, these emotions, these developments unless they first trample down the resurgence in Japan, China, Turkey and Persia and reverse the march of progress in Europe and America. Neither can they circumvent the action of natural forces which are not moved by but move the Indian political leaders. Reforms which would have satisfied and quieted ten years ago are now a mere straw upon a torrent. Some day they must make up their minds to the inevitable and follow the example of rulers all over the world by conceding a popular constitution with whatever safeguards they choose for British interests and British sovereignty, and the earlier they can persuade themselves to concede it, the better terms they can make with the future. This has been the traditional policy of England all over the world, and it has always been an evil day for the Empire when statesmen have turned their backs on English traditions and adopted the blind impolicy of the Continental peoples. They have seen at Lahore and Hughly that Moderatism is a dead force impotent to help or to injure, that whatever the lips may profess, the hearts of the people are with Nationalism. Impolitic severity may transfer that allegiance to the militant revolutionism which is raising its head and thriving on the cessation of all legitimate political activity. The Nationalist leaders will stand unswervingly by their ideals and policy, but they may prove as helpless hereafter as the Moderates are in the face of the present situation.

The Anglo-Indian community, through its recognised organs, is now busy inflaming hostility, hounding on the Government to farther ill-advised measures of repression and adding darkness to darkness and confusion to confusion. Statesmanship they never had, but even common sense has departed from them. The Indian people made a fair offer of peace and alliance to them at the beginning of the movement by including goods produced in India through European enterprise and with European capital as genuine Swadeshi goods; but instead of securing their future interests and position by standing in the forefront of the political and industrial development of India, they have preferred to study their momentary caste interest and oppose the welfare of the country to which they owe their prosperity. As a punishment God has deprived them of reason. They are hacking at the roots of British investment and industry in India by driving blindly towards the creation of more unrest and anarchy in the country. They are imperilling a future which can still be saved, by fanatical attachment to a past which is doomed. If they could look at politics with the eye either of the statesman or of the man of business, they would see that neither their political nor their commercial interests can be served by a vain attempt to hold this vast country by pressing a mailed heel on the throats of the people. The pride of race, the arrogance of colour, a bastard mercantile Imperialism are poor substitutes for wisdom, statesmanship and common sense. Undoubtedly, they may induce the Government to silence and suppress, to imprison and deport till all tongues are hushed and all organisations are abolished — except the voice of the bomb and the revolver, except the subterranean organisation that, like a suppressed disease, breaks out the more you drive in its symptoms. Have they ever contemplated the possibility of that result of their endeavours — the possibility that their confusion of Nationalism with Terrorism may be ignorant and prejudiced, and that the measures they advocate may only destroy the one force that can now stand between India and chaos?

To the people also we have a last word to say. We have always advocated open agitation, a manly aspiration towards

freedom, a steady policy of independent, self-sustained action and peaceful resistance to the repression of legitimate activities. That policy was only possible on condition of a certain amount of self-restraint in repressive legislation by the Government, and a great amount of courage, self-restraint, resolution and self-sacrifice on the part of the people. It appears we cannot count on any of these conditions. The rise of a revolutionist party fanatically opposed alike to the continuance of the British connection and to peaceful development makes our policy yet more impossible. A triangular contest between violent revolution, peaceful Nationalist endeavour and bureaucratic reaction is an impossible position and would make chaos more chaotic. Any action at the present moment would be ill-advised and possibly disastrous. The Government demands co-operation from the Moderates, silence from the Nationalists. Let us satisfy them and let there be no action on our part which can be stigmatised as embarrassing the authorities in their struggle with Terrorism. The self-restraint of our party after the conviction of Mr. Tilak was rewarded by the breakdown of Moderatism after it had undisputed control of the press and platform for almost a year. A similar self-restraint will be equally fruitful now. Revolution paralyses our efforts to deal peacefully but effectively with Repression; Repression refuses to allow us to cut the ground from under the feet of Revolution. Both demand a clear field for their conflict. Let us therefore stand aside, sure that Time will work for us in the future as it has done in the past, and that, if we bear faithfully the burden of the ideal God has laid upon us, our hour may be delayed, but not denied to us for ever.

## The Elections

THE GREAT election is over, the first in England which has been fought on constitutional issues since the passing of the Reform Bill in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. The forces of reaction have put forth their utmost strength and, in the result, have only succeeded in just equalising their own numbers with those of the official Liberal party. This partial success will be more fatal to the cause of reaction than a defeat. For, in the coming Parliament, the Liberal Ministry will be dependent for their very existence on the forty Labour votes that represent the frankly socialistic element in English progressive opinion. Such a state of things has never before existed in English politics and a few years ago it would have been thought impossible. Practically, Socialist opinion will rule England so long as the Asquith Ministry lasts and, if the Socialists are wisely guided and refrain from abusing their opportunity, they will be able to take such steps in the modification of British politics as will ensure the triumph of Socialism in England at no distant date. Not only will the Government depend for its very existence on the Labour vote, but it will depend for its safety on Irish support. If, therefore, the Irish also are wisely guided and do not press the favourable situation too far, the long delayed concession of Home Rule is a certainty within the next two years. Necessarily, the success of the Irish and the Socialists can bear no fruit unless the veto of the House of Lords is annulled or a new elective Upper Chamber takes the place of the present absurd and antiquated institution. We have not therefore erred in forecasting a democratic revolution in England as the inevitable result of the action of the House of Lords in rejecting the Budget, or, as they euphemistically put it, referring it to the country. Mr. Balfour has recognised that the verdict of the United Kingdom has been given in favour of the Budget and against Tariff Reform. The real

issue is now, what it should have been throughout, the reform, abolition or replacement of the House of Lords.

When the elections were in progress, Mr. Asquith committed himself on the question of Home Rule, and, even if he wished to draw back from it, in face of his dependence on Labour and Irish votes he can no longer retreat. All that he has done is to qualify his promise of a final solution of the Irish question by stipulating that it shall contain provision for the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament as well as local autonomy of a liberal character for the Irish nation. This means not only the restriction of all Imperial questions to the province of the Parliament meeting in London, but the decision of questions between Ireland and England by the same body and possibly a power of veto in certain matters for the British Cabinet. It is impossible for an English statesman to go farther in the direction of Irish autonomy, and the Irish party will be well advised to accept even this qualified autonomy and make it an instrument for so developing the strength of the Irish nation as to make further concession in the future inevitable. The lifework of Parnell has not gone in vain; the two great questions he brought to a head by his masterly policy, the liberation of the Irish peasant from rack-renting landlords and the liberation of the Irish race from an unsympathetic domination, are both in process of solution within a quarter of a century of his untimely end. Liberty is a goddess who is exacting in her demands on her votaries, but, if they are faithful, she never disappoints them of their reward.

For India, the elections are as favourable as an English election can be. We do not regard the defeat of pro-Indian Liberal candidates as a calamity. There is always a limit to the efforts of members of Parliament, however sincere, who are bound by ties of party loyalty and discipline not to embarrass their official chiefs beyond a certain point. The Labour members and the Nationalists are bound by no such scruples and both of these parties have sympathy with India. The one problem before us is how to turn that sentiment of sympathy into an effective impetus towards action; for in European politics sentiment is not a sufficiently strong motive unless it is supported by some

practical community of interests. The Irish Parliamentary party were able to bring Home Rule into the category of realisable ideals because they made it to the interest of the British parties to get rid of the Irish difficulty; if that ideal is realised now, it will be because the interests of the English Liberals and the Irish Nationalists have become one and, therefore, they must accommodate each other. It is forces that effect great political changes, not moral sentiments or vague generousities. Even a great idea can only become operative when it is manifested as a working force with a definite aim and a distinct pressure on its environments.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda I.1

# KARMAYOGIN

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of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.,

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## Passing Thoughts

### Vedantic Art

The progress a new tendency or a new movement is making can be measured by the amount of opposition it meets, and it is encouraging to note that the revival of Indian Art is exciting intellectual opponents to adverse criticism. Mr. Vincent Smith, a solid and well-equipped scholar and historian but not hitherto noted as an art-critic, recently lectured on Indian Art, ancient and modern. It is not surprising that he should find little to praise in the characteristic Vedantic Art of our country and seek to limit its excellence to a few masterpieces. Neither is it surprising that he should object to the revival of the national traditions as restoring Brahminic separateness from the traditions of the rest of the world. These are arguments that are as obvious as they are superficial. But it is strange to find him basing his opinion of the inferiority of the Vedantic style on its appeal not being universal. This merely means that the Vedantic motive and conventions are new to the European mind, and the average eye, enslaved to old associations, cannot immediately welcome what is new and ill-understood. Every new step forward in artistic tradition within Europe itself has been met by the same limited comprehension and has had to get the assent first of the trained and sensitive taste and then of the average mind before it could be said

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to be universally recognised. The real question is whether the Vedantic style has anything in it that is true, deep and universal, whether it has a motive, a power of interpretation, a success in making Truth reveal itself in form, such as will ensure its conquest of prejudices based purely on inability to receive or welcome new impressions. The answer to that crucial question cannot be doubtful. Vedantic Art reveals spirit, essential truth, the soul in the body, the lasting type or idea in the mutable form with a power and masterly revelation of which European art is incapable. It is therefore sure to conquer Europe as steadily as Indian thought and knowledge are conquering the hard and narrow materialism of the nineteenth century.

### Asceticism and Enjoyment

Small things are often indicative of great and far-reaching tendencies. While glancing at the *Modern Review*,—always the best worth perusal of our Indian monthlies,—our attention was arrested by a slight illustrated article on Railways in India and America. The writer contrasts the squalor, indigence and discomfort of railway travelling in this Paradise of the efficient Anglo-Indian with the lavish comfort and opulence of railway furnishings and appointments in the United States. The contrast is indicative of the immense gulf between the teeming wealth of America and the miserable indigence of India, once the richest country in the world. America is the land above all lands where enjoyment, bhoga, is frankly recognised and accepted. India, many would say, is the land above all lands where bhoga is sternly refused. That is the common view; we are not inclined to think it the correct view. The asceticism of India is a phase, a characteristic of a civilisation dominated by an unfavourable environment and driven in upon itself. The classical period when India was full of life, activity, development, abounding vigour, defending herself successfully against the impact of the outer barbarian, was a period of frank and lavish enjoyment far more intellectual, artistic, perfect than anything Europe has ever been capable of, even at its best. In yet older literature we find the

true spirit of India, a splendid capacity for bhoga and tyaga in their highest terms, the utter enjoyment of the householder, the utter renunciation of the sannyasin. To take the utmost joy of life, to be capable of the utmost renunciation of life, at one and the same time, in the same mind and body, to be master of both capacities and bound by neither, — this was the secret of India, the mighty discipline of which Janaka was the traditional exemplar. “Renounce all that thou mayest enjoy all,” — this is India’s characteristic message, — not Buddha’s absolute renunciation, not the European’s enslavement to his bodily, vital and intellectual desires and appetites. Tyaga within, bhoga without, — Ananda, the divine delight of the purified soul, embracing both.

### **Aliens in Ancient India**

We extract elsewhere a brief article on the above subject from the December *Indian Review* for which we had no space in our former issues. The ancient Indian treatment of foreign residents forms a curious contrast to the spirit of exclusion which is growing upon modern nations. We have our own doubts about that little privilege of exemption from suits for debt which Mr. Hayavadana Rau mentions with appreciation; it would obviously place the alien merchant at a disadvantage when compared with the scrupulous honesty of the Indian traders, and we are not sure that it may not have been a subtle stroke of Chanakyalike diplomacy to coddle the resident foreign middleman out of existence while favouring the non-resident importer. The chief importance of the article is, however, the incidental light it throws on the organisation of life in ancient India. We are too apt to forget how noble, great and well-appointed a life it was. There were no railways, telegraphs or steamships, it is true, and democracy was beginning to go out of fashion in favour of a centralised bureaucratic monarchy. But in spite of these drawbacks, the ancient life of India was as splendid, as careful, as convenient, as humane, as enlightened in its organisation as that of any modern society or administration.

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### The Scholarship of Mr. Risley

We are not concerned with the political issues of Mr. Risley's great oratorical effort in connection with the Press Bill, for we have renounced politics; but Mr. Risley as a scholar falls within our province, and we can only hope our remarks on that subject will not expose us to the provision against bringing officials into contempt. Even at that risk we must take leave to say that we can only hope Mr. Risley's ethnological science is less remarkably muddled than his knowledge of Indian civilisation and literature. In his exhortation to Indian womanhood to stand fast to its ancient moorings he jumbles together Swayamvaras, the rape of the Sabines and Shacuntala in a miraculous fashion! At no Swayamvara that we are aware of, did the women come forward as peacemakers between the abducting hero and the disappointed suitors. Mr. Risley has been misled by pitchforking his early memories of Roman history into Indian epic and narrative. And need we say that there was neither Swayamvara, nor fighting nor peacemaking in the story of Shacuntala? This is the first time, moreover, that a startled Indian public has been pointed to Shacuntala as the ideal Hindu woman. Sita, Draupadi, Savitri, Damayanti, — these are familiar to us as ideals, but Shacuntala is Mr. Risley's own addition. To us she is a beautiful poetic creation, not an exemplar of feminine conduct. We observe that the *Bengalee* is full of admiration for Mr. Risley's poetic rapture over Shacuntala. We do not know whom we should congratulate more, the poet of the Press Bill or his admirer.

### Anarchism

Are we not entitled, by the way, in the interests of the English language, to protest against the misapplication of the word Anarchists to the Indian Terrorists and Anarchism to their policy? Their methods are wild and lawless, their effort is to create anarchy; but Anarchism and Anarchist are terms which imply something very different, a thing as yet unknown either in practice or in theory to India. The Irish Fenians did the same things as

the Indian Terrorists are now practising, but nobody ever called them Anarchists; to misapply this term is to bring anarchy into the modern use of language. It is doubtful whether any Indian who has not been to Europe, really knows what Anarchism is. Philosophically, it is the negation of the necessity of government; in practice, it is often the use of assassination to destroy all government irrespective of its nationality or nature. Democracy is as abhorrent to the Anarchist as Czarism, a national government as intolerable as the government of the foreigner. All government is to him an interference with the liberty of the individual, and he sets out to assassinate Czar or democratic President, constitutional king or imperial Caesar with a terrible impartiality, an insane logicity. For if we ask him how liberty of any kind except the liberty of the strong to prey on the weak can exist in the absence of government, he will probably answer that by right education right ideas and right feelings will be established and the spirit of brotherhood will prevent the abuse of liberty, and if anyone infringes this unwritten law, he must be destroyed as if he were a noxious wild beast. And by a parallel logic he seeks to destroy all the living symbols of a state of society which stands in the way of the coming of his millennium.

### **The Gita and Terrorism**

Mr. Risley repeats a charge we have grown familiar with, that the Gita has been misused as a gospel of Terrorism. We cannot find any basis for this accusation except the bare fact that the teaching of the Gita was part of the education given by Upen-dranath Banerji in the Maniktola garden. There is no evidence to show that its tenets were used to justify a gospel of Terrorism. The only doctrine of the Gita the Terrorist can pervert to his use, is the dictum that the Kshatriya must slay as a part of his duty and he can do it without sin if he puts egoism away and acts selflessly without attachment, in and for God, as a sacrifice, as an offering of action to the Lord of action. If this teaching is in itself false, there is no moral basis for the hero, the soldier, the judge, the king, the legislature which recognises

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capital punishment. They must all be condemned as criminals and offenders against humanity. It is undoubtedly true that since the revival of religious thought in India the Gita has ceased to be what Mr. Risley calls it, a transcendental philosophy, and has been made a rule of life. It is undoubtedly true that selflessness, courage, a free and noble activity have been preached as the kernel of the ethics of the Gita. That teaching has in no country been condemned as ignoble, criminal or subversive of morality, nor is a philosophy of any value to any sensible being if it is only transcendental and cannot be lived. We strongly protest against the brand of suspicion that has been sought to be placed in many quarters on the teaching and possession of the Gita, — our chief national heritage, our hope for the future, our great force for the purification of the moral weaknesses that stain and hamper our people.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN THIS ISSUE

The Three Purushas  
A System of National Education I  
Conversations of the Dead I  
Anandamath XIII (continued)  
Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda I.2, II.1

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## Passing Thoughts

### The Bhagalpur Literary Conference

The prevalence of annual conferences in the semi-Europeanised life of Bengal is a curious phenomenon eloquent of the unreality of our present culture and the inefficiency of our modernised existence. Our old life was well, even minutely organised on an intelligent and consistent Oriental model. The modern life of Europe is well and largely organised on an intelligent and consistent Occidental model. It materialises certain main ideas of life and well-being, provides certain centres of life, equips them efficiently, serves the objects with which they are instituted. Our old life did the same. But this is precisely what our modern life does not do. Its institutions are apes of a foreign plan, unintelligent expressions of an idea which is not ours; they serve no civic, no national purpose. They are the spasmodic movements of an organism whose own life is arrested, but which feels itself compelled to move, however awkwardly and uselessly, if only to persuade itself that it is not dead. We have for instance a Literary Conference which meets once a year, if nothing occurs to prevent it. But such an annual celebration has no intelligent purpose except as the centre of an organised literary life. The pulse of our literary life is feeble and artificial. Its centres are conspicuous by their absence. In Europe the club, the literary

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paper, the coterie, the school of writing, the Academy are distinct entities in which the members of the organism have living relations, a common atmosphere, a common intellectual food. They have no Literary Conference because the literary life of Europe is a reality. We in India have neither these institutions nor any other centres of our own. The Conference is a convulsive attempt to relate ourselves to each other, which evinces a vague desire for united living, but no capacity to effect it. There was a time when a vigorous literary life seemed about to form itself in Bengal, and its relics are seen in the literary magazine and the Sahitya Parishad; but at present these serve only to record the extremely languid pulsation of our intellectual existence. The great intellectual stir, hopefulness and activity of the last century has disappeared. The individual lives to himself, vigorously or feebly, according to the varying robustness of his personality or intensity of his temperament. Coordination is still far from us.

### **Life and Institutions**

Life creates institutions; institutions do not create, but express and preserve life. This is a truth we are too apt to forget. The Europeans and especially our gurus, the English, attach an exaggerated importance to machinery, because their own machinery has been so successful, their organisation so strong and triumphant. In the conceit of this success they imagine that their machinery is the only machinery and that the adoption of their organisation by foreign peoples is all that is needed for perfect social and political felicity. In Europe this blind attachment to machinery does not do fatal harm, because the life of a free nation has developed the existing institutions and modifies them by its own irresistible law of life and development. But to take over those institutions and think that they will magically develop European virtues, force and robustness, or the vivid and vigorous life of Europe, is as if a man were to steal another's coat and think to take over with it his character. Have not indeed many of us thought by masquerading in the amazing garb which nineteenth

century Europe developed, to become so many brown Englishmen? This curious conjuring trick did not work; hatted, coated and pantalooned, we still kept the chaddar and the dhooty in our characters. The fond attempt to become great, enlightened and civilised by borrowing European institutions will be an equally disastrous failure.

### **Indian Conservatism**

In India we were, if possible, even more attached to our machinery — all the more because we had ceased to understand the science of social mechanics which they embodied. We attached a superstitious importance to maintaining our society exactly in the mould of our Shastras while in reality that mould had been altered out of recognition centuries ago. We quoted Parashara and Manu while we followed Raghunandan and custom. This religious fiction was very much like the English superstition about the British constitution which is supposed to be the same thing it was in the days of Lord Somers, but is really a thing Lord Somers would have stared at aghast as an unrecognisable democratic horror. The cause is the same in both cases — a robust and tenacious society freely developing its machinery in response to its inner needs while cherishing and preserving them. Englishman and Hindu have been alike in their tenacious conservatism and their refusal to accept revolution, alike in their respect for law and the thing established, alike in their readiness to change rapidly and steadily if the innovator would only disguise from them the fact that they were changing. The Hindu advanced more slowly because he was an Asiatic in a period of contraction, the Englishman more quickly because he was a European in a period of expansion. If our social reformers had understood this Indian characteristic, they might have revolutionised our society with comparatively small friction, but the parade of revolution which they made hampered their cause. Even as it is, Indian society, in Bengal at least, is changing utterly while all the time loudly protesting that it has not changed and will not change. The mould in which Raghunandan cast society, is disintegrating

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as utterly as the mould of Parashara or Manu has disintegrated. What will replace it, is another matter.

### **Samaj and Shastra**

Every Samaj must have its Shastra, written or unwritten. Where there is no Social Scripture, there is none the less a minute and rigid code of social laws binding men in their minutest actions. The etiquette of the European is no less binding than the minute scrupulosities of Manu or Raghunandan, and it is even more minute and scrupulous. It is a mistake to think that in Europe men can eat as they will, talk as they will, act as they will with impunity. They cannot — or at least they could not, though one hears of strange revolutions, and in the days of the suffragette everything is possible. Society everywhere is exacting, scrupulous, minute, pitiless in punishment of slight departures from its code, however absurd and unreasonable that code may be. But while in India the sanction is religious, in Europe it is social. In India a man dreaded spiritual impurity, in Europe he shrinks from the sneers and dislike of his class or his fellows. Social excommunication is always the ultimate penalty.

### **Revolution**

But in Europe and India alike we seem to stand on the threshold of a vast revolution, political, social and religious. Whatever nation now is the first to solve the problems which are threatening to hammer Governments, creeds, societies into pieces all the world over, will lead the world in the age that is coming. It is our ambition that India should be that nation. But in order that she should be what we wish, it is necessary that she should be capable of unsparing revolution. She must have the courage of her past knowledge and the immensity of soul that will measure itself with her future. This is impossible to England, it is not impossible to India. She has in her something daemonic, volcanic, elemental — she can rise above conventions, she can break through formalities and prejudices. But she will not do

so unless she is sure that she has God's command to do it, — unless the Avatar descends and leads. She will follow a Buddha or a Mohammad wherever he will lead her, because he is to her either God himself, or his servant, — because as Sri Ramakrishna would have put it, she saw the *chapras*. It was a little of that daemonic, volcanic, elemental thing in the heart of the Indian which Lord Curzon lashed into life in 1905. But the awakening was too narrow in its scope, too feebly supported with strength, too ill-informed in knowledge. Above all the Avatar had not descended. So the movement has drawn back to await a farther and truer impulse. Meanwhile let it inform its intellect and put more iron into its heart, awaiting a diviner manifestation.

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN ISSUES 33–36

The Strength of Stillness  
 Conversations of the Dead II  
 A System of National Education II–V  
 Baji Purbhou (poem)  
 The Principle of Evil  
 The Stress of the Hidden Spirit  
 Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda II.2, III.1

Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta for Chandernagore in the middle of February 1910. His connection with the *Karmayogin* ceased with his sudden departure. The editorial matter in the issue of 19 February certainly was written by him. Most articles in subsequent issues were written by Sister Nivedita. Two pieces by Sri Aurobindo published in the *Karmayogin* after his departure are reproduced on the following pages.



## Sj. Aurobindo Ghose

**W**E ARE greatly astonished to learn from the local Press that Sj. Aurobindo Ghose has disappeared from Calcutta and is now interviewing the Mahatmas in Tibet. We are ourselves unaware of this mysterious disappearance. As a matter of fact Sj. Aurobindo is in our midst and, if he is doing any astral business with Kuthumi or any of the other great Rishis, the fact is unknown to his other Koshas. Only as he requires perfect solitude and freedom from disturbance for his Sadhan for some time, his address is being kept a strict secret. This is the only foundation for the remarkable rumour which the vigorous imagination of a local contemporary has set floating. For similar reasons he is unable to engage in journalistic works, and *Dharma* has been entrusted to other hands.

*Karmayogin* no. 37, 19 March 1910

## In Either Case

**T**HERE are two movements of humanity, upward and downward, and both are irresistible. It may seem for a moment that the downward movement is arrested and an upward lift may for a while rejoice the hearts that are attached to a cause forsaken by God and Destiny. The majestic or impetuous rise of a religion, an idea, a nation may for a fleeting period be held back by main force and with a fierce and infinite labour the wheel may be driven back for the space of an inch or even two. But God cannot be deceived and God cannot be conquered by violence. Where He is the Charioteer, victory is certain and if He wheels back, it is only to leave ground which is no longer advantageous to Him and shift the conflict to terrain fixed beforehand for the victory. Often He forces His adversaries to drive Him from ground conquered and occupied in order that they may exhaust their strength on a position never meant to be permanently held and by their very triumph prepare a more decisive overthrow.

Minute minds fix themselves on details and say, "Here we have failed, there we have prevailed"; and if the record of defeats seems to be long and ill-balanced by doubtful successes, they grow discouraged and apprehend the ruin of their cause. So men deceive themselves as to the trend of events by not keeping their eyes open to the great stream of inevitable tendency which prevails over all backwashes and petty currents. And where defeat is predestined for a season, their want of faith leads to the very calamity which they apprehended. The eye of Faith is not one with the eye of Knowledge; — Faith divines in the large what Knowledge sees distinctly and clearly; but in the main thing Faith and Knowledge are one and the wisdom of the Lover is justified and supported by the wisdom of the Seer. Faith fights for God, while Knowledge is waiting for fulfilment,

and so long as the latter is withheld, the former is necessary. For without indomitable Faith or inspired Wisdom no great cause can conquer.

We must look therefore to the great tendency of things and interpret in their light the minute events that are passing at the moment. Is the main tendency of things upward or downward? If it is downward, even then we must strive, for the man who abandons a cause which is right because it is denied success, is despicable, and he inflicts a wound on mankind in the present and the future. Great causes which are fought out boldly to the end are made sacred by courage and suffering and their resurrection and final victory is inevitable. Only those which are supported by cowards and meanly abandoned, are erased from the books of the future. The mediaeval movement of civic liberty in France and Italy failed and gave place to Teutonic despotism, but it revived with a hundredfold force in the French Revolution and it was the impetuous rush earthwards of the souls that had fought for it hundreds of years before that shattered to pieces the once victorious feudal system. But if, as we are assured, the movement is upward, then we may persist in absolute confidence, sure that reverses in details are only meant to prepare and point the true way to victory.

Persistence does not imply persistence in methods that have proved to be infructuous or from which, though temporarily fruitful, God has withdrawn His sanction. We must remember that we are a nation not yet trained in the vaster movements of modern politics. Not only our rank and file, but our captains and our strategists need the training of events, the wisdom of experience to make them perfect. Fire, impetuosity, self-sacrifice, intellectual vigour, subtlety, wealth of ideas, fertility of resource to meet unexpected happenings, these have been given to us in abundance. But the perfect experience of the veteran in great battles, the acute political intelligence which comes of long familiarity with the handling of high affairs and national destinies, these are yet in us immature and in a state of pupillage. But God Himself is our master and teacher, for He would give to His chosen nation a faultless training and a perfect capacity.

Only we must be ready to acknowledge our mistakes, to change our path, to learn. Then only shall we victoriously surmount all obstacles and move steadily, impetuously, but without stumbling or swerving, to our goal.

Moreover, we have weaknesses that are still rampant and uncorrected in our midst. It is our first duty to purge these out of our hearts with a merciless surgery. If the intellectual equipment is deficient, the spiritual equipment is also far from perfect. Our leaders and our followers both require a deeper sadhana, a more direct communion with the Divine Guru and Captain of our movement, an inward uplifting, a grander and more impetuous force behind thought and deed. It has been driven home to us by experience after experience, that not in the strength of a raw unmoralised European enthusiasm shall we conquer. Indians, it is the spirituality of India, the sadhana of India, *tapasya*, *jnanam*, *shakti* that must make us free and great. And these great things of the East are ill-rendered by their inferior English equivalents, discipline, philosophy, strength. *Tapasya* is more than discipline; it is the materialisation in ourselves by spiritual means of the divine energy creative, preservative and destructive. *Jnanam* is more than philosophy, it is the inspired and direct knowledge which comes of what our ancients called *drishti*, spiritual sight. *Shakti* is more than strength, it is the universal energy which moves the stars, made individual. It is the East that must conquer in India's uprising. It is the Yogin who must stand behind the political leader or manifest within him; Ramdas must be born in one body with Shivaji, Mazzini mingle with Cavour. The divorce of intellect and spirit, strength and purity may help a European revolution, but by a European strength we shall not conquer.

The movements of the last century failed because they were too purely intellectual and had not an enlightened heart behind them. Nationalism has striven to supply the deficiency; it has poured the inspirations of the heart into a swifter and more discerning intellectual activity. But Nationalism also has been defective; it has been Indian in sentiment and aspiration, European in practice and actuality. It has helped itself with the intellect, rejoicing in its own lightness, clearness, accuracy, shrewd insight,

but it has not been sufficiently supported by inspired wisdom. It has attached itself to imaginations and idealisms, but has not learned to discern the deeper Truth and study the will of God. It has been driven by ardent and vehement emotions, but was defective in clear will-power and the pure energy that is greater and more impetuous than any passionate feeling. Either Nationalism will purify itself, learn a more sacred truth and command a diviner impulse, or it will have to abandon utterly its old body and get itself a new. The pressure of events seems to be pointing in the latter direction. But in either case defeat cannot be the end, victory must be the end.

In all the events of the last year and a half the voice of the divine Teacher can be heard crying to us, "Abandon that you may possess; do my will and know yourselves, purify yourselves, cease to follow your fancies." He that has ears, let him hear. Knowledge will not come without self-communion, without light from within, not even the knowledge of the practical steps that can lead to success. Every step that is taken in the light of a lower wisdom will fail until the truth is driven home.

The work that was begun at Dakshineswar is far from finished, it is not even understood. That which Vivekananda received and strove to develop, has not yet materialised. The truth of the future that Bijoy Goswami hid within himself, has not yet been revealed utterly to his disciples. A less discreet revelation prepares, a more concrete force manifests, but where it comes, when it comes, none knoweth.

*Karmayogin* no. 38, 26 March 1910

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OTHER WRITINGS BY SRI AUROBINDO IN ISSUES 37–39

A System of National Education VI–VIII  
Some Aphorisms of Bhartrihari  
Chitrangada (poem)



## APPENDIX

### *Karmayogin* Writings in Other Volumes of the Complete Works

Non-political writings from the *Karmayogin* are published in other volumes of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO. In the table below, the items included in each volume are listed in the order of their appearance in the *Karmayogin*. The original titles are given. Some of these writings were later revised by Sri Aurobindo.

#### VOLUME 1. EARLY CULTURAL WRITINGS

Two Pictures  
Kalidasa's Seasons  
Suprabhat: A Review  
Indian Art and an Old Classic  
The Brain of India  
The Revival of Indian Art  
The National Value of Art  
The Men that Pass  
Conversations of the Dead  
A System of National Education

#### VOLUME 2. COLLECTED POEMS

Invitation  
Who?  
An Image  
The Birth of Sin  
Epiphany  
Baji Purbhou  
Chitrangada

## VOLUME 5. TRANSLATIONS

Anandamath  
Some Aphorisms of Bhartrihari

## VOLUME 13. ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY AND YOGA

The Ideal of the Karmayogin  
Karmayoga  
Man — Slave or Free?  
Yoga and Human Evolution  
Yoga and Hypnotism  
The Greatness of the Individual  
The Process of Evolution  
Stead and the Spirits  
Stead and Maskelyne  
Fate and Free-Will  
The Three Purushas  
The Strength of Stillness  
The Principle of Evil  
The Stress of the Hidden Spirit

## VOLUME 17. ISHA UPANISHAD

The Isha Upanishad

## VOLUME 18. KENA AND OTHER UPANISHADS

The Kena Upanishad  
The Katha Upanishad  
Moondac Upanishad of the Atharvaveda

## Note on the Text

KARMAYOGIN: POLITICAL WRITINGS AND SPEECHES 1909–1910 consists of articles published in the weekly newspaper *Karmayogin* in 1909 and 1910 and speeches delivered during the same period. The articles are published issue by issue in the order of their appearance, the speeches by date of delivery.

Between May 1909 and February 1910 Sri Aurobindo was the most prominent leader of the Nationalist or Extremist Party in Bengal. He had spent the previous year in jail while the Alipore Bomb Case, in which he was the principal accused, was under trial. Acquitted and released on 6 May 1909, he found the party disorganised and without an English-language organ, as the *Bande Mataram*, a newspaper he edited from 1906 to 1908, had been suppressed a few months after his arrest. He resolved to continue to place the nationalist ideal before the country; but he now conceived this ideal in less purely political terms than before his arrest. During his imprisonment he had undergone a series of spiritual experiences that had changed his outlook on life. When he decided to launch the *Karmayogin*, he conceived of it as “A Weekly Review of National Religion, Literature, Science, Philosophy, &c.”

The first issue of the *Karmayogin*, which came out on 19 June 1909, contained part of the “Uttarpara Speech”, which had been delivered on 30 May, as well as two important articles setting forth the purpose of the journal and the task before the country. Each issue of the journal after the first contained the following:

(1) A column consisting of from three to twelve headlined paragraphs dealing with one or more topics. Between 26 June 1909 and 5 February 1910 the column was called “Facts and Opinions” (with some variants). On 12 February the heading was changed to “Passing Thoughts”. Subjects dealt with included current events, British rule, party politics, “national religion”, and the like.

(2) One or two leading articles dealing with the same subjects in more depth.

Many issues also contained material by Sri Aurobindo in one or more of the following categories:

(3) Articles on philosophy, yoga and related topics. There is no clear border between articles in this category and those on national religion.

(4) Single articles or instalments of longer works on cultural topics: education, art, literature, etc.

(5) Literary works, including translations from the Sanskrit and the Bengali, poems, etc.

(6) Transcriptions of speeches. These were reproduced from other newspapers, which employed shorthand writers to take down the proceedings of public meetings. Some of them were revised by Sri Aurobindo for publication in the *Karmayogin*.

In addition, the *Karmayogin* contained:

(7) Articles and speeches by other persons reproduced from the Indian and British press.

(8) Articles written for the *Karmayogin* by other persons.

(9) Two or three pages of ordinary news per issue.

(10) Advertisements.

After the first several issues, the *Karmayogin* contained few articles written for it by other persons. Almost all original matter appearing in the journal was written by Sri Aurobindo.

In *Karmayogin: Political Writings and Speeches 1909–1910* the editors have reproduced only Sri Aurobindo's columns (whatever the subject), his longer articles on current politics and national religion, and the speeches delivered during this period. Other writings by him published in the *Karmayogin* are listed at the end of each issue. A table at the end of the book gives the volume of THE COMPLETE WORKS OF SRI AUROBINDO in which these writings are published.

Sri Aurobindo left Calcutta in the middle of February 1910, probably before the nineteenth of the month. From that time the newspaper was edited by Sister Nivedita (Margaret Noble), and most of its articles were written by her. Writings (essays, translations and poems) that Sri Aurobindo had left behind in Calcutta continued to be published in the journal until it was discontinued on 2 April 1910. Sri Aurobindo spent late February and March incognito in the French enclave of Chandernagore, located thirty kilometers north of Calcutta. From here

he sent the amusing letter published in the *Karmayogin* of 19 March. His essay “In Either Case” was either left behind in Calcutta or sent from Chandernagore.

On 31 March Sri Aurobindo left Chandernagore for Calcutta and the next morning boarded a ship that took him to Pondicherry, the capital of French India. Here he remained for the rest of his life. His departure from Calcutta marked the end of his active involvement in politics.

**Printing history.** Most of the writings in the present volume made their first appearance in print since 1909–10 in *Karmayogin: Early Political Writings—II*, volume 2 of the Sri Aurobindo Birth Centenary Library (1972). “An Open Letter to My Countrymen” was issued as a pamphlet shortly after its publication in the *Karmayogin* in 1909. Several articles from the journal were reproduced, sometimes after revision, in three booklets: *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (1918, 1919, 1921, 1927, 1937, 1938, 1945, 1950 and subsequently), *Man—Slave or Free?* (1922, 1966), and *The Need in Nationalism and Other Essays* (1923). The *Uttarpara Speech* was published as a booklet in 1919, 1920, 1922, 1943, 1950 and subsequently. An edition of Sri Aurobindo’s *Speeches*, including six speeches published in the present volume as well as the “Open Letter”, was brought out as a booklet in 1922 and reissued four times between 1948 and 1974. A new edition, published in 1993, included five speeches not published during Sri Aurobindo’s lifetime. Copies of them were discovered in British India government files and first published in *Karmayogin: Early Political Writings and Speeches—II* or in the journal *Sri Aurobindo: Archives and Research*.

The texts of all the writings and speeches published in the present volume have been checked against the original *Karmayogin*, the booklets *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* and *The Need in Nationalism*, and the original sources of the speeches.