



LOKAMANYA TILAK

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Foreword

The conquest of a nation by an alien power does not mean merely the loss of political freedom; it means the loss of one's self-confidence too. Due to economic exploitation by the ruling power, the conquered nation is deprived of its natural resources and the people lose their sense of self-respect. Slavery leads to moral degradation and it thus becomes essential to restore self-confidence in the people so that they become fearless enough to participate in the struggle for freedom. In this respect Tilak played a pioneering role in India's freedom struggle. For nearly four decades, he directed his energies to the task of creating the consciousness in the people that *swarajya* was their birthright. As editor of the *Kesafy* he opposed the tyrannical British rule and raised his voice against the injustices perpetrated on the Indians. With Chhatrapati Shivaji as his perennial source of inspiration, Tilak appealed to the people to emulate the great Maratha warrior and revive the glorious past.

During the famine of 1896, Tilak made a fervent plea that the government must provide relief to the peasants, as stipulated in the Famine Relief Code. When Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India, partitioned Bengal, the people of Bengal were enraged. Tilak, alongwith Lala Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal, made the issue of partition a national cause and appealed to the people to assert their rights. In 1908, after the bomb blast in Muzaffarpore, Tilak, through the *Kesari*, warned the British government that the Indian youth would rise in revolt if the legitimate and just demands of the people were not acceded to. The government responded by arresting him and prosecuting him for sedition. He was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and transported to the Mandalay prison in Burma. Tilak suffered the punishment stoically, carried on his pursuit of knowledge even in prison, and wrote the *Gita-Rahasya* —a monumental philosophical treatise containing the message of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and his own interpretation of the text.

On his release from prison in 1914, Tilak resumed his struggle for the freedom of the country. His entire life of sacrifice and political integrity earned him a place in the hearts of his countrymen who came to refer to him as 'Lokamanya Tilak'. He toured different parts of India, spoke to the people in his simple and direct style and aroused them to fight for *swarajya*. He succeeded in awakening them from their stupor and paved the way for reaching the goal of *swarajya*.

Though many books have been written on Lokamanya Tilak, here in this book, I have made an humble effort to present some of the lesser known aspects of his personality. Prof. A.K. Bhagwat and I had co-authored a biography on Tilak at the time of his birth centenary celebrations in 1956 for which, I am grateful to him. I started studying the life and works of Lokamanya Tilak in 1954; yet, even after four decades, I feel that my efforts to probe the depths of his personality are still incomplete.

Pune
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1. STUDENT AND TEACHER

Youth is the springtime of life. During this happy period spirits soar high, eager to accept any challenge, face any danger.

Two young students, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, both studying at the Deccan College in Poona, sat engrossed with thoughts on the present and the future in an optimistic and self-confident frame of mind. Both had impressed their teachers with their intelligence and desire to acquire knowledge. While most students wove rosy dreams about their personal life, Tilak and Agarkar thought of their society and the future of their country. They were idealists prepared to dedicate their lives to a noble cause. Their favourite pastime was to go for walks on a hillock nearby and hold discussions on varied subjects. At times they would get involved in heated arguments particularly when the two differed sharply in their views. However, these differences did not come in the way of their friendship as each was aware of the other's sincerity and earnestness.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak was born on 23rd July 1856, in a middle-class family at Ratnagiri. His father Gangadhar Pant worked in the Education Department of the government. Bal lost his mother at an early age and was, therefore, brought up by his paternal aunt. He had his primary education at Ratnagiri. His father was then transferred to Poona as Assistant Deputy Educational Inspector. During Bal's school days, his father regularly made him recite the *sub-hashitas*, *shlokas* and other verses in Sanskrit and Marathi.

As was customary in those days, Bal got married at a young age in 1871. A year later he lost his father. His uncle Govindrao took charge of the household. On completing his matriculation at the age of sixteen, Bal joined the Deccan College at Poona. Since his father had made adequate provision for him, Tilak could complete his college education without being burdened by economic constraints. He secured a first class in his B.A. examination with mathematics as the main subject. As a student Tilak was known for his razor-sharp intelligence and love for reading.

Agarkar came from a poor family. He had to pass through many hardships, both during his high school as well as college days, that is, while studying at the Deccan College. But that did not deter him in any way. In a letter to his mother, Agarkar wrote: "Dear Mother, I know you must be hoping now that your son has passed his high school examination, he would get an officer's job which would enable you to lead a happy life. However, let me tell you frankly, I have decided to earn just as much as is required for sustenance; I shall be satisfied with modest means of livelihood and will spend the rest of my life for the good of the society."

These two young friends had diametrically opposite views regarding the manner in which they would serve their country. Tilak was of the opinion that they ought to devote their energies to the task of liberating their motherland from the British yoke. Agarkar, on the other hand, felt that though political independence was important, it was necessary first to reform the society through social work and then turn one's attention to political work. Tilak, being a student of mathematics, was forthright in his approach and clear in his perception. Agarkar, a student of philosophy, with a rare sensitive mind, was keen to launch a battle against the evils and injustices perpetrated in Indian society. One thing

they had in common—both were voracious readers and admirers of two great English thinkers—Mill and Spencer, whose thoughts and ideas greatly influenced them.

Both Tilak and Agarkar had no time for futile talks or sterile discussions. Both were eager to act but according to each one's own ideological convictions. For days together they would discuss India's problems and how these could be overcome. It was through these discussions that their ideas took shape and both came to the conclusion that before plunging into either the political or social field, it was necessary to spread education, an essential prerequisite for laying the foundation for their future work. This was no compromise, but a realistic decision taken after careful thought and serious deliberations.

It was but natural for both Tilak and Agarkar to hold in great regard the then leaders of the society and be influenced by their ideas. Mahadeo Govind Ranade was the leader who profoundly influenced their thoughts and ideas. Ranade, a judge in the High Court, was a great scholar with wide vision and earnest desire to serve the society. Even though in government service, Ranade had worked endlessly towards the enlightenment of his people through his words and deeds. He started institutions like the Sarvajanik Sabha, established libraries at different places and started a series of spring lectures, in Poona, for educating the people and making them aware of their rights and duties to the Indian society. Tilak and Agarkar held Justice Ranade in high esteem, but somehow felt that they could serve the society better only if, unlike Ranade, they kept themselves away from the shackles of government service. Interestingly enough, it was during this period that Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar resigned from his government job to start publishing his inspiring writings. Chiplunkar had a powerful pen and edited a Marathi magazine, *Shala Patrak*. In 1872 he wrote an article entitled, 'The Mission of a Teacher'. In this inspiring article, Chiplunkar drew attention to the fact that in the hands of idealist teachers, education can become a powerful weapon like a sword—sharp, forceful and penetrating. When Tilak and Agarkar took the decision of devoting their energies to education, it was the ideas put forth by Chiplunkar that made them conscious of the nature of their mission. When these two young idealists came to know that Chiplunkar had decided to start a high school in Poona, they met him in September 1879 and expressed their desire to join him in his mission by working as teachers in the proposed high school. This gave an impetus to Chiplunkar's project and on 2nd January 1880 started the New English School in Poona. Among those to join the school was Vaman Shivaram Apte, an eminent Sanskrit scholar who took charge as headmaster at the high school.

Another very hard-working, dedicated and resourceful person, Madhavrao Namjoshi, also joined this team of teachers. In those days most students of the Deccan College, on completing graduation from the University of Bombay, preferred to enter into government service or start practising as lawyers. But Tilak and Agarkar chose to shun a stable and secure life and took to the thorny path of idealism. They wanted to create awareness in the young generation regarding the future of the society and inculcate in them the noble values of patriotism. These idealists, scoffed at by the so-called successful persons in society, were determined to accept the challenge of their times. They paid no heed to criticism by the worldly wise because they held a strong belief in the words of the revolutionary Marathi poet Keshavsut, who had said, "There is great substance in the so-called futile ideals and those who seek this substance are generally dubbed as mad men."

The founding of the New English School marked the first step in the path of enlightenment and social service. Thus also began a new chapter in the life of Tilak and his colleagues. A school which started with only thirty-five students in the first year, grew in strength with the number of its pupils rising to three hundred and thirty-six in the next year. Prof. Wordsworth, an eminent and a renowned professor in Deccan College, showed his appreciation by writing: "I am surprised at the remarkable success of the New English School. The education imparted in our college to the students has created in them strength and fervour. This school is an expression of that strength." Dr William Hunter too, who was then the Director of Education, admitted that the standard of education in the New English School was higher than that in the government high schools.

The next step in the field of education was the establishment of the Deccan Education Society on 24th October 1884. Shortly afterwards, the Fergusson College was founded on 2nd January 1885. When Tilak and Agarkar were students in the Deccan College, it had been their dream "to start a new college after finishing their studies". This dream became a reality with the starting of the Fergusson College. Both Tilak and Agarkar, after they had taught in the New English School for about five years, started feeling the need for teaching in a college. During his student days, Tilak's capability in mathematics had been highly appreciated both by his fellow students and professors. Sharangpani, a friend of Tilak, has related the following incident about Tilak. Once he found Tilak walking restlessly in his room. When Sharangpani asked Tilak the cause for his disturbed state of mind, Tilak replied that he was thinking about a problem in integral calculus. Sharangpani said, "Then why don't you meet Prof. Chhatre?" Tilak replied, "I know the method of solving the problem as stated in our text-book but, I want to solve it by a different method." Next day Tilak could arrive at a new method. He approached Prof. Chhatre with his solution which impressed the latter so much that he remarked, "Tilak's intelligence has the brilliance of the sun."

No wonder, Tilak was eager to make the best of this opportunity to teach at Fergusson College. He greatly enjoyed his work. However, Tilak's teaching was appreciated by brilliant students but the ordinary students had difficulty in keeping pace with him because while teaching, for instance, the binomial theorem, he tended to state the initial¹ steps verbally and to write only the important steps on the blackboard. L.R.Pangarkar, who later earned recognition as a scholar and writer in Marathi, was a student of Fergusson College, and in one of his lectures, said, "Those who have fine sensibilities, study and enjoy poetry and those who have a dry matter-of-fact mind, study mathematics and science." When Tilak came to know of this observation made by Pangarkar, he called him and said, "There is poetry in mathematics but it requires a particular type of intelligence to understand the poetic charm of mathematics. Just as you visualise beauty while reading poetry, I visualise beauty while studying astronomy and while making mathematical calculations about the stars during their course." Tilak further added, "I think a person, who does not understand mathematics, has a defective intellect."

Chiplunkar, Agarkar and Tilak enjoyed the work of teaching and coming in contact with young and impressionable students. They, however, did not want to restrict their students' activities to the field of education. They wanted to widen their horizon by teaching them about the people, the political and social problems besides inculcating in them the spirit of patriotism. Realising that the newspaper was the most powerful

instrument for educating the people, they decided to launch a newspaper. Here it is necessary to take into consideration the situation prevailing in India and the challenges faced by those who wanted to mould public opinion.

The British had initially come to India for the purpose of trade. The East India Company started trade in different parts of India. After a few years, ambitious persons like Robert Clive began to feel that political power was essential for safeguarding the economic interests of the East India Company and that of Britain. India was ruled in different parts by different rulers. The Mughals were dominant in north India. The Peshwas ruled Maharashtra, the Rajput princes governed Rajasthan while there were feudal lords spread in other parts of India. Clive with his policy of 'divide and rule', set one ruler against the other and used all means in his power to establish his supremacy in various parts of India, primarily with the help of money-lenders and selfish feudal lords. Bengal was the first to be brought under British rule. Later their rule extended to other regions too. Some resistance was offered to the British, particularly by the Santhals in south Bihar. But as there was no combined resistance by the Indians, the British succeeded in crushing the Adivasi revolt and of various patriotic groups in different parts of India. Till the eighteenth century, the Indian society was prosperous. India had a huge section of weavers who helped the country in exporting cloth to many countries in the East. The British could not tolerate this rivalry to their dominance in trade and chose to destroy the Indian handloom industry. Thus the export trade was destroyed and India soon became impoverished. Further, owing to the caste system of the Hindus, political power was concentrated in the hands of the upper caste Brahmins. As a result, the society was fragmented. The Peshwas, instead of looking after the welfare of their people, acted selfishly, ruling in a tyrannical way. The common people were exploited and the scheduled castes were given inhuman treatment by being treated as untouchables. They were fed up with the corrupt and decadent regime of the Peshwas and as such the British encountered no difficulty in conquering the Deccan. The common people in India were brave and patriotic while the rulers were corrupt and inefficient, but there was no alternate leadership. Moreover the British had modern weapons and knew the techniques of modern warfare, whereas the Indian soldiers fought with arms which were outdated. As a result of these factors— political, social and military—British hegemony was established. In 1857, there was a major uprising in which Bahadur Shah Zafar, the Mughal Emperor, Nanasaheb Peshwa and Laxmibai, the Queen of Jhansi, incited their people to revolt. The Indian soldiers who had joined the British Army, revolted against the British. However, the leaders of this national uprising did not get any co-operation from the people in the south, while in the north, Sikhs and many Rajput princes joined hands with the British. As a consequence, the first war of independence in 1857 was quelled and the British brought the whole of India under their domination. India lost her freedom while the British established imperial rule in India.

The British rulers decided to administer the country with the help of the 'native' people. They started schools and colleges for educating the Indians who could then be recruited for different jobs in administration. Universities were established in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. This gave the young generation access to modern knowledge. Many students viewed this opportunity for higher education from a utilitarian point of view and, as expected by the British/ willingly joined government service. However, some gifted students transcended the limitations imposed by the examination system and

started a different pursuit of knowledge which would help in developing a new outlook on life. Raja Rammohun Roy in Calcutta was the first such individual who was proud of his cultural heritage despite being imbued with the modern knowledge through the British system. While many Indians, enamoured of the British way of life, slavishly imitated them, some among the first generation of university graduates, conscious of the strength and the weaknesses in the Indian society, decided to take measures for reforming it. In Maharashtra, Mahadeo Govind Ranade, Jyotirao Phule, Lokhitawadi and Bal Shastri Jambhekar were the persons belonging to the latter category with vision and foresight. They made a fervent plea for social reforms through their writings and boldly analysed the defects and shortcomings of our social system. Jyotirao Phule, an active social reformer who exposed the evils of the caste system, made a strong plea for social equality. He and his wife Savitribai started a school for girls, and a home for destitute women. He welcomed persons belonging to all castes and allowed the scheduled castes to draw water from the well in his house. Mahadeo Govind Ranade, a moderate, through his patient and methodical work, shook the tradition-ridden and orthodox Hindu society out of its stupor by giving enlightenment to it. Justice Ranade wanted the spirit of liberalism to permeate the various strata of the society. Many eminent Indians, pained* by the state of affairs in India, decided to devote their life to the task of social upliftment. Dadabhai Naoroji of Bombay was the tallest among these worthy individuals to be fired by the spirit of social service. Surendra Nath Bannerjea in Bengal and many others in different parts of India rose up to create a new awareness and enthuse the people to work for social reforms while fighting for political rights. The contributions made by the persons of such high moral and intellectual stature like Dadabhai Naoroji, Justice Ranade, Surendra Nath Bannerjea and others laid the foundation for future political work.

The British established the rule of the law and gave people a sense of security. Universities established by them enabled the young generation to develop close contact with modern ideas and knowledge. Persons like Ranade appreciated these benefits though not at the cost of losing political freedom. Dadabhai Naoroji was the first to point out that though there was law and order, the British rulers were exploiting India of its economic resources and making it impoverished. Jyotirao Phule pleaded for a basic change in the social structure while Ranade favoured a gradual change— first in the way of thinking and then in the way of living.

Vasudeo Balwant Phadke, a young man from Colaba (now known as Raigad district), came to Poona and was so moved by the speeches and ideas of Ranade, that during the 1872 famine in Maharashtra, he chose to tour the famine-stricken districts of the Bombay Presidency. He was appalled at the terrible plight of the people, the numerous deaths due to starvation and the callous attitude of the British government. Phadke was enraged and convinced that India's lot could not improve till the British left the country. The young rebellious Phadke took to the path of armed revolt against foreign rule. Failing to muster support of the educated class, he decided to organise the tribals— Ramoshis and Kolis— amongst whom he had faithful and brave followers, prepared to sacrifice their lives. Despite his organisational abilities and extraordinary valour, Phadke's efforts at armed rebellion did not succeed. He and his men were overpowered by the British. He was arrested, tried, and sentenced to life imprisonment at Eden where he died in prison in 1883. Phadke's martyrdom not only evoked admiration in the people but kindled the flame of patriotism in the hearts of many a youth.

British domination angered the people, but, owing to continued subjugation, moral degeneration had set in and the people had lost their sense of self-respect. Efforts of leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji and Justice Ranade were directed at the task of reviving the spirit of self-respect in the people. Political work in the first phase entailed efforts at moral regeneration. The first generation of political leaders and social reformers through their spade work paved the way for the next generation of patriotic leaders. In Maharashtra, Chiplunkar, Tilak and Agarkar were the rising stars of the new generation, whose aspirations for a new order in India far surpassed those of the earlier generation. With tremendous self-confidence, while working in the field of education, they took upon themselves the task of educating the people by starting two journals, *Kesari* in Marathi and *Maratha* in English.

Tilak, Agarkar and Chiplunkar had to surmount considerable difficulties in setting up their press. However, obstacles were overcome and the first edition of *Maratha*, the English weekly, was published on 2nd January 1881. *Kesari*, the Marathi weekly, saw the light of the day two days later. Tilak was the editor of *Maratha* while Agarkar was that of *The Kesari*. The meaning of the Marathi word *Kesari* is 'a lion' and the Sanskrit verse printed near the editorial, addressed and warned the intoxicated elephant not to stay in the forest, for there was a lion used to tearing the huge rocks mistaking them for elephants. These young men strove hard at raising financial resources for running the two weeklies. Both the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* evoked an enthusiastic response and within a short time five thousand copies of the *Kesari* were getting printed. In almost all the major towns of Maharashtra, a single copy of the *Kesari* was read by many people. This marked the first step in establishing communication with the people of the state. However, it was difficult for the *Kesari* to become a self-supporting weekly. The *Maratha* was beset by financial losses but Tilak and Agarkar deemed it necessary to publish a journal in English—the language held in high esteem by the educated.

It was not easy for Tilak, Agarkar or Chiplunkar to shoulder the responsibilities of teaching at the college and of running the two weeklies simultaneously. Moreover, they were inexperienced as journalists. It was, however, their dedication, determination and enthusiasm which enabled them to carry on their mission of educating the young generation as also the others. The zeal and sincerity of their efforts won much support for them. But not for long. Soon they ran into stormy weather when they published some letters in the *Kesari* and the *Maratha*. In these letters an allegation had been made that a conspiracy had been hatched in Kolhapur state to declare its ruler as 'mad' and so dethrone him. It was further alleged that Madhavrao Barve, who was the then Diwan of Kolhapur, was playing a leading part in this sinister plot and was torturing Prince Shivaji II, the ruler of Kolhapur. Unfortunately, these letters given to the editor of the *Kesari* were fake and as a result Barve, the Diwan of Kolhapur state, filed a case of defamation against Tilak and Agarkar. People were convinced of the innocence of Tilak and Agarkar who, owing to their inexperience, had put their trust in Kagalar, the villain, who had duped them by giving forged letters. Tilak and Agarkar frankly admitted before the court how they got the letters and mistook the contents to be genuine. Nevertheless, both were sentenced to four months' simple imprisonment. However, the common man was convinced of their honesty and their devotion to the ruler of Kolhapur. They were all praise at the courage of these two young editors who went to jail with a smile on their lips. Principal Wordsworth, Justice V.N. Mandlik and other eminent persons of the town

submitted a petition to the government pleading for annulment of the punishment, but the government paid no heed to it.

Tilak and Agarkar were kept in Dongri Jail in Bombay. Agarkar has given a graphic description of his experience in the prison in his small book, *A Hundred-and-One Days in Dongri Prison*, in Marathi. Owing to the hardships of prison life and the unappetising food served to the inmates, Tilak lost twenty-four pounds while Agarkar lost sixteen pounds in weight. After a month's stay in prison, they were given the permission to read and write. However, the two friends spent most of their time discussing various subjects of their interest. On their release from Dongri Jail, they were given a warm welcome by the people. Lokhande, the editor of *Deen Bandhu*, and other influential persons belonging to the non-Brahmin community were the first to felicitate Tilak and Agarkar.

Generally days spent together in prison help to strengthen the bonds of friendship and amity. But with Tilak and Agarkar the ideological differences between them became more and more sharp. In 1884, when a plea was made to the government to pass a law against child marriage, the reactions of the editors of the *Kesari* and the *Maratha* were diametrically opposite. While Agarkar, a staunch opponent of child marriage, wrote in the *Kesari* a signed article supporting the plea against child marriage, Tilak opposed the idea of government interference in social and religious matters. His stand encouraged the proponents of child marriage to raise their voice too. This development widened the gulf between Tilak and Agarkar. Their differences of opinion were echoed during the meeting of the life members of the Deccan Education Society. Agarkar led a group of reformist-teachers, while the other group of orthodox and traditionalist teachers supported Tilak's point of view. In the *Kesarif* articles expressing divergent views on this subject were published. The rift between the editors grew to such an extent that Agarkar resigned from his post as editor of the *Kesari* to start a Marathi weekly, *Sudharak*, in order to propagate social reforms and to work whole-heartedly towards carrying them out.

During the meeting of the Deccan Education Society, Tilak was of the view that life members should work as Jesuits and not supplement their income from outside sources. In one way this was a reference to Agarkar who had written a book *Vdkya Meemansa* for which he had received a grant from Holkar, the ruler of Indore. Tilak and Agarkar clashed on the issue of the Holkar grant. Both Agarkar and Tilak were men of principles and had made sacrifices for the Deccan Education Society. However, the differences among them became irreconcilable, forcing Tilak to resign from the Society and the teaching profession. This marked a parting of ways for Tilak and Agarkar.

Tilak in his letter of resignation wrote a long explanation clarifying his ideological position. He stated that "while serving the Deccan Education Society for over a decade, I worked with others in the Society for a noble cause and therefore, it was with a feeling of deep regret that I took the decision to leave the Society." He added, "I assure you that it was only after a great struggle with my own feelings that I came to this conclusion. In fact, I am now giving up my life's ideal with the aim that by separating myself from it, I shall serve it best, and to the best of my satisfaction." Tilak did not just defend his position, but candidly wrote: "I am deeply conscious of my fault, which, I know, has given at times reason to some of my colleagues to be offended by me. The chief fault that I am aware of in me is my manner of expressing myself in strong and sharp language..."

But, I can assure you, that if I spoke strongly it was because I felt strongly for the interests of the institutions.”

Tilak and Agarkar, who in their college days were close friends and shared each other's ideals and worked together through sunshine and rain, parted company not only on matters of education, but in the field of journalism too. Each had a different set of priorities—Tilak gave importance to political work while Agarkar gave prominence to social reforms. However, apart from these differences, they held similar political views. Both wanted India to be freed from British rule and both were prepared to make sacrifices to achieve this freedom. However, their contrary philosophical stands came in the way. Agarkar was a rationalist and an atheist. In his speech in the Deccan College, in 1895, Tilak admitted that he was an agnostic as he had been brought up in an orthodox family and owing to its influence during his formative years; he had come to respect the traditions of Hindu society. He did not approve of Agarkar's zeal for social reforms. Agarkar stood for individual freedom but Tilak with his traditionalist approach felt that the individual should conform to the norms of the society. Both worked together in the educational field but on issues like child marriage, they differed sharply and these ideological differences became so acute that parting of ways became inevitable. On leaving the Deccan Education Society, Tilak devoted his energy to political work. He made the *Kesari* a powerful weapon to fight the British. Agarkar, after resigning from editorship of the *Kesari*, launched the journal *Sud-harak*, which he used as a powerful instrument to attack the hypocrisy and orthodoxy of the Hindu society. It was a sad day when Agarkar died at the young age of thirty-nine in 1895, and there is no way of finding what his views would have been on the political struggle in India which intensified soon after. However, it has to be admitted that Agarkar was a pioneer in his rational struggle for social reforms. Tilak, in his obituary on Agarkar, published in the *Kesari*, paid glowing tributes to the noble qualities of head and heart possessed by Agarkar.

On leaving the Deccan Education Society, Tilak started law classes in Poona for those appearing for the High Court pleader's examination. This was necessary for earning his livelihood. Tilak had not practised as a lawyer after passing his law examination, but due to his rare analytical mind, his law classes became very popular in no time. He not only coached students for the examination, but also explained the fundamental principles of law in a lucid manner. His lectures on Hindu law, in particular, were so illuminating that Justice Mahadeo Govind Ranade, who was senior to Tilak, once quietly attended the class to listen to Tilak's lecture.

Tilak now concentrated his energies on political work. He not only gave expression to the aspirations of the people through *the Kesari*, but created in them a new awareness of their rights and the path to struggle against the government.

2. DEDICATED JOURNALIST AND RADICAL NATIONALIST

Recognition in public life is always rare and if it ever comes, it does so only after severe tests and trials. Man's ability is proved in moments of crises and through the part he plays during his struggle against injustice. Some public workers with a correct perception of reality tend to think on the right lines but fall short in practising what they preach. Tilak's stature as a social worker grew while facing difficult situations. In times of conflict, Tilak was never confused; he took a clear-headed view in matters of dispute.

If his stand was not acceptable to all, he never took an equivocal attitude, but, once his mind was made up on something, he never budged an inch from his position. His understanding of the complex nature of society became visible through his actions. As his struggle against his opponents gathered momentum, his write-ups became more and more sharp and forceful. Devoid of fear and with courage in his convictions, he behaved aggressively with those who differed from him. In India, and particularly in Maharashtra, the last decade of the nineteenth century witnessed a lot of turmoil. People had to pass through great sufferings. Tilak, who started his social activities in 1880, was not yet a mature leader. However, he rose to the occasion, championed the cause of the people during this period of hardship, and won the hearts of many with his selfless service. His involvement with social activities came to the fore particularly during the famine in Maharashtra in 1896 and during the plague epidemic which caused havoc in Poona, in 1898.

There were some controversies on matters of social behaviour and Tilak inevitably supported the existing state of affairs. His upbringing in an orthodox Hindu society was the potent factor in influencing his attitude. Byramji Malabari, a renowned social reformer and member of the Legislative Council, suggested an amendment to the Indian Penal Code by raising the age of marriage for a girl from ten to twelve. This was known as the 'Age of Consent Bill'. Though a progressive Bill, it was strongly opposed by the orthodox Hindus who supported the practice of child marriage. Tilak's argument was not opposed to the suggestion put forth by Malabari, but he did not like interference in social matters from an alien government. His friend and contemporary G.G. Agarkar made a fervent plea for social reforms and supported the Age of Consent Bill. Tilak's arguments were clever but their impact was unfortunate. However, in spite of this opposition, the Age of Consent Bill was passed. Tilak's stand was resented by those holding a progressive outlook, but won him accolades from the orthodox.

In 1893, there were Hindu-Muslim riots in some towns of Maharashtra. Tilak took a fearless and impartial stand as became apparent through his editorials in the *Kesari*. He severely criticised the British for instigating the Muslims. He wrote: "Apparently there are two parties in the riots—the Hindus and the Muslims. However, if we ponder seriously on the causes of the riots, we find that there are three parties, viz. the Hindus, the Muslims and the British government. We can probe into the causes only if we take into consideration the presence of the British government, which is keen on dividing our society so that their rule in India can be strengthened."

Tilak wanted the Hindus and Muslims to have the freedom to follow their respective religions but not at the expense of the Hindus being meted an unjust treatment. He severely criticised those who advised the Hindus to be more tolerant. He asked the government to be impartial and allow justice to prevail.

He personally visited the sites where the riots broke out; collected information on the mischievous and partial role played by the British Collectors, and published his findings in the columns of the *Kesari*. His forthright writings and speeches were highly appreciated by the people.

During this period he played an active role on the political front too. He attended the session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay, in 1889, and participated in the deliberations. He moved an amendment to the resolution on the reconstitution of the

Legislative Council. The amendment was seconded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. In 1892, Lord A.O. Hume, who had actively supported the establishment of the Indian National Congress, sent a secret circular to its members, exhorting them to carry on their active work among the people in order to strengthen the Congress. The circular evoked mixed reactions among the leaders of the party. The moderates feared that the circular would give an opportunity to the government to level the charge of sedition against the Indian National Congress. Hume had suggested in the circular that the Congress Committee should collect all relevant information on the growing impoverishment of the people, and send it to the government in order to make the British rulers aware of the disastrous consequences of the calamity. Tilak strongly supported the circular by Hume. He wrote in the *Kesari*; “Hume Sahib is not asking anyone to rebel against the government. He has only drawn attention of the Congress leaders and the government to the fact that the people are becoming poorer and if we do not resist this state of affairs, grave consequences would follow.”

From the various editorials Tilak wrote in the *Kesari*, it became evident that he was getting more and more convinced that the political movement could gather momentum only if the Congress members were to work actively among the people and organise them together. He not only put forth the idea on the need for working among the people but started acting towards implementing it.

The first programme he undertook was to organise the Ganapati festival on a social basis. He knew that the people liked festivals and participated in them enthusiastically. It was his earnest desire to give a constructive orientation to the Ganapati festival and create a social platform for educating the people. In one of his editorials, he even referred to the different social festivals in ancient Greece and Rome and made a fervent plea that similar festivals should be held in the country. Ganapati is an important deity of the Hindus, particularly in Maharashtra, and Tilak made a plea for celebrating the festival on a large scale so that all sections of the society could participate. People in Maharashtra enthusiastically responded and organised cultural fairs, or *melas* as they were popularly called, and groups of young men marched through the streets, giving rhythmic performances on *lezims* — an instrument used in athletics. Tilak also organised lectures by eminent persons on varied subjects and thus created a platform for educating and enlightening the people. A beginning made in Poona was soon adopted and followed by people in other cities.

Chhatrapati Shivaji is to this day one of the greatest national heroes for the people of Maharashtra; he is a perennial fountain of inspiration. Tilak decided to organise the Shivaji festival in Maharashtra. In 1895, he started the movement for restoration of Shivaji's *samadhi* at the Raigad fort— the fort where Shivaji was crowned king and which is a memorial built in his memory after his death in 1680. It was at Tilak's instance that the first Shivaji festival was celebrated at the Raigad fort on 15th April 1896. In the *Kesarif* Tilak, in his editorial entitled, 'The National Festival of Shivaji Jayanti', wrote: “We should be ever grateful to those heroes who upheld the honour and dignity of our nation. Chhatrapati Shivaji was our national hero, who established *swarajya* and liberated the people. The celebration of Shivaji festival is an occasion for expressing our gratitude to him. If we cherish the memories of our national heroes we can promote in ourselves a nationalist attitude. For promoting the sense of nationality, it is necessary to have national heroes whom people can worship as idols.

Chhatrapati Shivaji's life was full of courage, sacrifice and love for his motherland. Remembering him by celebrating his birth anniversary would create in us the same love for our motherland as he had; it would also kindle the flame of patriotism in our hearts." Tilak appealed to the people to set aside their differences and participate unitedly in the festival to celebrate Shivaji's birth anniversary.

Later, in his speech at Amravati, Tilak enunciated his intention and approach behind his movement, by saying, "He who desires progress and strives for it is a noble person. He who obstructs progress is a villain. Shivaji Maharaj fought against those forces which hampered the progress of our society. It was not his intention to kill Afzal Khan, but he wanted to remove all obstacles and difficulties in the path of progress. If Shivaji wanted to kill Afzal Khan just because the latter was a Muslim, he would not have treated Afzal Khan's wife with courtesy. Shivaji showed her respect and sent her back to Bijapur with ornaments and other presents. Every one should be loyal to the nation and forget the differences due to each other's caste and religion. Shivaji alone acted in a noble manner... He was aware of the plight of the society during his time and wanted to liberate the people from tyranny and hardship. Owing to his brave deeds and efforts, Shivaji could put an end to the sad plight of our society; he led the people on the path of progress."

In another speech he said, "We celebrate different occasions in order to sow the seeds of wisdom, courage and such other virtues in our society. Shivaji Jayanti is a festival of this kind. Chhatrapati Shivaji inspired feelings of patriotism at a time when people had forgotten their freedom. He paved the way for freedom not merely for the people of Maharashtra but for the whole of India. For his patriotism, his love for freedom and his heroic deeds he remains a hero for most of us. We must imbibe in ourselves the noble qualities of Shivaji which would enable us to rise from our pitiable state and inspire us to emulate his heroic deeds."

Tilak's role during disturbances of any kind gave people the courage and confidence to elect him, from 1893 to 1895, to the Poona municipality. He was also elected fellow of the Bombay University and later to the Bombay Legislative Council. In Maharashtra, Justice Ranade was the first to start various social institutions. He founded the Sarvajanik Sabha at Poona where the Sabha became an institution which voiced the aspirations of the people and did social work in times of calamities like famine. Prof. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who was a follower of Justice Ranade, did very useful work as secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha. Both Justice Ranade and Prof. Gokhale, however, were moderates in their mode of work. Tilak shared the ideals of both these leaders but his way of executing the task was different. He did not mince words when criticising the wrong actions of the government. He also felt that the Sarvajanik Sabha must not merely do relief work but become an instrument of political action. This was naturally resented by Gokhale, but in 1895 Tilak took control of the Sarvajanik Sabha and became its secretary in place of Prof. Gokhale.

This period was a critical period in Maharashtra. In social matters Tilak did not support the progressive forces, but while championing the cause of the people, he showed rare courage. With his sharp intelligence, tenacity of purpose and above all, his stubborn attitude, he soon won over his adversaries. His capacity for mobilising public opinion and defying powerful opponents soon earned him popularity. He was thus emerging as a leader of the people of Maharashtra.

It was in this period that he took the decision on the priorities in his public life. During his Deccan College days, Tilak gave precedence to politics over his classmate Gopal Ganesh Agarkar's preference for social reforms. It was in 1891 that Tilak took the decision to devote his energies to political work and strive for his country's independence. This decision was the result of his belief that the ills of our society could be overcome once independence was achieved. Therefore achievement of *swarajya* became his first priority. He was against social reforms for he feared that they would lead to "fragmentation of our traditionalist society and weaken the freedom movement."

He was keenly aware of the servile attitude of the people and the inferiority complex which the average Indian came to suffer from under British rule. This sense of inferiority could be removed only if the people were made aware that the Indian culture was in no way inferior to Western; but was superior to the latter in many ways. Thereafter Tilak always advocated nationalism based on pride in the Indian culture. He was convinced that nationalism would take its roots in the Indian soil only if the people became conscious of their glorious past and the role played by heroes like Shivaji Maharaj. He called for political regeneration and refrained from highlighting the shortcomings in the Hindu society to keep the people's mind diverted. However, he could not keep away from social controversies. All he wanted was that the society should continue as it had been doing and opposed all those who pleaded for social reforms. As a result, the orthodox and the traditionalist people, who wanted the domination of the so-called upper castes to continue and invariably took a reactionary attitude to reforms, began to consider him as their spokesman. This was indeed a blow to the movement for social reforms in Maharashtra. The revival of nationalism as preached by Tilak created in the people an attitude of glorifying everything that belonged to the past.

Here it may be pointed out that his stand had essentially a local background and may have seemed narrow in outlook when compared against that of his contemporaries—Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, the political leaders who advocated social reforms in the Hindu society. Bipin Chandra Pal, who had the highest regard for Raja Rammohun Roy and at an impressionable age had come under the influence of the Bengali social reformer Keshub Chandra Sen, became a member of the Brahmo Samaj. Bipin Pal's radical stand in politics did not deter him from advocating social reforms or condemning the outdated customs and practices in Hindu society. Lala Lajpat Rai was a follower of Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj. Lala Lajpat Rai, while taking a militant position in politics, openly condemned the decay and corruption which had crept into Hinduism owing to the orthodox attitude of the so-called upper castes in the society. Both Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal commanded a large following in politics and were respected for their advocacy and practice of social reforms. In Maharashtra however, Tilak always criticised the social reformers and in order to strengthen the nationalist movement, glorified the past and supported the traditionalist way of life. While advocating the need for concentrating one's energies on political problems, it is difficult to understand why he so vehemently opposed social reforms and lent support to the orthodox section of the Hindu society.

Ranade and his disciple Gokhale advocated liberalism. Tilak, who in his earlier days was influenced by liberal thinkers, later began to feel that liberalism would not find roots in the Indian soil. He thought that an effort to transplant Western philosophy would not succeed either. He believed that every society had its own source of strength and India's

strength lay in her cultural values. The Indian society was like a tree in the soil which derived sustenance from her cultural values. He wanted the modern political ideal of nationalism to be grafted on this tree, instead of transplanting an alien ideology on Indian soil. Tilak had thus given up his early adherence to liberalism and taken to the path of militant nationalism. The change in his ideological shift from liberalism to radical nationalism during 1890 to 1895 was reflected in his actions. Prof. Gopal Krishna Gokhale as secretary of the Sarvajanik Sabha was a methodical social worker. He gave expression to the grievances of the people and submitted petitions to the government requesting redressal of their grievances. His representations were always based on facts and the logic of his arguments was convincing. Tilak, while appreciating the sincerity and studious nature of Gokhale, strongly criticised the politics of petitions and prayers because he was of the opinion that in politics a demand must be supported by people's sanction. To bring this to the notice of the people, Tilak opposed Gokhale in the Sarvajanik Sabha and in 1895 won the Sabha elections through democratic means. He then gave the Sarvajanik Sabha a new orientation. In the 1896 famine in Maharashtra, Tilak sent volunteers of the Sarvajanik Sabha to collect all available information on the prevailing situation and then presented these stark facts to the government. He did not merely make representations; he wanted to force the government to abide by the provisions of the Famine Code which was passed after the famine in 1872. According to this Famine Code, the government had accepted the responsibility of taking some relief measures, such as giving *tagai* loans, remission on land revenue and relief work to the famine-stricken farmers. Tilak published in the *Kesaria* summary of the Famine Code. On behalf of the Sarvajanik Sabha, a Marathi translation of the Famine Code was published as a pamphlet and hundreds of its copies were distributed among peasants in the famine-affected areas of Maharashtra. He exhorted the farmers to join hands and bring pressure on the government to act according to the commitments made in the Famine Code. This enraged the British government.

Tilak and his volunteers were not indulging in any illegal or unlawful activity, but the government did not like the challenging attitude of the Sarvajanik Sabha and reacted by prosecuting Prof. Paranjape and Sathe, who were engaged in explaining the provisions of the Famine Code to the peasants of Colaba district. When Tilak came to know of this, he rushed to Pen, the *tehsil* town of Colaba district. While addressing a huge meeting of farmers, he declared, "This government rules according to law. If Prof. Paranjape is prosecuted for explaining to the people the meaning of government law, there is all the more reason that I should be prosecuted." The government had to acquit Prof. Paranjape and the other volunteers. It was a mammoth meeting attended by thousands of peasants. When they started shouting Tilak Maharaj *kijai*, the District Collector requested Tilak to restrain the crowd, and Tilak readily complied. His bold stand and success in bringing pressure on the government on implementation of the Famine Code captivated the imagination of the people. He emerged as a champion of the downtrodden and the oppressed. While carrying on his struggle of ensuring relief work for the people, Tilak established a Weavers' Guild for the famine-stricken weavers of Sholapur district. Tilak sought the help of the rich merchants of Sholapur, arranged to supply yarn to the co-operative society of weavers and promised the sale of their cloth. Under this scheme, relief was given to more than a thousand weaver families. Tilak's untiring efforts— both

combative and constructive to provide relief to the people—evoked great respect for him among the people.

During the famine, Tilak not merely submitted petitions, but his demands were backed by public sanction and therefore the government had no option but to take cognisance of them.

The Indian National Congress was established in 1885. It was a national unity platform evolved by eminent leaders like Surendra Nath Bannerjea, Justice Ranade, and others. Tilak took interest in the work of the Congress right since its inception. In 1889, while attending the fifth session of the Congress, he moved an amendment to a resolution putting forth a scheme for the reform and reconstitution of the Legislative Council. His speech while moving the amendment and subsequently Prof. Gokhale's speech in support of him were highly appreciated by the delegates. Though a staunch supporter of the Congress, Tilak always made a plea for radicalising the Congress. He was an admirer of Dadabhai Naoroji and through his editorials in the *Kesari* reiterated Naoroji's view that the British government was responsible for India's poverty. Tilak wrote: "Dadabhai Naoroji is a new preacher of political religion who has taught us that India is our motherland and our goddess, that we are dwellers of India tied through the common bond of brotherhood and that our religion is to strive selflessly to ameliorate the political and social sufferings of our country."

In 1893, Tilak was elected fellow of the University of Bombay. The election was held by postal ballot. The graduate voters showed tremendous confidence in him because of which he won by an overwhelming majority. In 1895, he was elected to the Poona municipality and in the same year to the Legislative Council of Bombay. The elections were held as per the Reforms Act of 1892, which provided for the election of a representative by the municipalities and, the district boards. Tilak contested the election from the central zone and won thirty-five out of the sixty-five votes polled in the constituency.

Tilak was both intelligent and studious. People expected him to make a significant contribution to the Bombay University and to the Legislative Council. However, his association with these institutions was only for a brief period. Moreover, Tilak did not like the way in which the Legislative Council functioned. On 21st January 1893, he wrote in the *Kesari*: "In its last meeting, the Legislative Council worked for only three-quarters of an hour. During this short time, answers were given to twenty questions, some papers were read out and the draft of one Bill was passed. This was indeed a travesty of legislative work." Tilak was disillusioned with the working of the Legislative Council. While making a speech on the budget, he criticised the system of signing a five-year agreement between the provincial government and the Central government. Tilak also pointed out that though from 1870 to 1895, the earnings of the Bombay Presidency had increased to five-and-a-half crores of rupees, the government, instead of spending it on the welfare of the people, had misused it to meet the departmental expenses. He exposed the flaws in the administrative set-up. In 1897, when prosecuted for seditious activities, he promptly resigned from the Legislative Council.

The government had wanted to stifle his voice when he was organising the peasants of Maharashtra during the famine of 1896. However, Tilak with his rare legal acumen was acting strictly within the framework of law, and the government could take no action

against him. Such an opportunity, however, came for the government at the time of the plague epidemic in Poona in 1897. As at that time no preventive inoculation was available, hundreds of people lost their lives. The government, to counter the situation, started a plague hospital for treating patients. It even launched a cleanliness programme all over the city> asking the people to stay in temporary huts built outside the city; and it took many such measures. All this work was entrusted to Mr Rand, an Assistant Collector who took the help of British soldiers. The British soldiers acted carelessly and hurt the feelings of the people by throwing away the images of their God, and their utensils besides committing many other outrages. This created panic and greatly enraged some young men. An eminent social worker, Pandita Ramabai, condemned the widespread molestation of women.

Tilak was not the one to keep quiet. He rose to the occasion and did everything possible to create confidence in the people. In the *Kesari*, of 16th February 1897, he wrote in favour of segregating the patients affected by plague, and spoke against the superstitious belief of the people to regard hospitals as chambers of death. He urged the government to take up the work of segregation and house-searching with the willing co-operation of the people. He himself took the lead in setting up a plague hospital besides the one started by the government. Letters came pouring in from citizens of Poona complaining against the indiscretionary acts of the soldiers.

By May 1897, the epidemic subsided and people resumed their normal activities. 12th June was the day on which Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was crowned the king. In order to celebrate this day Prof. C. G. Bhanu of Fergusson College, delivered a lecture in which he referred to the killing of Afzal Khan by Shivaji Maharaj. Tilak presided on this occasion and in his presidential remarks, observed: "In killing Afzal Khan, Shivaji did not commit any sin, because he took this action not to further his own interests but to do public good. Shivaji Maharaj strove to drive out the aggressors and there is no sin of covetousness in that." However, the British government and particularly the bureaucracy, enraged by Tilak's growing political influence, wanted an opportunity to hit him and therefore alleged that his remarks were insinuating and liable to encourage seditious activities by the people.

On 22nd June 1897, the Governor of Bombay gave a reception at the Government House on the occasion of the diamond jubilee celebrations of Queen Victoria's rule.

Mr Rand was present at this official function. Once the reception was over, the officers started returning to their homes. Lieutenant Jyerst was going home in a cab, when he was shot at by a young man. Mr Rand was following in his cab and he too was shot at from behind. Lt. Jyerst died on the spot and Mr Rand succumbed to his injuries a few days later, All this happened after midnight. The road was deserted and the young men who shot Jyerst and Rand disappeared in the dark and the government was shocked at the incident.

At Chinchwad, near Poona, the Chapekar brothers, Ranade and a few other young men had started a secret organisation called the Chapekar Club. These young men, perturbed at the humiliating behaviour of the British, had decided to take revenge on Mr Rand for his misdeeds during the plague epidemic. They wanted to terrorise the government officers. They felt that by celebrating the diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria's rule, the government was adding insult to injury. They, therefore, planned to attack very selec-

tively and it was Damodar Chapekar who shot at Mr Rand when the latter was returning home. Here it maybe pointed out that Damodar Chapekar was a gymnast, keen enjoining the army but could not qualify for it. This killing episode was a challenge to British rule and soon special officers were appointed to investigate into the murder. A reward of twenty thousand rupees was announced for the person giving information on the whereabouts of the assassins. The police resorted to ruthless repression in order to strike terror in the hearts of the people. The Anglo-Indian press, and particularly *The Times of India*, wrote insinuating articles alleging that his speeches had incited the killers to kill Mr Rand and that the Poona Brahmins had conspired to overthrow the British government.

The Times of India referred to Titak's remarks on Shivaji and Afzal Khan, alleging that he supported the murder of Afzal Khan. Tilak protested against the misrepresentation by the newspaper and denied the allegation that he had preached sedition. In his editorial in the *Kesari* he not only condemned the murder of Mr Rand but also pointed out that owing to the repressive measures of the government, many innocent people had been forced to suffer for no fault of theirs. Mr Lamb, the Collector at Pune, called a meeting of important citizens on 28th June and during his address, remarked, "The government's powers are unlimited and repression is necessary to unearth crime and bring the culprits to book." After this meeting, Tilak in his editorial in the *Kesari* wrote: "In such circumstances, it is the duty of every citizen to help the government... but the Collector should not have used threatening language. It was impertinent of him to refer to his powers and authority in the meeting of citizens." People had resigned themselves to their fate but Tilak felt it his responsibility to see that they were not cowed down by government threats. The title of his next editorial in the *Kesari* was 'Vindictiveness is not the Way for Ruling People'. By his writings he wanted to put a stop to the demoralisation besetting the people and help restore their confidence.

The government appointed Mr Bruin as a special officer to investigate the murder of Mr Rand. The government's intention was to establish a close contact between the assassins and Tilak and then accuse him of conspiracy in the murder case. Bruin was an intelligent and skilful officer who did everything in his power to collect evidence to implicate Tilak in the crime. However, his efforts proved of no avail. Had there been any link between Tilak and the Chapekar brothers, Bruin would have unearthed it and the government could then have tied the noose around Tilak's neck. Tilak, while condemning the murder, wrote fearlessly that the excesses and the atrocities committed by the soldiers during the plague epidemic had provoked the people to act as they did. He also gave a list of their atrocities and said that such actions infuriated the young men who were driven to this desperate act as a way of expressing their wrath. When the government's repressive measures became more and more stringent, Tilak wrote an editorial, 'Is the Government in its Senses?' He used his pen like a whip which further enraged the government. On 29th July 1897, he was arrested and prosecuted on charges of sedition. The reason given for prosecution was that, in his speech on Shivaji on 12th June, it was Tilak's intention to spread disaffection against the government.

Prof. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was in England when all this happened. In an interview to a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, Gokhale remarked that the murder of Mr Rand was the outcome of the atrocities committed by the soldiers. He stated that the British soldiers not only examined the women patients on the streets but also molested

one of them following which she was forced to commit suicide. This interview by Gokhale enraged the public in England and questions were asked in the Parliament. The Secretary of State for India gave a categorical reply that the allegations made by Gokhale were utterly false. Gokhale, while making this charge, had relied on the information given to him by some of his friends through their letters. Unfortunately when he wanted to substantiate the charge, his friends could not give the necessary convincing evidence. Gokhale was an honest person and when he could not prove the charges he had made, he tendered a public apology. He had unfortunately been let down.

Tilak had anticipated his prosecution and being one not easily perturbed, was prepared to face any eventuality. Explaining his ideological position to the people was far more important to him than making preparations for facing prosecution charges. A week before his arrest, Tilak wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* entitled, 'What is Sedition?'

The editorial throws light on Tilak's point of view and his political stand. He wrote: "Criticising an officer or a law in strong language does not amount to sedition. Penal Code has made a distinction between 'disapproval' and 'disaffection'. Wisdom is not the monopoly of our rulers. However great their strength or power be, at times they behave childishly and commit mistakes as a result of which the people suffer. In such circumstances there is nothing illegal in discussing their actions and asking people to appeal to the rulers for a fair treatment. It is our earnest desire that under British rule, our people should get more rights and not suffer repression. There may have been an article in some newspaper transgressing the limits of the Penal Code. The British Empire is so strong that such an article can in no way harm it. Hence it is in the interest of the government and also of the people that such articles should be ignored and principles which have evolved after a great deal of thought and are of perennial importance should continue to be the basis for governing the people."

After Tilak's arrest on 27th July, an application for his release on bail was submitted to the High Court. It was, however, turned down. On 2nd August he was committed to the Sessions. Barrister Davar again filed an application for bail and on 4th August Justice Badruddin Tyabji decreed that Tilak should be released on bail provided two securities of 25,000 rupees each and a personal bond of 50,000 rupees were furnished. The necessary securities were submitted and Tilak was released. He left for Poona to see his friend Baba Maharaj Pandit who was seriously ill due to cholera.

Tilak's arrest had aroused sympathy all over the country. A Tilak Defence Fund had been started simultaneously in Bombay and Calcutta and a collection of 47,000 rupees was made. ShishirKumarGhosh and Motilal Ghosh of *Amrit Bazar Patrika* and Surendra Nath Bannerjea took the lead in collecting for the fund at Calcutta. It was then decided that Tilak should be defended by Pugh and Garth of the Calcutta bar and be assisted by Barrister Chaudhuri, also of the Calcutta bar.

Before the trial was to begin some persons suggested that Tilak should tender an apology. But he stoutly refused to do so. In this context, he wrote the following letter to a friend: "The other side expects me to plead that I am guilty. I am not prepared to do so...My position among the people depends entirely on my character, and if I am cowed down by the prosecution, I think living in Maharashtra would be as good as living in the Andamans. On the merits of the case I am confident of success...We must take risks if we are in politics. These are hazards of our profession and I am prepared to face them...The

government's object is to humiliate the Poona leaders...but they will not find in me a *kutchra* reed as they did in Prof. Gokhale and the editor of *Dnyan Prakash*. You must remember that we all are servants of the people. You will be betraying and disappointing them if you show a lamentable want of courage at a critical juncture...^ case I am convicted, the sympathy of my countrymen will support me in my times of trouble." This letter, which throws light on his courage and integrity, was later quoted by Piyush Kanti Ghosh in his memoirs of Tilak.

The case against Tilak came up for hearing on the 8th of September and lasted for a week. Justice Strachey was the presiding judge and Basil Lang, the Advocate-General, conducted the prosecution. Following is the brief summary of the speech of the Advocate-General: "If any article in a newspaper creates in the mind of the reader a desire to obstruct or overthrow the government, the article should be regarded as seditious. Tilak is a fellow of the university, a member of the Legislative Council, a respected and an influential person. The circulation of the *Kesari* of which Tilak is the editor is about seven thousand. The editorial in the *Kesari* is bound to have an impact on the people. The *Kesari* calls this government 'alien'. *Maratha*—another newspaper edited by Tilak—says that some day the people will have to take to arms. Though there is nothing wrong in celebrating the Shivaji festival, but it was wrong to politicise the occasion and use it for spreading resentment against the government by referring to the flourishing of swords during Shivaji's times. It is evident that the intention of the writer was not just to appeal to the government for justice...The writer has dubbed the government tyrannical in context of what happened at the time of the plague epidemic. Tilak has also justified the murder of Afzal Khan. All these have to be considered in totality and it becomes evident that his intention was not to express disapproval at the actions of the government but to spread disaffection against the government?'. The Advocate-General however did not level the charge that there was a link between the articles written by Tilak and the murderers of Mr Rand.

Barrister Pugh, Tilak's counsel, repudiated the arguments of the Advocate-General. There were some heated exchanges between Justice Strachey and Barrister Pugh regarding the meaning of the word 'disaffection'. Justice Strachey granted that there was no connection between Tilak's articles and Mr Rand's murder, but, while summing up, remarked that if the accused intended to incite enmity against the government, an enmity that might take root and spring up in the distant future, it was sufficient to hold him guilty under Section 124-A.

After Justice Strachey's conclusions, the jury retired for consultation and after three-quarters of an hour returned to give the verdict. Six jurors found Tilak guilty while the other three pronounced a verdict of 'not guilty'. When asked by the judge if Tilak had anything to say, Tilak remarked, "Whatever be the verdict of the jury, I think, I am not guilty. The articles I have written are not seditious and their effect would not create disaffection against the government." Justice Strachey then observed, "I am convinced that you wrote the articles with the intention of creating disaffection in the minds of the readers...Although I take a serious view of your offence, I do not take such a serious view as to award you the maximum punishment. I sentence you to only eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment."

Barrister Chaudhuri, who assisted Barrister Pugh and Barrister Garth in pleading Tilak's case, has given the following account of what happened before and after the trial:

“Before the trial we had long consultations with Tilak. Mr Pugh and Mr Garth were greatly impressed by the great ability, keenness of intellect, strong common sense, spirit of independence and the remarkable understanding of law that Tilak displayed during the course of our consultations. After the trial we decided that we should move the Bombay High Court for leave to appeal to the Privy Council. It was arranged that we should meet at 9 a.m. the next day to draft the petition. When we arrived and read the transcript of the judge's charge, a messenger came from Tilak with a bundle of papers containing a lot of writing on sheets in pencil... To our unspeakable surprise we found that it was a draft of a petition for leave to appeal to the Privy Council that we had yet to draw up. Barrister Pugh went through it from top to bottom and said with delight that we possibly could not have done it better. Barristers Pugh and Garth were filled with admiration and they remarked that during their professional career, they had not come across any layman or even a lawyer who could draw up a petition of appeal so accurately and exhaustively after having heard only a charge or judgement delivered by a judge in court without referring to any notes. Such a man was Tilak.”

The display of sympathy for Tilak following the trial was simply-phenomenal. *The Hindu* wrote: “From the early hour in the morning to late in the evening, crowds of people stood outside the office of *The Hindu*, anxiously awaiting the latest news about Tilak. And when the telegram was read, oh, what grief, what anguish was seen on the faces around!”

Tilak's conviction was regarded as a national calamity. In the Congress session at Amravati in 1897, C. Shankaran Nair in his presidential remarks regretted that Tilak had not been treated as a political prisoner. When Surendra Nath Bannerjea in his speech said that due to Tilak's conviction the whole nation was in tears, the Congress delegates were so touched that they stood up in reverence.

In the meantime, Damodar Chapekar had been arrested for Rand's murder in Bombay. Chapekar took the entire responsibility of the murder upon himself. People were amazed when they came to know of his fearless statement in the court. On 2nd March 1898, in the Sessions Court, Damodar was found guilty and sentenced to death. While Damodar Chapekar was kept in the Yervada prison in the ward for prisoners to be hanged, Tilak was kept in another ward of the same prison. Damodar Chapekar requested the authorities at the prison to be allowed to meet Tilak once at least. The permission was granted. When Damodar met Tilak, he asked him for a copy of the *Bhagawad Gita* and requested that after his death the last rites should be performed according to the Hindu religion. Tilak gave a copy of the *Bhagawad Gita* to Damodar and the latter went to the gallows, quietly holding the religious book in his hands. Tilak arranged for the funeral and the last rites to be performed according to the deceased's wishes.

Bal Krishna Chapekar was arrested in December 1898. The Dravid brothers, who at one time were members of the Chapekar Club, became informers and owing to the information supplied by them, the police arrested Damodar and Bal Krishna Chapekar. The youngest of the Chapekar brothers— Vasudeo, and Ranade, another member of the Chapekar Club, shot the Dravid brothers near their house in Sadashiv Peth in Poona, on 8th February 1899. The Dravid brothers succumbed to their injuries the next day,

following which Ranade and Vasudeo Chapekar were arrested. In the second week of May 1899, Vasudeo, his brother Bal Krishna and Ranade— all three were hanged in the Yervada prison.

People did not view Rand's murder by the Chapekar brothers as a crime. Lala Lajpat Rai, the radical leader of Punjab, wrote: "The Chapekar brothers, who murdered the two officers who had made themselves obnoxious during the plague epidemic in Poona, were not looked upon by thf people as criminals. The Chapekar brothers met their fate heroically. People admired the motive behind the deed though not the deed itself."

The supreme sacrifice made by the three brothers was unique and evoked respect in the hearts of the people. Tilak arranged for the last rites of the three brothers and their associate Ranade, who had laid down their lives for the honour of their motherland. However, Tilak had no connection with them. Had there been some evidence in this respect, he could not have escaped the gallows. This group of revolutionaries used to meet Maharshi Annasaheb Pat-wardhan, a saint for whom Tilak too had the highest respect. It is quite possible that Tilak had some knowledge about this group of young men—this can only be a matter of conjecture. Though Tilak was fearless and courageous, he was a realist. He knew that if he wanted to educate the people politically to make them fight the British, it was necessary to have nothing to do with extremist activities. He never indulged in any rash behaviour. As a political leader his stand was that persons like the Chapekar brothers had the right to serve their motherland according to the dictates of their conscience but for himself, however, he had drawn a line of demarcation between bold action and a rash deed. He was a brave leader who observed certain norms, which were necessary for his line of action.

From 1890 onwards Tilak took active part in politics. He also continued with his academic pursuits and found time to read the *Vedas* and other ancient Sanskrit texts, as also books by eminent authors of indology, astronomy and such subjects. In 1892, Tilak wrote the book, *Orion*. He sent a summary of the book to the International Oriental Congress which met in London in 1892. Tilak's book evoked great interest and earned him praise from eminent scholars like Prof. Max Muller, the eminent indologist. Scholars of indology were shocked to learn of Tilak's sentence to eighteen months of rigorous imprisonment. Unappetising food and the hardships of prison life made Tilak lose a few pounds in weight and his health in general also deteriorated. Unperturbed and undaunted, he accepted everything in a stoic manner. Whatever leisure time he found after a day's hard work, he devoted to reading. Prof. Max Muller had sent him a copy of the *Rigveda*, edited and annotated by him. Tilak, in spite of his respect for Prof. Max Mullet's scholarship, did not agree with the tetter's interpretation of the Vedic verses. When he read a particular *richa*, he did not accept the meaning given by Prof. Max Muller. Tilak pondered over it for a long time, and then came to the conclusion that the *richa* must have been written somewhere in the Arctic region, near the North Pole. Tiiak was almost in ecstasy and decided to write a book based on the thesis that the Aryans had their homeland in the Arctic. "Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage."

Though Tilak was in a solitary cell, surrounded by high walls of the prison, his mind transcended the limitations of time and space and he felt as if he was hearing the *richas* recited by the Aryan sages living in the Arctic four thousand years ago.

People all over India wanted Tilak to be released. A memorandum seeking his release was submitted to the British government by Prof. Max Muller and a few other eminent scholars from Europe, who held Tilak in high esteem for his significant contributions in indology. Prof. Romesh Chandra Dutt, an eminent historian of Bengal, also signed the memorandum, which carried the following paragraph:

“That Mr Tilak has served his country well as a scholar and a Sanskritist and his services have been recognised by the best scholars of Europe...that he is unused to manual labour and has suffered much in health from prison discipline.”

These efforts of Max Muller and other scholars bore fruit. After undergoing rigorous imprisonment for eleven months, he was granted conditional release from prison on 6th September 1898.

After his release Tilak went to Sinhgad fort near Poona for relaxation. Sinhgad was his favourite resort for he regarded it as a sacred place because Tanaji, a close associate of Shivaji Maharaj, became a martyr while trying to capture this fort. In Poona, Tilak kept a busy schedule due to public engagements and hardly got any rest but at Sinhgad he got the peace he needed. He enjoyed the quiet atmosphere and the fresh, cool breeze of the mountains. His leisure hours were spent in reading and writing. He enjoyed talking to the simple farmers, *mavals*, living in the vicinity of Sinhgad. His health was soon restored and the rest invigorated his mind. He started his activities with renewed zest.

After resting for two months, in December 1898 Tilak attended the Madras session of the Congress, as a delegate. After the session, he went to Ceylon via Rameshwaram, and returned to Poona in February 1899. He got back to his work as editor of the *Kesari* and resumed his political activities. In December 1899 he attended the Lucknow session of the Congress and at the request of his friend Kashinath Pant Chhatre, the proprietor of a circus, went to Burma. He toured different parts of the country for his political work, but never wrote an account of his travels. However, in May 1900, during the Vasant-Vyakhyan Mela at Poona, he delivered a speech giving his impressions on his travels through Ceylon and Burma. On Ceylon his observations were: “In the society in Ceylon, there is no caste system, there are no child marriages and there are inter-marriages between persons belonging to Buddhism and Christianity. In spite of all these social reforms during the last three hundred years, the feeling of patriotism, pride in one’s religion and the sense of unity have almost vanished. The main reform that the society in Ceylon needs is arousing patriotism and fraternity among its people. Ceylon is a fertile country and is also rich in minerals. However, the Sinhalese people are by nature complacent and lazy. As a result, they do not use their natural resources properly and thus foreigners are exploiting the country to their own benefit.”

On Burma, Tilak made the following observations: “Absence of caste system, religious freedom, education of women, adult marriage, widow remarriage, absence of restrictions in food habits-nail these social reforms, which many of our learned and wise people have been trying to propagate in our society, existed in the Burmese society even before the British came and conquered the country. But, in spite of all these reforms, the Burmese lack patriotism, self-respect and there is a feeling of hatred amongst different groups. As a result of quarrels amongst these groups, the Burmese are unable to protect their freedom. King Thiba’s rule came to an end and the British conquered Burma. It is therefore evident that there is no vital link between social reforms and an earnest desire

for the upliftment of one's country. Even if social reforms become a permanent feature of our society, people need not necessarily become patriotic. Love for one's country, the desire to work unitedly for the good of the people, the failure to set aside minor differences and petty jealousies in order to work for the upliftment of the poor, the desire to acquire modern knowledge and learn the new skills necessary for developing the industries, even if it means going to far-off countries, and the resolve to maintain the identity of one's country—all these qualities must be promoted in the people if any country is to make progress and prosper. These qualities do not depend on what we call social reforms. In fact, in some societies like the Burmese, qualities which are considered essential for the progress of a nation are conspicuous by their absence. The Burmese society has implemented all the social reforms. An earnest effort has to be made to inculcate the virtues necessary for the building up of a nation and if we want India to make progress on all fronts, we must give priority to these virtues and strive to instil them in our people.”

After returning to Poona in February 1899, Tilak once again took over as editor of the *Kesari*. During the period of his imprisonment, N.C. Kelkar worked as the editor and was ably assisted by Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar. Tilak had worked as editor till the seventeenth issue of the *Kesari*, published in 1897, when his name was removed from editorship following his conviction. Now Tilak once again assumed the responsibilities of the editor and on 4th July 1899 wrote the stirring editorial, 'Beginning the Sacred Duty once Again'. He declared to the world that he was in no way cowed down by his sufferings and would carry on his mission with renewed vigour. He knew that the path to political freedom was a long and arduous one, for which one would have to undergo a lot of suffering and face the wrath of the foreign government. Therefore, soon after his release, he declared, "I am resuming my duty to serve our country and I shall do so in a fearless and dedicated manner as I did earlier." He wanted to restore confidence in the minds of the people and persuade them to work for liberating India from foreign clutches. He made a resume' of the events and the situation prevailing in the country since the past twenty-two months and brought to peoples notice how the Indian society had suffered in certain respects. In his editorial, he referred to the controversy between the moderates and the radicals in Maharashtra and made the following observation: "A person does not become a moderate if he calls himself a moderate, nor does a person become a radical by declaring that he is a radical. While both these groups scoff at each other, the ruthless power of the government will crush them both. All of us have to accept the restrictions imposed by law. However, even within this existing framework, one can take some liberties. The difference between the moderates and the radicals is chiefly regarding the manner in which such liberties are to be taken while striving to secure political rights for India. The moderates consider the present situation and the scope for political work as satisfactory. But the *Kesari* thinks that both these are unsatisfactory and openly says it. In spite of this difference of emphasis, the moderates and the radicals can and should work together for the common goal, and much would be achieved if they co-operated with each other in serving the cause of our country.”

These observations reflect his political maturity and resolve to consolidate and unite all sections of the society towards working *for swarajya*. Despite his other preoccupations, he made it a point to spare some time for his academic pursuits and the study of the *Vedas*. It was because of this study that Vedic phrases flowed naturally from his pen and

show how well versed he was in ancient Sanskrit literature. The Anglo-Indian press in India disapproved of Tilak's release from prison. The press was, as it is, annoyed with him for not voicing dissent against the killing by Vasudeo Chapekar and his associate Ranade. Tilak had nothing to do with the incident, but the press continued with its malicious propaganda against him, hinting that he was the prime culprit and that his writings incited violence against the British. At this juncture, Lord Northcote was appointed Governor of Bombay. *Globe*, a conservative journal in England, under the pretext of advising the newly-appointed Governor, wrote that there was a network of anti-government groups in the Bombay Presidency, that Tilak was the moving spirit behind the activities of these groups and that after his arrest, violence had been checked but only temporarily. The *Globe* wrote: "Happily Sir Stafford Northcote goes to his important office with much fuller knowledge of the state of affairs than his predecessor possessed until his mind was informed of the campaign of murder which Tilak directed, if not as its organiser."

The Times of India had always been hostile to Tilak and it reproduced the above-mentioned remark of the *Globe* in its issue of 18th November 1899, stating that it was an expression of public opinion. Immediately after this, Tilak lodged a libel suit against *The Times of India*. Pherozeshah Mehta was his lawyer. In the prosecution case against Tilak under the charge of sedition, the Advocate-General had unequivocally stated that Tilak was in no way connected with Rand's murder. Pherozeshah Mehta based his arguments on this statement and pleaded Tilak's case in a forceful and convincing manner. Meanwhile, when the editor of *The Times of India* came to know of the libel suit, he immediately published his apology the next day, stating that in this respect, the views of *The Times of India* differed from that of the *Globe*. At the end of the apology, the editor concluded: "The remarks were baseless and we are sorry for publishing them." Thus *The Times of India* had to tender an apology openly and that marked the end of the libel suit. However, Tilak did not stop at that. He now filed a libel suit against the *Globe* in England. After great reluctance the editor of the *Globe* tendered an unconditional apology. This apology was prominently published in the 24th November 1900 issue of the *Kesari*. This moral victory helped to raise his political prestige and made him immensely popular. He then went to attend the Lahore session of the Indian National Congress where on reaching the dais, not only the delegates but the spectators stood up to give a standing ovation and lustily cheered him. Tilak's patriotism, fearlessness, fighting qualities, sharp intellect, upright character and above all, spirit of sacrifice won him a place in the hearts of the people and he came to be known popularly as 'Lokamanya Tilak'. Tilak's writings in the *Kesari* between 1900 and 1905 clearly indicated the evolution of his views and the growth of his ideology on the basis of the views of different thinkers and authors. He was deeply impressed by the book, *Poverty and British Rule in India* written by Dadabhai Naoroji. Digby's, *Prosperous British India* was another book which he found very stimulating and thought provoking. Finding it necessary to communicate the views of Dadabhai and Digby to the people, Tilak wrote an article in the *Kesari* on 10th December 1901. Dadabhai had for over a quarter of a century emphatically stated that the British had exploited India, drained her of its natural resources and were thus responsible for India's growing poverty. He had substantiated his arguments by quoting facts and figures that exposed the diabolical role of the British in India's economic exploitation. Similarly Digby had drawn a harrowing picture of the

appalling poverty in India and had shown that the salary drawn by the Secretary of State for India, per year, was equivalent to the sum total of the average income of ninety thousand Indians. Both these authors had shown that the British had not only held India in political bondage but exploited the country economically in such a ruthless manner that it had become totally impoverished. They also stated that the continued exploitation would make the country's condition worse. He concluded by applauding Dadabhai Naoroji and Digby on their role in exposing the heinous crime of the British in India.

Tilak invariably put forth his views forcefully and emphatically and attacked his opponents through his pen, no matter how great or powerful the opponent was. He did not spare even his contemporaries like Agarkar, Ranade or Gokhale. His open sarcasm deeply hurt the sensitive minds of these persons. However ruthless or unfair he was in many of the controversies, he never demeaned the qualities of his adversaries or the significance of their work. In an obituary on Agarkar, Tilak wrote: "Agarkar was a fervent *swarajist*. He was deeply agonised at the poverty in our country, by our dependence on others and our degradation in the field of commerce and industry. He was pained by the misery caused by certain odious customs in our society, particularly regarding the Hindu widows. However, he was much more pained by the evils which were a result of the British rule in India." In the same article, Tilak paid glowing tributes to Agarkar's spirit of sacrifice and wrote: "A person must not become a slave of circumstances but should master them in order to realise the ideals cherished by him. This is possible only if the person is courageous, selfless, willing to sacrifice everything and has the capacity to make determined efforts for the good of the people. Such men alone can be regarded as great and Agarkar belonged to this category."

In the obituary on Ranade, Tilak referred to Ranade's scholarship, statesmanship, constant preoccupation with doing good for the society and desire to involve people in the movements which he had initiated. Tilak wrote: "Ranade, during his life-time, made an arduous effort to enlighten our society. There are many leaders who speak and write about enlightenment, but the way in which Ranade kindled the flame of knowledge and strove for awakening the people was indeed unique. He was the apostle of enlightenment. His death has created a void which cannot be filled in the near future."

Tilak held Swami Vivekananda and his principles on Hinduism in high regard. Reverence for Swami Vivekananda is reflected in the obituary written by him.

Tilak, during his student days, was influenced by Herbert Spencer's thoughts whom he regarded as a sage of modern times. After Spencer's death, Tilak gave a lucid account of his agnosticism and his views on evolution thus: "Spencer's life-long dedication to knowledge and the new ideas propounded by him in his delineation of philosophy were the most salient features of his life. Great poets and philosophers, no matter where they are born, in reality belong to the entire humanity and people from all lands love and respect them. We have no hesitation in regarding the late Herbert Spencer as a philosopher from amongst us."

Tilak also held Prof. Max Muller in high regard and his book, *The Sacred Books of the East* profoundly influenced his way of thinking. In an obituary on Prof. Max Muller, he paid glowing tributes to his profound scholarship/perceptive intellect and rare human qualities. Tilak wrote: "Max Muller devoted all his energies to the *Vedas* and other sacred books. He was instrumental in revealing to the Western world the glories of Hindu

religion and philosophy. Death has taken away a great scholar and noble person, whose life was devoted to the pursuit of knowledge, and who found a sense of fulfilment in his study of Hindu philosophy.”

During this period, i.e. 1900 to 1905, Tilak wrote extensive and critical reviews on the new editions of the *Mahab-harata* and the *Ramayana*. He threw new light on the problem of deciding the period during which the two great epics could have been written. This was followed by a scholarly discussion on some important aspects of these epics, as has been pointed out by some eminent scholars.

While undergoing imprisonment in 1893, he became concerned at a *richa* in the *Rigveda*, -and in a brain-wave concluded that the *richa* must have been written near the North Pole which was the original homeland of the Aryans. This was not just a flight of the imagination but an original and brilliant idea to have struck a scholar of great erudition. Soon after his release from prison, he plunged into politics. However, he reserved a part of his time for reading books on geology and archaeology. From the evidence he had collected, he was confident of proving his thesis. He carefully sifted the data he had gathered and planned his book in a logical and methodical way. In the summer of 1902, he went to stay at Sinhgad fort where he found the necessary solitude and peace for writing the book. He took with him his writer Gopalrao Gogate, to whom he dictated his voluminous book, *The Arctic Home of the Vedas*. Gogate, in his reminiscences of Tilak, wrote: “Tilak dictated to me hectically for fourteen to fifteen hours a day. Sometimes he would be so absorbed in contemplation of a new idea that I had to wait for hours before he would resume the work of dictation...He hardly spoke to anyone in the house...the work continued till almost the last minute of our leaving Sinhgad...He was happy when the book was completed.”

The Arctic Home of the Vedas was published in 1903. Tilak, in the preface, wrote: “The inference that the ancestors of the Vedic *rishis* lived in the Arctic home in interglacial times was forced on me by the mass of Vedic and Avestic evidence.” This voluminous work, divided into thirteen chapters, presents a scientific description of the Arctic region and says that in ancient times the Arctic region was inhabited by man. Tilak did not depend solely on Vedic literature but analysed the evidence he had collected in the light of geology, the *Vedangjyotish* and linguistics. He also interpreted the different myths and after consulting many reference books, drew the conclusion that the Aryans in ancient times lived in the Arctic region. In the first three chapters, geological evidence throws light on the problems of the period when man inhabited the region near the North Pole. In the third chapter there is a Table indicating the period in which the Aryans lived in the Arctic region. In the ninth chapter, Tilak gives a novel interpretation of the Vedic myth on the war between Vritra and Indra. This myth, according to Tilak, had its origin in the belief that the earth was enveloped in darkness for a long time and that this long night was followed by a long period when there was light. Tilak’s interpretation was based on a *richa* in the *Rigveda*. He substantiated his thesis with evidence from the *Avesta*, the holy book of the Parsis. He then arrived at the conclusion that since such a phenomenon, viz. a long night followed by a long day existed only in the North Pole, the myth of Indra and Vritra must have originated in that region. In the thirteenth chapter, he put together all the evidence collected to arrive at the conclusion that the original homeland of the Aryans was the Arctic region.

Prof. Warren, an eminent American scholar, gave a favourable review of *The Arctic Home of the Vedas*, and expressed his agreement with Tilak. Some other research scholars in the West however did not agree with him, but nevertheless praised him for his research methodology which was based primarily on anthropology. Though the thesis put forth by Tilak is not accepted by research scholars of today, it however is a challenge for many. He showed the way to studying certain findings in a novel manner.

During this period there broke a storm over the issue of religious rites in Maharashtra. Sayajirao Gaekwad, the ruler of Baroda state, said that there should be similar religious rites and ceremonies for the Kshatriyas as those for the Brahmins, which are performed according to Vedic rites. This raised a storm with the orthodox Brahmins opposing vehemently and asserting that religious rites according to the *Vedas* could be performed only for the Brahmins. This controversy reached the ears of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj, ruler of Kolhapur state, who took the stand that the *sanskaras* and religious rites for Kshatriyas should be performed according to the *Vedas*. When Rajopadhye, the official priest for the royal family, refused to perform the rites according to the *Vedas*, Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj confiscated the village given to Rajopadhye as *inam* for the duties he performed as a priest. Tilak then wrote: "The caste distinctions have traditionally become a part of life for the Hindus and though inter-mixing of castes is desirable, it must be admitted that these distinctions would continue for hundreds of years." Tilak also pointed out that Shivaji too was a Kshatriya who had summoned a Brahmin from Benares at his coronation ceremony which was performed according to the *Vedas*. However, rites and *sanskaras* in the family were performed according to the *Puranas* and not the *Vedas*. Tilak's stand on this issue was dubious and vacillating. His strong criticism of Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaj deeply hurt the Maratha community and created a rift which lasted for many years. It was evident that Tilak with his orthodox background took a rigid stand which was harmful to his political objective. He wanted the people to join the freedom movement, but, he himself did not show the broad outlook which is expected of a leader of his stature, and as a result, the Marathas were estranged. Instead of utilising the opportunity for winning over the Marathas, he took a stand which created a schism between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins, particularly among the Marathas.

On the economic front too Tilak did not show a progressive outlook, particularly regarding the restrictions on the money-lenders. He wrote an editorial under the title, 'The Money-Lender is killed and the Farmer too is killed'. In this article, Tilak argued that as long as the loan was not given to the farmer, it was futile to impose restrictions on the money-lender. In another article, Tilak opposed the legislation regarding land revenue. In sharp contrast to the progressive attitude of Mahatma Phule, Tilak took a rigid, traditionalist view. The fact was that he belonged to the family of *Knats*, who were money-lenders in Ratnagiri district. Instead of supporting the plea for giving more rights to farmers who tilled the land, Tilak chose to defend the privileges enjoyed by the money-lenders, who were looked upon as exploiters. At a time when he was fighting for political rights for the Indian people, he failed to uphold the rights of the farmers who tilled the soil. Instead, he chose to support the rights of the class to which he belonged. In this regard Tilak, who was expected to be ahead of his times, failed to show the far-sightedness expected of him.

Meanwhile in the political field, he was gaining in popularity. Upto 1898, his field of activity was confined to Maharashtra. After 1900, however, he realised the need for spreading the political activity to every nook and corner of India and directed his efforts towards doing so. He did not approve the moderate stand of the Indian National Congress because he felt that it would not help achieve political rights. He decided to give a radical orientation to the Indian National Congress by creating a greater awareness among the people through their participation in political activities. He wanted a militant struggle against the British government which was responsible for economic exploitation and impoverishment of the Indians. Tilak pointed out that due to foreign domination people had lost their sense of self-respect which had led to moral degeneration in the society. He was agonised at the slavish mentality that had come to stay with the Indians; he decided to make a determined bid to put a stop to this rot and generate a new enthusiasm among the masses. He realised that sacrifices were necessary in order to kindle the flame of patriotism. Convinced that not words but deeds alone could bring about a change in the attitude of the people, he organised cadres of active and devoted young men, willing to make sacrifices. Though he himself worked within the framework of law, he wanted the young men to pave the way for revolutionary action.

He gathered a few young idealists, who came out with novel ways for acquiring political freedom. Krishnaji Prab-hakar Khadilkar, an intelligent young man, who worked with the *Kesari*, also thought on similar lines. Tilak and Khadilkar went to attend the Indian National Congress at Calcutta in 1900. There an elderly woman known as Mataji, invited Tilak to the school run by her. They went to see the school and were surprised to hear “Mataji speaking in Marathi. This woman, a widow, had some years earlier gone on a pilgrimage to Nepal. At the Pashupati temple in Karh-mandu, the Maharaja of Nepal saw her and both started living together. After the Maharaja’s assassination, she settled down in Calcutta and started a school. She came to be known as ‘Mataji’. She maintained her contacts with Nepal through a colonel, Kumar Narsinha Rana. Mataji told Tilak that he would get all co-operations for his work in Nepal from Colonel Rana. Tilak accepted the offer and accompanied by Khadilkar, went to Patna. But they failed to get the permit to enter Nepal and perforce had to return to Poona. However, Khadilkar decided to use this contact for revolutionary activities. He went to Nepal under the pretext of setting up a factory for manufacturing tiles, though his intention was to manufacture rifles covertly. Through Colonel Rana, he established contacts with a representative of the German firm JCruppa, for the manufacture of arms. Khadilkar stayed in Nepal as Krishnarao upto 1903. He was accompanied by one Vasudeo Limaye and some others. However, his efforts did not realise much and Khadilkar returned disappointed, to Poona. Tilak knew about Khadilkar’s activities but in no way was involved with him.

Vasukaka Joshi, another young associate of Tilak, went to Afghanistan under the pretext of seeing the Mahnubhav *math*, a religious place of a particular Hindu sect at Kabul. His intention was to establish contacts with the Amir of Afghanistan, but, as he failed to do so, he had to return disappointed. Tilak helped and encouraged some young men who wanted to go abroad to study science. He helped Vishnu Ganesh Pingale, a brilliant student, to proceed to America to study chemistry. Pandurang Sadashiv Khankhoje was a bright student from Wardha, whom Tilak gave financial assistance for going to America to study modern agriculture. Both these young men after completing their studies, joined the revolutionary party—the Gadr Party.

Japan was then a developing nation, and when in the Japanese-Russian war Japan defeated Russia, all Asiatic countries were filled with pride, because never before had an Asiatic country defeated a European nation. Japan emerged as a symbol of the aspirations of the people of Asia. Some youths in Maharashtra went to Japan surreptitiously to get training in the use of arms. There is, however, no evidence to prove that these young men got support from Tilak though they had his blessings.

During this period, Tilak had to pass through a great deal of torment in personal life. He wanted to keep the promise which he had made to his friend Baba Maharaj Pandit before the latter's death; and he did what he thought best. However, his enemies and those whose interest was at stake hatched a conspiracy to destroy his public life by character assassination. The humiliation which Tilak suffered due to this unfortunate incident must have taken a toll of a few years of his life.

This episode had its beginning when Tilak was prosecuted in 1897. With his release on bail on 4th August he returned to Poona, on 5th August Shri Baba Maharaj Pandit, suffering from cholera and aware that he was not likely to recover, made a will requesting Tilak to become one of the trustees of his estate. Tilak deemed it his duty to respect the last wishes of his friend and agreed to become a trustee. Baba Maharaj died the next day. At that time, Baba's wife Tai Maharaj was pregnant. Baba Maharaj had stated in his will that if Tai Maharaj were to give birth to a son then he would be the legal heir. However, if she did not beget a son or if the son died at an early age, then Tai Maharaj with the consent of the trustees could adopt a suitable boy as a son. Tai Maharaj gave birth to a son but unfortunately he died in 1898. At that time Tilak was undergoing his term of imprisonment.

After his release, Tilak called a meeting of the trustees. The trustees reviewed the income and expenditure of the Maharaj family and made the necessary arrangements. On 18th June 1901, at the next meeting of the trustees, it was decided that Tai Maharaj would adopt a boy belonging to a Brahmin family and who was living with his parents in a village near Aurangabad. Accordingly Tilak and Dadasaheb Khaparde accompanied Tai Maharaj to Aurangabad where she approved of the boy and agreed to adopt him as her son. The adoption ceremony was performed according to the *shastras* in the presence of respectable citizens. Tilak felt relieved that he had kept his promise and discharged his obligation accordingly. Little did he know that a conspiracy was afoot against him. Tilak, too keen to return to political work, wanted to fulfil his promise made to a friend as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Tai Maharaj changed her mind and turned hostile. On 6th July 1901, she served a legal notice on the trustees that henceforth they should not interfere in her affairs. Nagpurkar, one of the trustees, and two others declared that the adoption ceremony had not taken place and wanted Tai Maharaj to adopt one Balamaharaj Pandit of Kolhapur as her son. The adoption ceremony was scheduled to take place on 13th July. However, Tilak stepped in and took prompt and firm action to prevent further mischief. The proposed adoption ceremony did not take place and Balamaharaj returned to Kolhapur on 15th July. Tai Maharaj then decided to perform the adoption ceremony at Kolhapur. Tilak tried to prevent this but his efforts proved of no avail. The second adoption ceremony was performed at Kolhapur on 18th August 1901. Tilak, as a trustee of the estate of the late Baba Maharaj Pandit, filed a suit in the court, in order to prove

that the adoption ceremony at Aurangabad was legal and the second one at Kolhapur illegal. Tai Maharaj in the meanwhile filed an application to revoke the probate. Aston, the District Judge, heard the suit filed by Tai Maharaj and held the Aurangabad adoption ceremony invalid and revoked the probate. He found Tilak guilty of criminal offence and recommended his prosecution. Tilak appealed to the High Court against the decision. The High Court reversed Aston's order of revocation but strangely enough allowed the criminal proceedings against him to continue. The magistrate sentenced him to eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment with a fine of two thousand rupees. Tilak was released on bail. In the Sessions Court, the judge reduced his sentence to six months and revoked the fine. The news of Tilak's conviction shocked the people. However, Tilak maintained a calm and dignified silence. S.B. Tambe, counsel for Tilak, in his reminiscences has written: "Tilak's peace of mind was never disturbed in spite of the fact that the conviction was to be a permanent blot on his character."

While the case was going on, an unfortunate incident occurred in Tilak's family. His eldest son Vishwanath, who was twenty-one years old, died of plague. Tilak, however, maintained his composure. Tilak used to dictate his editorials to Appaji Vishnu Kulkarni, who in his reminiscences has written: "On the day following Vishwanath's death, Tilak brought reference books from the library and dictated to me an editorial under the title, 'The Resignation of Maharaj Holkar has been sanctioned'. I was disturbed at Vishwanath's death, but Tilak dictated the editorial with his usual composure as though nothing had happened."

Meanwhile after the decision of Lucas, the Sessions Judge, Tilak appealed to the High Court. The appeal was heard on 24th February 1904. On 3rd March, the two judges who heard the case acquitted Tilak and set aside the sentence passed by the Sessions Judge. They also ordered that the fine, if already paid, should be refunded. The original adoption at Aurangabad was held valid. Thus Tilak's stand was fully vindicated and the blot on his character removed. There was great jubilation all over the country on Tilak's victory. *The Amrit Bazar Patrika* wrote: "Tilak's character has shone forth more brilliant, like gold after being exposed to fire." *The Advocate of India*, while welcoming the judgement of the High Court, said that the judges in the lower court and the Sessions Court were prejudiced against Tilak and that their partiality had given a blow to people's trust in the British mode of justice. Over two hundred telegrams congratulating Tilak were received by him. There was a public meeting in Poona in which he was felicitated. Tilak spoke, "I did not show any extraordinary courage. Public opinion was on my side; that was why I withstood the ordeal."

Tilak was acquitted in the criminal prosecution, but the civil litigation continued. In 1906, the magistrate gave a verdict in which each of Tilak's contentions was accepted. Tilak's opponents appealed to the High Court. The judge of the High Court declared the Aurangabad adoption invalid and passed strictures on Tilak. Against this judgement, Tilak filed an appeal before the Privy Council. In 1915, the Privy Council gave its verdict unequivocally in favour of him. Thus Tilak's moral stand was at long last vindicated. However, he had to suffer mental tension for many years and had to spend over fifty thousand rupees as expenses for filing suits, both civil and criminal. Tilak regarded his promise to his friend Baba Maharaj Pandit as sacred and courageously faced harrowing experiences in order to keep his word and discharge his obligation.

Jagannath Maharaj Pandit, the boy adopted as her son by Tai Maharaj at Aurangabad, became the legal heir. In his reminiscences he wrote: "When I expressed a desire to give Tilak fifty thousand rupees, he told me that he would not accept a pie from me. When I insisted on giving something Tilak said, 'If it will make* you happy, give me some land behind your bungalow; I shall donate the land to the New Poona College, an institution which takes pride in our nation and works enthusiastically in the field of education'."

3. FOUR-POINT PROGRAMME FOR *SWARAJYA*

The struggle for liberty is a way of asserting the dignity of human life. When a nation loses freedom and is ruled by another nation, the subject nation develops a feeling of inferiority and the people lose their sense of self-respect. The Indian leaders were deeply disturbed over this moral degradation afflicting large sections of the people and thus, using the platform of the Indian National Congress, they appealed to the people to join hands to preserve India's dignity and integrity. Lokamanya Tilak started the Shivaji festival with the hope that the noble life and heroic deeds of Shivaji would provide inspiration to the people and instil self-respect in them. At this time, Swami Vivekananda gave a brilliant exposition on the noble qualities present in Hinduism to an international conference on religion. He made the world realise the glorious nature of India's tradition and devotion to noble values in life. In September 1893, while addressing the World Conference of Religions, he declared, "Hindu religion is based on tolerance and accepts the existence of other religions. I regard truth as God. The entire world is my country." Owing to his broad outlook and wide vision, Swami Vivekananda won world-wide acclaim. His speeches enthralled his Western listeners. He convinced the world that though India had lost its political freedom, it was not in bondage, the soul of the nation was still free. He helped create a noble image of India in the world, and during his tour, conquered the hearts of many with his simple and austere life, his brilliant intellect and his noble character. These rare qualities of his filled the hearts of Indians with joy and respect for him. When Vivekananda returned to India, he was given a tumultuous welcome. He then embarked on a tour of different parts of India. He delivered innumerable speeches, made people conscious of their glorious heritage and identity and appealed to them to bring about reforms in all spheres of life. His emphasis was on removal of poverty and inequality, establishment of ties of brotherhood among all sections of the society and the need for unity to build a new India. Lokamanya Tilak held him in high respect and deeply appreciated his work. He had great expectations from Swamiji, but unfortunately Swami Vivekananda died prematurely in 1902. In an obituary on Vivekananda, Tilak published in his journal an inspiring character-sketch of the noble preacher, and appealed to the people to practise what Vivekananda had preached. He also wrote that India's glory could be revived if Indians were to act according to the inspiring message of Swami Vivekananda.

In 1904 during the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress, it was decided to depute a representative of the Congress Party to explain to the British rulers the political aspirations of the Indian people. Accordingly Prof. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was sent to England. Lala Lajpat Rai, who was then in England, assisted Gokhale in pleading for India's cause. Gokhale was not only intelligent but had an uncanny control over the English language. His thinking was logical, his manner persuasive and he could present

facts with a rare skill. He pleaded India's cause in an effective and forceful manner. He placed before the British a correct picture of the state of affairs in India and exposed the Machiavellian policy of Lord Curzon. He also made the demand for home rule in India. In one of his public speeches, he said, "The Indian people are getting united to work for a political ideal. They are making preparations for fighting against the government. If justice is denied to the Indian people and if their legitimate political aspirations are thwarted, then there can be an uprising and the 'people would try to win *swarajya* in their own way. Under such circumstances, you must guard against the eventuality of sending British troops to India to crush the Indian uprising."

Tilak was very happy when he read the report of this speech. He wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* showering praise on Gokhale. He congratulated him for the excellent work done while presenting India's case in England. On Gokhale's return, a mammoth meeting was held in Poona to felicitate him. Tilak moved a resolution thanking Gokhale and praising him for his patriotic spirit and excellent work in England. On 12th December 1905, Tilak published in the *Kesari* a photograph of Gokhale with an artistically designed border. In the same issue a special interview of Gokhale given to the *Kesari* was also published.

India's plight under the British made many Indians restless and incited the sensitive and the idealist to strive for freedom. Barrister Shyamji Krishna Varma was one such idealist who had started his activities in England. He had an extraordinary career before he took to active politics. An eminent scholar of Sanskrit, Shyamji Krishna Varma had helped Monier Williams in the preparation of his English dictionary before leaving for England to become a barrister. On his return to India, owing to his fine legal acumen, he was invited by the prince of Junagadh state to work as the Dewan for him. In Junagadh state, his activities made the British suspicious of him and so he left for England in 1897. There he started practising as a barrister and within a short time acquired fame and fortune. He then decided to work for India's freedom and started a journal, *Indian Sociologist* to give expression to India's political aspirations and put forth his radical views to the British. In the first issue he announced the scheme under which he proposed to give scholarships to Indian students. He wanted to help brilliant students to study in different departments of the world's universities. He also wanted to inculcate in these promising young men a spirit of patriotism so that they could take a lead in the freedom movement. He was prepared to spend all his fortune on building up a cadre of revolutionary young men. In the *Indian Sociologist*, he fearlessly wrote incisive articles demanding India's freedom from the British and in 1905, founded the India Home Rule Society. He also founded a hostel for Indian students which later became the rendezvous for Indian revolutionaries. Tilak lent support to Shyamji's activities besides giving advice and guidance. Shyamji sent the *Indian Sociologist* to Tilak regularly. Tilak asked Shyamji to draw up a plan for building up a group of political missionaries who could work for India's freedom. It was decided to call the organisation 'Deshbhakta Samaj'. Bipin Chandra Pal was chosen as the first political missionary, but as he was arrested in Bengal, the scheme could not progress any further.

Lokamanya Tilak was of the opinion that a nation striving for freedom had the moral right to use all means and methods in its struggle. He knew the significance of the contribution made by Swami Vivekananda in India's freedom struggle by trying to mould world opinion. He also appreciated Gokhale's fervent advocacy of the Indian cause and

his concerted efforts at convincing the British of the need for giving political rights to the Indians. He was also aware of the importance of the spade work done by Shyamji Krishna Varma in building up a revolutionary cadre. He strongly supported all these efforts carried out in different corners because all aimed at the single ideal of winning freedom. His ideological stance was to accept the *sutra* which called for adoption of all kinds of means for the realisation of the goal of *swarajya*.

Tilak was eager to give a radical twist to the political movement so that feelings could be roused to such a pitch as to encourage all to participate in the freedom struggle. Lord Curzon's autocratic rule presented the necessary impetus for building up the political movement in India. Curzon was a diehard imperialist with contempt for the Indians. Towards the end of 1900, in a confidential letter to the Secretary of State for India, Curzon wrote: "The Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my greatest ambitions, while in India, is to assist it to a peaceful demise."

Curzon, intoxicated with the might of the British Empire, took one unjust decision after another. This deeply hurt the Indians and Tilak felt the need for challenging Curzon's tyrannical rule. He fearlessly took certain steps in that direction. When Curzon declared his resolve to partition the country, Tilak wrote a fiery editorial in the *Kesari* entitled, 'The Moment of Crisis'. He said, "Like Ravana, Lord Curzon wants to dance frantically all over India. Power has gone to his head to such an extent that reason has ceased to function and like a wild elephant he is trampling on public opinion in Bengal." Tilak, while arguing that the people ought to react strongly to Curzon's high-handedness, wrote: "Unless we take some stringent action to hurt the government's pride, Lord Curzon's arrogance will not get checked." In the end, Tilak wrote that mere speeches by leaders of Bengal were not enough and would not serve any purpose either.

In the editorial of 22nd August, Tilak wrote: "Instead of submitting petitions and making requests, the people should resort to some extreme measures which would be an eye-opener for the autocratic and arrogant British rulers...National boycott is a measure of this kind." Tilak described how Italy, China and America had used such a weapon effectively in the past and "history has proved that even the unarmed people, if united and determined to act courageously, emerge strong and can defy a powerful opponent without resorting to arms."

Once Tilak made up his mind to pursue a particular course of action, nothing could halt him or make him falter. On 29th August 1905, he wrote an highly inflammatory editorial under the heading, 'The Rule of Lord Curzon'. He strongly attacked the tyrannical deeds of Curzon and compared him to Aurangzeb. In the concluding paragraph, he wrote: "Just as in the solar system there are some comets, similarly among the galaxy of politicians, who surround the King Emperor, there are some who resemble the comets. Lord Curzon is a person of this kind."

Tilak was always serious in everything he did. He was never shallow or superficial in manner. Once he had decided on the path to be taken, he took every step firmly and resolutely. When he made a plea for using boycott as a weapon, he wrote an editorial, 'Boycott-A Yoga', in order to explain the nature of the strategy he wanted to adopt. He emphasised the need for boycotting foreign goods and viewed it not merely as a movement to be carried on for some time but a yoga which should pervade the Indian's

way of life. He even made a reference to the teachings of the *Bhagawad Gita* which said that taking action was the best form of yoga.

On 16th October 1905, Bengal was partitioned. Bengal was a politically conscious state where the people were dead against the partition. The government clarified that Bengal was being partitioned for administrative convenience, but the leaders of Bengal knew fully well that Lord Curzon's intention was to attack and destroy the unity of the people of Bengal and permanently create a rift between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Hindus were in majority in West Bengal while in East Bengal the Muslims were more in number. Curzon's shrewd plan and evil intentions were clearly reflected in his speeches during his tour of East Bengal. In order to strengthen the rule of British Empire in India, Curzon adopted the 'divide and rule' policy. His devious plan, however, did not succeed. The people of Bengal acted in a concerted manner to oppose the partition. The movement gathered tremendous momentum within a short time. On 7th August 1905, before the announcement of the partition, a large demonstration was held in Calcutta, the like of which the people of Bengal had not witnessed before in their life. In a public meeting it was decided to boycott British goods and a committee was appointed to chalk out the future plan of action. People from different strata of society joined the anti-partition movement. Fearing that the movement might remain restricted to Bengal, radical Indian leaders, in a rare political foresight, gave it a broad base by organising the struggle on an all-India basis. Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai made the people aware that partition of Bengal was not a regional issue but an attack on the self-respect and dignity of all Indians. In this movement, the trio—Lal, Bal and Pal, i.e. Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal—emerged as the accredited leaders of India's freedom struggle, blessed with political foresight. By chalking out a practical and realistic programme of action, they displayed their capacity for giving the people a correct lead and their determination to strengthen the bonds of unity among the Indians. It was no mean task to take the political movement to every corner of a vast country like India. Tilak with his strong sense of realism knew that once the wrath of the people had been sufficiently aroused against British rule, it would be necessary to give it the right direction. He came forth with a four-point programme of *swadeshi*, boycott, national education and *swarajya*, thus involving the people in different activities and enabling them to contribute their bit to the freedom struggle.

Bengal's agitation against its partition helped in forging intimate ties of friendship between it and Maharashtra. Of course, this did not happen suddenly. A few years before the partition, Sakharam Hari Deuskar from Maharashtra had gone and settled down in Bengal. He not only mastered the Bengali language but wrote a book too in Bengali. The book contained stories of heroes drawn from Indian history and due to the patriotic fervour of his tales; it soon captivated the imagination of the youth in Bengal. Many felt an irrepressible urge to fight for the freedom of their motherland and decided to take recourse to revolutionary means. Aurobindo Ghosh was the fountain-head of inspiration for the Bengali youth at the time, of the partition of Bengal. Ghosh had his education in England and was a brilliant young man with strong patriotic feelings. While studying at Cambridge University he took to revolutionary ideas and felt that India could be liberated only by means of an armed revolution. On his return to India, he started working as a professor of English at a college in Baroda. He began writing a series of articles for a weekly in Bombay called *Indu Prakash* under the heading, 'New Lamps for Old'. He

severely criticised the moderate methods of the Congress and advocated the need for giving a radical orientation to the party. This created a sensation in political circles and drew Tilak's attention to the writer of such articles. Tilak appreciated these articles for their radical ideas and patriotic fervour. Aurobindo published a pamphlet, *Bhavani Mandir*, in which he put forth his plan for preparing for a revolution. He planned to collect a group of young idealists and train them in an *ashram* to promote all-round development of their personality. These young men, with fine physique and sharp intellect, would also have the capacity for independent and original thinking. According to Aurobindo, they would be *karmayogis* who would renounce the pleasures of life and devote their energies to the task of liberating their motherland. He, with his brother Barindra Kumar and another associate Keshavrao Deshpande, began training and building of a cadre of revolutionaries.

The first meeting between Tilak and Aurobindo took place in 1902 when both attended the Ahmedabad session of the Indian National Congress. Tilak took Aurobindo outside the *pandal* and both had a long discussion in the open ground for quite some time. This was not merely a discussion between two political stalwarts; it was a confluence of two streams, a meeting of two forces in the country's freedom struggle. They exchanged views and resolved to make a united bid to break the chains of slavery which had stifled the spirit of the Indian people. Both felt that the efforts of the moderates were not leading the nation anywhere. Aurobindo felt that politics of petition and prayers only helped to take away the edge from the movement. His aim was to train and organise young revolutionaries who could help in obtaining freedom. Tilak felt that the liberal leaders who had put their faith in the fairness of British justice were completely mistaken because with their moderate methods they were incapable of leading the struggle towards *swarajya*. He felt that a radical orientation of India's political struggle under the aegis of the Congress was a necessary prerequisite, Aurobindo, though blessed with a sharp intellect, was highly emotional. Tilak too had a sharp intellect, but seldom got carried away by emotions. His approach to problems was always rational. Aurobindo was a dreamer with the capacity to involve people in his dreams about an ideal world. Tilak knew that a determined effort would have to be made to educate the people politically and make them participate in the freedom struggle. A mass movement at the grassroot level, according to Tilak, was a prerequisite of radical politics. Nevertheless, both regarded *swarajya* as their common goal and both were eager to co-operate with each other. Tilak was aware of Aurobindo's capacity to touch the chords of the young hearts by arousing them, and urging them to sacrifice their all for a noble cause. With faith in Aurobindo's inspiring personality, Tilak decided to join hands with him to take the political movement on a radical path.

The struggle against the partition had begun when Aurobindo was working as a professor in Baroda. He soon resigned from his teaching job and along with his brother Barindra reached Calcutta. He launched a journal, *Vande Matamm*, which in no time became very popular with the youth. His powerful pen and wonderful command over the English language helped inspire the youth to action. 'National education' was not just an empty slogan during the anti-partition movement. The leaders of Bengal wanted to practise what they preached. They, therefore, started the National College in Calcutta with Aurobindo Ghosh as its Principal. As an eminent scholar with a knack for teaching English literature, Aurobindo inculcated in his pupils the noble values of life by placing

lofty ideals before them. He became a hero for many who became revolutionaries and dedicated their lives to the service of motherland. Tilak, despite his admiration for the rare qualities which Aurobindo possessed, however did not want the youths to live in a world of dreams. Once some youths in Maharashtra who had joined the 'Abhinav Bharati'—an organisation started by the revolutionary, Veer Savarkar—came to meet Tilak to seek his advice on the action to take. They told Tilak that they were prepared to die for their motherland but he, in his characteristic manner, remarked, "It is equally necessary to live and work for the motherland." He asked them whether they had read the writings of Dadabhai Naoroji and told them to first prepare themselves adequately for participating in the struggle. He warned them not to get carried away by emotions as there was no place for adventurism or any rash action in a political struggle. He explained his views to Aurobindo too and told him that it was necessary to initially create a mass base for their political movement. In his bid to involve as many people as possible in the struggle against Bengal's partition, Tilak insisted on the implementation of his four-point programme of *swadeshi*, boycott, national education and *swarajya*. Though Aurobindo held Tilak in high esteem, he believed that freedom could be won only through revolutionary methods. He thought that the four-point programme, though a step ahead of the plans of the moderates, was not a bold move. Tilak, on the other hand, was confident of building up a mass base through his programme. This led to a difference of opinion between them though Tilak was aware that he could not afford to ignore Aurobindo's charismatic personality. Therefore, despite the differences in approach, he maintained a cordial relationship with Aurobindo and often sought his co-operation. He decided to utilise Aurobindo's extraordinary abilities not merely for the *anti-partition movement*, but for the realisation of his goal of *swarajya*.

It was due to the three leaders—Lal, Bal and Pal—that the four-point programme became popular during the anti-partition agitation. Lala Lajpat Rai observed, "*Swadeshi* is the road to freedom; only then can we become self-reliant. We shall have to mobilise man power and other resources in India. We shall have to collect capital, then only can we make the *swadeshi* movement a success in the interest of our country." While advocating boycott, Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal said that boycott was just the first step and that the movement should culminate in the boycott of the British government. In Bengal, the people in a demonstration of unity collected all cloth manufactured in Manchester as also clothes made out of British cloth, and made a bonfire of them. This act created a wave of enthusiasm among the youth who realised the symbolic significance of burning foreign cloth. They knew that this marked the beginning of the process of destroying British rule in India.

TUak, Lajpat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal, in order to prevent the anti-partition movement from becoming negative in character, therefore, while encouraging the boycott of British goods, gave an impetus to the *swadeshi* movement by persuading resourceful businessmen to start mills for weaving cloth indigenously apart from factories for manufacturing soap and match-boxes. National banks were set up for collecting the capital required for establishing different industries. In the institutions founded for imparting national education, arrangements were made for providing technical education. Concerted efforts were made to promote among the youth the need for a healthy physique, intellectual curiosity and spirit of patriotism. A number of young men became

teachers in such schools and colleges to make the national education programme a success.

Tilak felt it necessary to involve people of all the states in his four-point programme. He wrote editorials in the *Kesari* on *swadeshi* and boycott and appealed to the people to participate wholeheartedly in the programme. At Pandharpur, devotees of God Panduranga had gathered in large numbers on the day of *ekadeshi* (11th day in the first fortnight) in the month of *Kartik*. Tilak decided to utilise the occasion for exhibiting *swadeshi* goods and hold a meeting of those involved with the *swadeshi* movement. In such programmes, Tilak did not allow his political differences to come to the fore. He invited even liberal leaders and both Gokhale and Tilak were present at the meeting at Pandharpur. In Bombay, Tilak collected a number of industrialists and businessmen and started the Swadeshi Co-operative Stores Ltd., which evoked an enthusiastic response from all sections of the society. For this purpose he collected a fund of two-and-a-half lakh rupees from eminent persons like Tata, Dwarkadas Dharamsi, Khatau Makanji and others.

The *swadeshi* movement was instrumental in imparting impetus to some enterprises which had been started before the anti-partition movement. He launched the paisa-fund in Maharashtra, under which one pice was collected from every person for starting some business. Many young men came forward to collect for the fund and the money thus collected was utilised for setting up a glass factory at Talegaon in Poona district.

In 1905, at the venue of the Benares session of the Congress, an exhibition of *swadeshi* goods was organised. In the Benares session of the Indian National Congress, the movement for national education and the idea of establishing the Benares Hindu University were mooted. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya placed before the delegates his concept of founding a Hindu university and this found strong support from Tilak. The proposed university received donations to the tune of nine lakh rupees. At this juncture, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha organised a meeting which was addressed by Tilak. In his speech, Tilak pleaded for adoption of the Devnagari script all over India. He realised that it could not be done immediately particularly in south India, so he suggested that a beginning could be made by printing text-books for primary schools in the said script. The movement for national education soon gained momentum. In the 1906 Congress session at Calcutta, it was announced that the Rashtriya Shiksha Mandal which had already started a school and college, would start giving degrees to its students. In Poona, a new institution, the Maharashtra Vidya Prasarak, was established and under its auspices the Samartha Vidyalaya was started at Talegaon. Prof. Vijaypurkar, who drew inspiration from Tilak, threw himself headlong into the national education movement and was appointed Head of the Samartha Vidyalaya. Before taking any action, Tilak always clarified his ideology. He defined national education as education which promotes love for one's nation and in an editorial in the *Kesari* under the title, 'The Responsibility of Private Institutions in Imparting National Education'; he elucidated his theoretical concept in a convincing manner.

While participating in the movement Tilak did not lose sight of the political issues. He wrote two informative articles on the cotton-yarn industry and the weaving industry. On 12th December 1905, he wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* repudiating the arguments levelled against the *swadeshi* movement. In between all this, Tilak never refrained from

making a dig at Morley, who had just taken over as Secretary of State for India in the British cabinet. Morley, a liberal, called himself a disciple of the great liberal thinker John Stuart Mill. Morley had written a book *On Compromise*. His assumption of office was hailed by the liberals in India as they had great expectations of him. Tilak regarded this trust in Morley as an act of political naivety. Within a short time of assuming office, Morley declared that Bengal had to be partitioned for administrative convenience. Tilak in an editorial entitled, 'Bluff has been Called Off' wrote that it was a good thing that Morley had shown his true colours and dealt a blow to the foolish hopes harboured by moderates. Tilak's editorial on Morley under the title, 'A Philosopher or a Diplomat' was one of the finest pieces of political criticism. Tilak argued that Morley might be a liberal for England's internal affairs, but vis-a-vis India, he was in no way different from any other imperialist ruler. He then listed instances of Morley's hypocrisy by proving how, while acting as a diplomat, he was doing his best to protect and promote the interests of the British Empire under the garb of liberalism. Tilak's arguments were logical and convincing. He strongly criticised Gokhale and other moderates for expecting concessions from Morley.

In 1905, Prof. Gopal Krishna Gokhale presided over the session of the Indian National Congress at Benares. Tilak had earlier praised Gokhale for the work done by him in England; he also favoured Gokhale's nomination for presidentship of the Congress. In his presidential speech, Gokhale severely criticised the autocratic rule of Curzon and made a plea for *swadeshi*. In this session Tilak put forth a resolution regarding famine, poverty, land revenue and the economic survey of India. While moving his resolution, he drew a devastating picture of India's poverty and argued that it was the responsibility of the government to remove poverty by conducting a survey of representative villages to identify the causes of poverty before suggesting ways of removing it. Tilak believed that emphasis on economic issues and the demand for removal of poverty would give a fillip to the struggle for *swarajya*. He feared that a weak-kneed policy of the moderates would result in destroying the tempo of the anti-partition movement. He advocated that the reins of the Congress should be given to the hands of radical leaders. He and his colleagues started working towards bringing about a change in leadership. Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and moderate leaders considered it undesirable to give a radical orientation to the *swarajya* movement. Gokhale and his colleagues frowned on Tilak and his radical associates. They feared that the common man's participation in the fight for *swarajya* might give the movement a wrong and undesirable turn. The moderates wanted India's case to be pleaded only by a handful of intellectuals who could put forth their views in a persuasive manner to which the British ruler might respond favourably and hence grant political rights to the Indians. The moderates had failed to understand the character of the British Empire whose sole aim was to exploit colonial nations economically. They had implicit faith in the British sense of justice. Tilak, on the other hand, had correctly gauged the character of the British Empire and was convinced that only political pressure on the British rulers could bring about fulfilment of India's demands. Thus, even though the moderates and the radicals had the same goal of *swarajya*, there was a sharp difference in their approach to realising the goal. A conflict between the moderates and the radicals became inevitable. It was a conflict regarding the leadership of the political movement in India. Though it was evident as to who would control the Indian National Congress and carry on the political movement, Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and others did not want to

be led by Tilak, and therefore decided to keep the reins of the Congress in their own hands.

After the Benares session, it was decided to hold the next session of the Congress at Calcutta. The radicals, led by Bipin Chandra Pal and Tilak wanted to select a new president for the Congress to impart momentum to the struggle. On the other hand, Gokhale and the moderates desired that someone who toed the moderate line of action should be made the leader. Tilak proposed the name of Lala Lajpat Rai for the presidentship, while Bipin Chandra Pal and other Bengali leaders proposed the name of Tilak. Gokhale and his colleagues were opposed both to Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai. However, Gokhale, realising that the political atmosphere in Bengal was favourable to the radicals, decided to come to a compromise and suggested the name of Dadabhai Naoroji, the grand old man of Indian politics, for the presidentship. In a way this was a moral victory for the radicals. Dadabhai Naoroji was not just the grand old man; he was very clear in his thinking and forthright in his opinions. His deep study of the political and economic problems, his integrity and upright behaviour and, above all, dedication to the service of the country, inspired great respect among the Indians. Thus Dadabhai Naoroji was unanimously chosen president of the Indian National Congress. Immediately after this Tilak wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* under the title, 'What would be the Advice of Dadabhai?' In this editorial, Tilak gave a correct evaluation of Dadabhai's contribution to India's struggle. Tilak wrote: "Alexander, Muhammad Gori, Taimurlane and Nadir Shah invaded India and looted and plundered its wealth... but the economic exploitation of India by the British is far more harmful to us. The British rulers, while establishing peace in India, have impoverished and sucked our blood. Due to British rule, moral degradation has set in among us and our abilities in different fields have been thwarted. To Dadabhai Naoroji goes the credit for making us and also the world conscious of all this. He has substantiated his thesis on" India's exploitation by the British empire with relevant facts and statistical data. Dadabhai was the first leader to state emphatically that British rule would ruin India completely. He made convincing arguments while making this serious observation." Tilak paid glowing tributes to Dadabhai's contribution as member of the British Parliament and quoted the following statement of Dadabhai: 'It is not enough to put a check on the economic exploitation of India by the British. It is absolutely necessary that Indians should be given the rights of *swarajya*.' Tilak reiterated in the end that Dadabhai Naoroji, who had given expression to such radical thoughts, was bound to support the political movement started by the radicals. Tilak's prognostications came true. Dadabhai Naoroji in his presidential address stated: "We do not ask for any concessions or favours. We want justice. To state this in brief, we want self-government, i.e. *swarajya*/' Dadabhai Naoroji was the first leader to utter the word *swarajya* from the platform of the Congress party and give sanctity to it. Thus came to be sown the first seeds of *swarajya*-m the minds of the Indians. On 8th January 1907, Tilak through the *Kesari* commented on what had taken place in the Calcutta session of the Congress. He gave extracts from Dadabhai Naoroji's address and wrote: "The ideal of the Indian National Congress is to get *swarajya*. The duty of the Congress is to work for achieving this goal. This has been proved and established in an unequivocal manner in the Calcutta session of the Congress."

Different resolutions were moved at the Calcutta session and there were heated debates on them. Tilak, though an ardent advocate of the radical line of action, did not

stretch the differences too far as it could have led to a split in the Congress. However, he did not compromise on his principles/The resolution on boycott stated: “Since at present the people of India have no say in the administration, the Congress is of the opinion that the boycott in Bengal was legal and justified.” He expressed satisfaction over the sanction given to the boycott by the Congress. In the resolution on *swadeshi*, it was stated that the programme would be undertaken even if it was to be at the cost of some sacrifice. Tilak pointed out how Pherozeshah Mehta’s views on *swadeshi* were wrong and how the sacrifices made by the people while accepting the creed of *swadeshi* had given a new orientation to the country. There was no difference of opinion on the resolution regarding national education. In brief, the Congress set its seal of approval on Tilak’s four-point programme.

Dadabhai Naoroji’s speech and the tenor of the resolution was a victory for the radical leaders—Lal, Bal and Pal. However the Congress organisation continued to be dominated by the moderates. Tilak, therefore, felt it necessary to start a wing within the Congress which would work towards radicalising the programme of the party. His suggestion was accepted by other radicals and the younger section of the Congress. Tilak constituted a new party which would function under the aegis of the Congress. Some leaders described it as a ‘ginger group’ while some journalists dubbed it as a ‘pressure group’.

After the Calcutta Congress, in a public meeting presided over by Bipin Chandra Pal, Tilak delivered a speech on ‘The Tenets of the New Part.’ He said, “Self-government is our goal. What the new party wants you to do is to realise the fact that your future rests entirely in your own hands. If you mean to be free, you can be free; if you do not wish to be free, you will fall and remain forever fallen... You need not use arms; but have you not the power of active resistance, have you not the power of self-denial and self-abstinence so as to prevent this foreign government to rule over you? This is boycott, and this is what is meant when we say, ‘Boycott is a political weapon’. We shall not give them assistance to collect revenue and sit peacefully. We shall not fight wars outside India with Indian blood and money. We shall have our own courts, and when the time comes, we shall refuse to pay taxes. Can you not do this with your combined efforts? If you can, then you are free from tomorrow.”

In politics, politicians, though vanquished, continue to show dissent. Prof. Gokhale had to beat a retreat at the Calcutta session of the Congress, but he did not accept defeat. He decided to put forth his point of view before the people and undertook extensive tours of important cities. Tilak wrote articles in the *Kesari* refuting Gokhale’s views. In the editorial entitled, ‘The Confusion of Hon’ble Gokhale’, Tilak specifically pointed to the contradictions in his stand. Tilak began his article by appreciating Gokhale’s efforts to make India progress but followed it by criticising his self-contradictory stand when Gokhale started opposing the boycott movement which he had initially favoured. Tilak felt that this contradiction was due to Gokhale’s moderate stand in politics. Boycott was a powerful weapon which Gokhale was not willing to use against the British. Tilak praised Gokhale for starting the Servants of India Society for training young men who would dedicate their lives to the service of India. At the same time he pointed to Gokhale’s misplaced support to government service because it was in strong contradiction to the ideals of the Servants of India Society. In an editorial published on 19th February 1907, Tilak exposed the weak links in the ideological stand taken by Gokhale and profusely quoted from the latter’s speeches. The title of the editorial was, ‘It is good that he has

spoken'. Tilak remarked that Gokhale's views centred around two assumptions, viz. 'We should not oppose this government because we cannot do without it' and that private schools should help the government in the education programme and that there was 'no point in opposing the government'. Tilak wanted universal education but did not approve of education merely to serve the British administration. He feared that Gokhale's moderate approach would render his efforts futile and take the edge off the political movement in India.

The editorial which Tilak wrote on 5th March 1907 was especially significant as it threw light on his ideological stand. In another editorial entitled, 'Constitutional or Legal', Tilak's criticism of Gokhale was far from personal. The two leaders differed sharply in their views and Tilak strongly opposed Gokhale's statement that "the political movement in India should be constitutional". He felt that the political movement could be constitutional only in those countries where the people had won a charter of their rights. He observed that in countries where the ruler enjoys unlimited powers, a political movement cannot be considered constitutional. Tilak wrote: "When people in England say that there is constitutional monarchy in their country, it means that the people through their movement have curbed the authority of the monarch and won political rights for themselves. In countries where the powers of the King are unlimited and where people have no political rights, the constitution does not exist. In England people have won their rights through political movements and have gone to the length of deposing their monarchs and even beheading one of them. In England the constitutional rights of the Parliament and those of the King are clearly demarcated. But, a constitution does not exist in India; the powers of the British Parliament and those of the King Emperor vis-a-vis the Indian people are unlimited. This means that in India, the government does not function in accordance with the wishes of the people. In other words, the government in India is unconstitutional." Tilak clarified that India was administered according to the laws formulated by the British government and "under these circumstances, the question whether our movement is constitutional or unconstitutional does not arise. The only question that remains is whether the movement is legal or illegal." He further added: "At present we cannot make the laws for ourselves. Therefore, even if our efforts are in consonance with the natural rights of the people and the historical process, and have a moral and ethical basis, the British rulers-alone decide whether they are legal or illegal. It is probable that our legitimate efforts made for a right cause might be dubbed as illegal. In such a case, instead of conceding that our efforts are illegal, we should state that the laws are tyrannical." In the end Tilak concluded: "We must only see that our efforts are just, moral and are made in order to achieve progress. We need not bother whether our efforts conform to the laws made by the government or whether they transcend the limits imposed by law. After all laws in India are made and interpreted by an alien government. It is true that punishment should be given for breaking a law, but if the law is unjust we must defy it and suffer punishment for our action because there can be no other alternative when the law is divorced from morality."

The culmination of Tilak's ideal was seen in the *Satyagraha* movement in which Gandhiji openly asked the people to flout the laws made by the British because they were divorced from morality.

Lord Curzon, the autocratic Viceroy who was responsible for partitioning Bengal, had to resign because of his differences with the commander-in-chief. However, the

sufferings of the people did not end with Curzon's resignation. After the partition of Bengal, Fuller was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of East Bengal. Fuller was a tyrant who tried to crush the movement against Bengal's partition through repressive measures. While fomenting trouble between the Hindus and the Muslims, he showed partiality towards the Muslims as became obvious through his perverse remark, "Muslims are my favourite mistress." Meanwhile a political conference was called at Barisal, where a Muslim leader presided. Fuller was enraged at this and he insulted leaders like Surendra Nath Bannerjea. A brutal lathi-charge was made on students who took out a peaceful procession, shouting "*VandeMataram*". He imposed a ban on the use of *Vande Mataram* but many students defied the ban and though mercilessly flogged, suffered the beating bravely. Bankim Chandra, the pioneer of modern Bengali literature, had in his novel *AnandMnith*, composed the words for the song *Vande Mataram*. *Vande Mataram* got recognition not because of its poetic excellence, but because many young people had to suffer imprisonment for singing it. As a result of this, *Vande Mataram* came to be regarded as a holy song and became the national anthem. It became the slogan of the freedom fighters. The words *Vande Mataram* inspired the youths to make the supreme sacrifice of their lives.

After a long and arduous struggle by the people of India and of Bengal in particular, the British government revoked the decision to partition Bengal. This marked a victory for the mass movement organised by Lal, Bal and Pal. The success of this movement was first major step on the path to *swarajya*.

4. AN ORDEAL

After the successful agitation against the partition of Bengal, people in India came to realise that a mass movement alone could enable them to acquire political rights. They developed confidence in themselves and in the efficacy of united action. Unfortunately, at this juncture the gulf between the moderates and the radicals in the Congress widened. While people were uniting, leaders were parting from each other due to sharp differences in opinion. At this point the government decided to pass a law on the rights of agriculturists in Punjab. Lala Lajpat Rai and other leaders of Punjab, opposed to the proposed Act, took the decision to launch an agitation against it. The government was enraged and arrested Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh on 9th May 1907. They were deported to Burma and detained at Mandalay. Widespread protests against Lalaji's deportation became the order of the day. Tilak, through his editorials and his public speeches, warned the people that as long as the Indians did not develop the ability and strength to resist injustice, the government would continue with its repressive measures. When the people demonstrated against Lalaji's arrest, the government issued prohibitory orders, banning public meetings. Tilak then declared, "We shall oppose the ban through word and later on, we shall defy it through deed." Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and other moderates attributed the government's repressive measures to the rash and reckless actions of the radicals. They believed that constitutional methods alone would enable them to get political rights. The unequivocal declaration by Dadabhai Naoroji that *swarajya* was the goal and the radical resolutions passed at the Calcutta Congress made the moderates fear that they were losing their grip over the Congress. Gokhale, in his public speeches, asserted that the methods of the moderates alone would be effective and

went to the extent of suggesting that the radicals should launch another Congress. Tilak strongly objected to this suggestion and declared, "The new Radical Party would function as a part of the Congress. It has not seceded from the Congress and it would never secede from the Congress." Tilak wrote in the *Kesari*, "There are bound to be differences of opinion in a political party. It is therefore wrong and foolish to suggest that the radicals should start another Congress. This suggestion is the machination of those who want to monopolise the administration of the Congress, which in fact is a broad-based political party where all strata of society are represented. Both the parties, the moderates and the radicals, should act according to their political convictions and win majority in the Congress by persuading people to support them. No one should be denied the right to participate in the activities of the Indian National Congress. Both the moderates and the radicals have the right to work inside the Congress and win a majority in the management." During those days the Congress served as the platform for national unity and not as a political party merely. Tilak, while explaining the 'tenets of the new party', categorically declared that the new Radical Party would carry on its political movement while remaining within the Indian National Congress. After the Calcutta session it was decided to hold the next session of the Congress at Lahore. However, the moderates, fearing dominance by Lalaji's followers, declared that the session would be held at Nagpur. In Nag-pur the majority of people wanted to elect Tilak as the president. The local liberal leaders, therefore, communicated their inability to hold the Congress session there. Thus Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta and Dinshaw Wachha, in the meeting of the AICC on 10th November, got a resolution passed to the effect that Surat would be the next venue of the session. On 11th November, Lalaji was released from detention. Tilak and other radical leaders then proposed Lalaji's name for presidentship of the ensuing session. This apparently put the moderates in an embarrassing situation. Tilak wrote that the only way to counter government action of detaining Lal Lajpat Rai was to elect him as the president. People from different parts of the country supported Tilak's suggestion through letters and telegrams. But the moderates adopted a rigid stand and in the meeting of the All India Congress Committee, disallowed the resolution. The radicals were enraged and walked out of the meeting. The moderates then passed a resolution to the effect that Rash Behari Ghosh of Bengal would be the next president of the Congress.

On 10th December Tilak in his editorial called for appointment of Lala Lajpat Rai as the president. Tilak wrote: "If there is no unanimous decision on this issue, I have a feeling that people would move amendments to the resolution passed at the AICC. There may be counter suggestions to the present decision as a result of which confusion might prevail." He further wrote: "Even if resolutions in the ensuing session are drafted by Gokhale or Pherozeshah Mehta, members of the new party should be present at Surat in large numbers and should make an earnest effort to give a radical slant to the Congress. It is true that the present Congress does not act according to the wishes and demands of the new party. However, it would not be advisable to break the Congress because the moderate leaders dominate it. The members attending the Surat session should not get provoked by what Pherozeshah Mehta is doing and should not act in an unruly manner."

Acharya Jawdekar, an eminent philosopher of Maharashtra, has summed up the difference between the ideological positions of Gokhale and Tilak in a very perceptive manner. He has written: "In Gokhale's politics, the Anglo-Indian community in India, the British capitalism and its representative, the Viceroy, and the bureaucracy formed the

conservative party. The educated leaders representing India constituted the progressive or the liberal party. In Tilak's politics, the British government was a foreign conqueror and the Indian leaders were destined to take India from slavery to independence. According to Gokhale, India's political work entailed converting an unlimited autocracy into a democracy, while Tilak always spoke of extricating the nation from the clutches of the British. Gokhale could never forget that India was a conquered nation while Tilak invariably maintained that the future form of our *swarajya* would be as a democratic republic. Gokhale always relied on the liberal democratic principles, while Tilak tried to draw strength from the burning flame of national sentiment."

From this it can be easily surmised that Tilak was a realist with a correct perception of reality. He was conscious of the limitations of the contemporary political situation, but was confident of transcending these limitations. He was making an earnest effort to instil such a confidence in the people and inspire them to act with courage.

The Congress session at Surat was held in December 1907. The delegates at the session had no idea of what was going to be discussed, though many visualised an imminent split in the Congress. Tilak came to Surat on 23rd December. In a public meeting, he said, "I do not want to split the Congress. I do not want a conflict. But I am determined to ensure that we do not retreat from the position we took at the Calcutta Congress. The new party has been formed not to harm the Congress; the new party merely wants to intensify the struggle against British rule."

The Congress session commenced on the afternoon of 26th December. Malvi, the chairman of the reception committee, welcomed the delegates. His speech was long and dull, but the people listened patiently. Then Dewan Bahadur Ambalal Desai rose to propose the name of Rash Behari Ghosh for presidentship of the Congress. Immediately there was some disturbance, but Desai somehow managed to complete his short speech. Then Surendra Nath Bannerjea rose to speak and some more people started shouting.

Surendra Nath Bannerjea, a powerful orator, raised his voice but owing to the disturbances nobody could hear a word of what he spoke. In his book, *Aurobindo on Himself*, Aurobindo has described the disturbances thus: "It was I, who, without the knowledge of Tilak, had incited the disturbance." The authenticity of this statement can be inferred from another piece of evidence. Aurobindo and his radical followers were insulted by Surendra Nath Bannerjea at a political conference held at Midnapur. A young man heckled Surendra Nath Bannerjea by shouting, "Midnapur traitor, sit down." This slogan could not have been given by the Maharashtrian supporters of Tilak, though some young men from Pona joined the shouting group from Bengal. At last the session was adjourned. Surendra Nath Bannerjea's supporters were disturbed at the heckling. Efforts to settle the dispute were started behind the scene, but proved futile.

The session was resumed at 1 p.m. on 27th December. Tilak had already conveyed that he would move an amendment to the proposal of electing Rash Behari Ghosh as the president. Surendra Nath Bannerjea began his speech, and no one disturbed him. As soon as his speech was over, Tilak went to the dais to move his amendment. Some volunteers tried to stop him, but Tilak brushed them aside and started addressing the delegates. Just then Rash Behari Ghosh got up to announce, "The resolution regarding my election has been passed. I am the president." With these words, Rash Behari Ghosh was about to start his address when Tilak interrupted him and politely but firmly told him, "You have not

yet been elected. I have come to move an amendment to the proposed resolution.” At this someone asked, “Who are you to tell us this?” Tilak stood firm and said, “Remove me if you dare.” Someone lifted a chair to throw it at Tilak, some ran to assault him, but Tilak stood his ground and did not budge. Then someone threw a shoe at the dais, which slightly brushed Pheroze Shah Mehta and Surendra Nath Bannerjee before landing on the table. Soon there was a free for all and complete pandemonium prevailed. The moderate leader made his escape through the back door. Some people tried to rush to the platform, but the police intervened and forced the people to vacate the *pandal*. Thus the chaotic session of the Indian National Congress came to an end at Surat.

Tilak, who was keen on asserting his ideological position, was rather unhappy at the turn of events during the Congress session. He did not want a split in the Congress and therefore took a lead in arriving at some compromise. Ogale, the editor of *Maharashtra* published from Nagpur, in his reminiscences on Tilak wrote that when he told Tilak that young men from Nagpur did not favour a settlement with the moderates, Tilak became angry and shouted, “Then do you want to break heads?” After some time, Tilak’s anger cooled and he said to Ogale, “Settlement or no settlement, we must work for it. I don’t care if I am insulted. I am working for our country and it does not matter even if I am insulted a thousand times for doing it.” However, Tilak’s efforts failed to provide a solution. Moderates like Gokhale and Pheroze Shah Mehta were convinced that the differences between them and the radicals were fundamental and neither of the two groups could work together in co-operation. They therefore decided to call a convention of moderates from which the radicals were kept away. The moderates drafted a pledge in conformity with their ideological position and decided to admit only those persons to the convention who agreed to take the pledge.

Though Tilak wanted to avoid a split, Aurobindo and his followers, as also many of Tilak’s supporters, did not approve of Tilak’s efforts for reconciliation with the moderates. When the moderates announced their decision to hold a convention, Aurobindo proposed that no radical should be allowed to attend the proposed convention. He felt that the moderates were engaged only in politics of petitions and prayers which were harmful for the growth of the freedom movement. The moderates wanted to keep away from the radicals. Aurobindo as a radical said that he would not like to touch the moderates even with a barge pole. Tilak had great affection for Aurobindo. He wanted radical young men to join the freedom movement in large numbers. But, with his realistic approach to politics Tilak did not favour the isolationist policy advocated by Aurobindo. When the announcement for holding the convention for moderates was made, Lala Lajpat Rai decided to sign the pledge and attend the convention. Some of the leaders and workers of the radical group met to discuss their future plan. Aurobindo made a fiery speech, in which he argued that it would be suicidal for radicals to sign the pledge and attend the convention. He made a fervent plea for revolutionising politics. Unlike Aurobindo, Tilak did not appeal to the emotions. He put forth the view that in spite of all the differences with moderates, it was desirable to sign the pledge and join the convention. He said, “The Indian National Congress is a platform common to all. If the Congress is to be dominated by one section, it would lose all its vitality.” Aurobindo did not agree with Tilak. Tilak cautioned his radical associates and asked them not to take any extreme step as that could invite stringent measures against them. He felt that as long as all sections of the people worked unitedly in the Congress, they could pressurise the

government as a single representative body of the Indians, but in the event of a split in the Congress, the government would isolate the radicals and hit out at them. Tilak explained to his young colleagues his reading of the political situation in India. Aurobindo wanted adoption of such a line that would force the government to hit out at them so that strong public opinion could be built up for a revolutionary struggle. Tilak disapproved of this adventurist attitude and felt that Aurobindo's estimate of the situation was wrong. He appealed for a prudent approach on the ground that if the government resorted to extreme repressive measures, there could be a possibility of the radical movement getting crushed.

However, Tilak's entreaties fell on deaf ears. Tilak was caught in a dilemma. His colleague Lala Lajpat Rai had already signed the pledge and was determined to attend the convention. Had Tilak too signed the pledge it would have led to estrangement of Aurobindo and his revolutionary associates. To avoid this eventuality, Tilak decided to bear the brunt of the impending attack and not attend the convention. He did not want to desert his revolutionary associates. He was determined to stake everything in life to save the revolutionary movement. This brave decision won the hearts of the young revolutionaries. The qualities of a good leader are tested in times of crises. Tilak's decision to act against his own desire and not attend the convention in order to save the revolutionary movement was indeed a noble decision. It reflected his selfless attitude, his intelligent perception and, above all, a parental concern for the young revolutionaries who were willing to sacrifice all for *swarajya*. On 27th December both the moderates and the radicals announced the manifesto each would adopt after the breakup of the Congress. The moderates described the events at the 23rd session of the Congress as unfortunate and made a plea for enforcing discipline. They said that they wanted *swarajya* and the same political rights as those enjoyed by other self-governing colonies of the British Empire. They also declared that their goal could be realised through constitutional means and by seeking more and more political rights in instalments. They pleaded for national unity and the improvement of the lot of the common people. The radicals expressed their resolve to continue working for the Congress in accordance with the resolutions passed at the Calcutta session.

The convention of the moderates turned out to be a tame affair. The meeting of the radicals was presided over by Aurobindo Ghosh. Tilak spoke in his simple, direct style. He appealed to reason and not to sentiments. He stated that a new spark had lit up the Congress such that the old order would have to yield place to a new. He did not believe in mere statements unless followed up with action. He was aware that Aurobindo and his revolutionary associates represented the new force in Indian politics which would prove an effective instrument in the struggle for *swarajya*. He therefore invited Aurobindo to Poona. On 13th January 1908, Aurobindo delivered a speech in Gaekwadwada—the campus of the *Kesari* and Tilak's residence. Aurobindo in his speech appealed to the emotions of the people while Tilak said, "I believe in our capacity for work. We can become the architects of our destiny. I feel that if we work with zeal, we shall succeed in achieving our goal."

During Aurobindo's stay in Poona and Sinhgad, Tilak found time to talk frankly with Aurobindo. Both regarded *swarajya* as their goal though their approach was different. Tilak favoured the preparation for a revolution without terrorist action; Aurobindo felt that *swarajya* could be achieved only through revolutionary activity and wanted immediate steps to be taken in that direction. Tilak warned Aurobindo of taking any rash

action. In Maharashtra, Veer Savarkar was an inspiring figure for the young men who wanted to adopt his revolutionary methods. Savarkar during his student days had participated in the movement for boycotting foreign goods and in making a bonfire of British cloth. He was both a powerful orator and a forceful writer. He had founded an organisation 'Abhinav Bharati' and along with his brother formed a group of revolutionary students. Savarkar decided to go to England to become a bar-at-law. On Tilak's recommendation, Shyamji Krishna Varma awarded him a scholarship and Savarkar started living in the India House from where he conducted his revolutionary activities. He wrote a book, *India's First War of Independence*, on the mutiny of 1857. He sent pistols from England to his brother at Nasik and along with Shyamji Krishna Varma, shifted to France, to avoid getting arrested in England. On his brother's arrest, Savarkar decided to return to England to arrange for his brother's defence. However, Savarkar was arrested in England and deported to India. When his steamer neared Marseilles in France, he jumped out from the vessel and swam ashore with the hope that he would not get arrested. However, the French police captured him and handed him over to the English police who took him back to England. Savarkar was later sentenced to exile in the Andaman Islands.

Some followers of Savarkar met Tilak in 1907 and apprised him of their plans. Tilak appreciated their courage but dissuaded them from taking any rash step. He told them, "A terrorist act would be suicidal. It would give the government an opportunity for destroying the revolutionary groups. Any adventurist action would do harm to our political struggle. Mangoes are not gathered before they are ripe and if you rush ahead, you get only sour mangoes to eat."

Acharya Jawdekar, a great political thinker of Maharashtra, has said in one of his interviews, "Tilak believed in India's inherent right to attain political freedom, be it through a violent revolution. He realised the need for preparing for a revolution. But he was definitely opposed to a premature attempt at revolutionary activities. Tilak directed all his energies to twin tasks. The first was to promote a spirit of nationalism to enable the people to transcend the limits of caste and religion and stand united while fighting against the British Empire. The second task, which Tilak placed before himself, was that of teaching the method of fighting injustice by involving the people in the struggle for *swarajya*. Work among the masses was the main lever of his political activity and he directed all his energies to the task of launching a popular revolutionary movement against the established government through peaceful means. The activities of the revolutionaries could serve as a complement to the peaceful and open struggle of the Indian masses. Tilak was thus an apostle of civil revolt. He explained his strategy to Aurobindo Ghosh, who, however, was determined to follow the path of armed revolution."

In the midst of his political work, Tilak found time to devote to the liquor prohibition drive. He wrote in *the Kesari* of 14th April 1908: "Drinking has been denounced both under religion as well as Islam. However, the government has granted licences to the people for selling liquor. This has resulted in widespread drinking, which is destroying the fabric of the Indian society." Tilak strongly supported the prohibition drive which was led by respectable citizens like Prof. Gokhale, Reverend Martin, Principal Mann of the College of Agriculture, and many others. In his next editorial Tilak condemned the government policy of opening liquor shops in different parts of the city and advocated

picketing at the gates of these shops to dissuade the people from taking to liquor consumption.

He then undertook a political tour of Maharashtra and Vidarbha states to deliver speeches in important cities like Dhule, Akola, Khamgaon and Malkapur.

Despite asking Aurobindo to restrain his revolutionary associates from resorting to terrorist action, Tilak could not succeed in curbing them. In Bengal, during the anti-partition struggle, Kingsford, a judge known for his vindictive attitude, had given deterrent punishment to many youths and ordered their flogging. Resenting his action, some of these youths decided to take revenge on him. In a concerted bid to strike terror in the hearts of the autocratic officers, these youths succeeded in obtaining new weapons, through P.M. Bapat, a revolutionary from Maharashtra. Bapat, a brilliant graduate with mathematics as his subject, had, during his student days in the Deccan College, taken a vow to sacrifice his life at the altar of liberty. Bapat was recipient of a scholarship from the University of Bombay which helped him to go to England to acquire a degree in engineering. However, in England he met Shyamji Krishna Varma and through him got in touch with some Russian anarchists. Bapat acquired from them a manual on how to make a bomb, after getting help from a Russian student on English translation .of the book. Meanwhile his scholarship was discontinued due to his anti-government activities. Bapat secretly returned to India and passed on a copy of the manual to the revolutionaries in Bengal. Barindra Kumar Ghosh, younger brother of Aurobindo, entrusted the work of manufacturing the bombs to Ulhaskar Datta, a brilliant student of chemistry. The bombs were secretly manufactured at the Maniktala Gardens in Calcutta. This group of revolutionaries planned to throw the bomb at Kingsford, who was then working at Muzaffarpore. The difficult task was to be carried out by two young revolutionaries—Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Kumar Chakravarti. On 30th April 1908, the first bomb exploded at Muzaffarpore and it helped create a panic. The other bomb was mistakenly thrown at a car carrying two Englishwomen, as the revolutionaries thought that one of the occupants of the car was Kingsford. The bomb exploded, killing the two English ladies on the spot. Prafulla Kumar Chakravarti committed suicide but Khudiram Bose was arrested. During the court proceedings, Khudiram Bose admitted throwing the bomb and boldly stated that he considered it a privilege to go to the gallows in the service of his motherland. He however regretted the killing of two innocent ladies, and clarified that his intention was to kill Kingsford, the tyrannical magistrate. Khudiram Bose was sentenced to death. Shouting “*Vande Mataram*’ he went to the gallows to embrace death with a smile on his lips. Stringent measures were immediately taken by the government in Bengal.

The explosion of the bomb at Muzaffarpore came as a rude shock for the British government, which decided to crush not only the revolutionaries, but all those involved in carrying out anti-government propaganda. Tilak wrote in the *Kesari* of 11th May 1908 his editorial entitled, ‘The Misfortune of the Country’. Though he condemned the act of terrorism, he did not spare the government for smothering the legitimate aspirations of the people in their struggle for *swarajya*. This was followed by a number of editorials on the subject by Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar, a close and trusted associate of Tilak and a member of the editorial board of the *Kesari*.

Prof. Shivaram Mahadeo Paranjape, a gifted writer whose writings were a source of inspiration for Veer Savarkar and other revolutionaries in Maharashtra, was the editor of the Marathi weekly, *Kal*. He wrote a number of editorials on the explosion of the bomb. He was immediately arrested on 11th July and prosecuted by the government. Tilak knew that his turn would be next to be arrested, so he geared himself for the ordeal. Tilak was arrested in Bombay, at his residence, Sardar Griha on 24th July 1908 at 6 p.m., on charges of sedition, under Sections 124-A and 153-A. He was kept in the Dongri Jail. While in prison, another warrant was served on him for publishing an article in the *Kesari* under the title, 'These Remedies are not Lasting'. When barrister M.A. Jinnah submitted the application for bail on his behalf, Justice Davar of the Bombay High Court rejected it. It was indeed an irony of fate that it was the same Davar who as a lawyer had earlier submitted the application for bail on behalf of Tilak in 1898, and had now, as the High Court judge, chosen to reject his application for bail. The government in the meanwhile issued search warrants, and Tilak's residence and office of the *Kesari* were searched for more than four hours on 13th July. Then began Tilak's trial in the Bombay High Court. Advocate-General Branson appeared on behalf of the government and he was assisted by barristers Inverarity and Binning. The jury consisted of seven Europeans and two Parsis. Tilak decided to defend himself in the court. M.A. Jinnah offered his services to act as the counsel for defence, but Tilak refused as he did not regard this as a legal battle. He viewed his prosecution as an assault on the rights of an editor to state his views on a major event, both before the government and the people. He was not willing to seek acquittal through the skill of a legal luminary like M.A. Jinnah.

His two editorials—'The Country's Misfortune' and 'These are not Lasting Remedies' were cited while prosecuting him under Sections 124-A and 153-A. Once the Advocate-General had completed his charges, Justice Davar asked Tilak if he had anything to say to defend the charges. Tilak replied that he was not guilty. Mr Inverarity argued on behalf of the prosecuting authority and expounded on the objectionable parts in the editorial on 'These Remedies are not Lasting'. He cited witnesses and presented evidence till 3 p.m. in the afternoon. Tilak then began his speech to defend himself.

While accepting his responsibility for the two editorials in the *Kesari*, Tilak proceeded to explain the term 'disaffection'. "The case of sedition divides itself into three parts—publication of the articles, the insinuation and the innuendoes and, lastly, the intention." He stated that the English translation of his editorials was not correct as a result of which the meaning of his remarks had been wrongly interpreted. He commented at length on what was meant by the word 'intention' and drew attention to the circumstances under which the articles were written. He pointed out that when a Bengali youth threw the bomb in Muzaffarpore, the Anglo-Indian news media in India incited the government to resort to ruthless repression. Tilak said that it was the duty of the Indian news media to point out to the government that if it acted on such sinister advice, it would be doing harm both to the people and to the rulers. Tilak argued that his editorials were in reply to the views expressed by the Anglo-Indian newspapers when they advocated adoption of repressive measures. He said he considered it his duty to warn the government of the disastrous consequences that would follow and added that the bomb incident was the result of the repression in Bengal by tyrannical officers. He further argued, "Criticism against the officials is certainly not an attempt to overthrow the government...I wish to show you that my articles are written in reply to an opponent. These were penned to

defend the interests of the people...I am prepared to stand by the consequences of my act.” He then drew the jury’s attention to the suggestion made by the Anglo-Indian newspapers that people should be flogged and asked if his articles could be termed harsh in comparison to the suggestion made by the press. Tilak also referred to the views expressed by the *Pioneer* on the atrocities committed in Russia as a result of the despotic rule of the Czar. Tilak argued, “Can you infer from this that the *Pioneer* wanted still further atrocities to be perpetrated in Russia? If not, then why should you object to my observation that unrest in India is the result of the repressive measures of the British government?”

Tilak’s comments on Sections 124-A and 153-A of the Criminal Procedure Code were both brilliant and incisive.

He strongly defended the freedom of the press and pleaded that not repression but a policy of conciliation and giving more rights to the people was what was needed. He pointed out that he had always condemned violence and dubbed it as a poisonous tree. The prime aim of his editorials was to convince the government that ruthless repression would only evoke a violent protest from the people and as such it was desirable to give way to the aspirations of the people. “Such a policy, argued Tilak, “would be in the interests of the people and the government.”

Within about twelve days of the prosecution, Tilak collected all possible books on law and other reference material in order to prepare for his defence in the court. Tilak began his speech in defence of himself on 15th of July and ended it on 22nd of July. He spoke for twenty-one hours and ten minutes. His speech was concise and devoid of any repetition of arguments. It was a reflection of his razor-sharp intellect and deep study of law and commitment to it. While defending himself, he was in fact addressing the people of India and exhorting them to fight for their political aspirations. Though an accused himself, he stood as an accuser, indicting the Anglo-Indian press for bringing Indians to disrepute. The dignified manner, the exalted tone and the deep sincerity of his speech had an exalting effect on all those present in the court. Tilak did not plead for mercy as he was prepared to suffer the consequences of his actions and of his writings. He concluded his speech with the following words to the jury, “I appeal to you not for myself but in the interest of the sacred cause I have the honour to represent.”

After Tilak’s defence, the Advocate-General merely repeated the charges made by him earlier. Justice Davar then addressed the jury by analysing the evidence and summing up the arguments put forth by both the sides. Justice Davar’s conclusions continued till 8p.m., following which the members of the jury retired to finalise the verdict.

The atmosphere in the court was grim. Tatyasaheb Kelkar, Dadasaheb Khaparde and other friends of Tilak could infer from Justice Davar’s summing up what the verdict of the jury would be. They therefore waited anxiously and quietly. Tilak was meanwhile allowed to meet and talk to his friends in the court. Stepping down from the box for the accused and laughing in his usual hearty manner, Tilak said to Khaparde, “Dadasaheb, it appears that I would be transported for life. Let us have tea. This may be our last tea together.” His light-hearted words were a triumph of the mind over circumstances, a triumph of moral idealism against the might of the tyrant. His laughter dispelled, at least momentarily, the gloom that had descended upon his friends and followers.

The jury returned at twenty minutes past nine to announce its verdict. Justice Davar asked the foreman of the jury "Is your verdict unanimous?" The foreman replied, "No, Your Honour. Seven of us are of the opinion that Tilak is guilty of all the three charges against him; while two of us are of the view that on all three counts, Tilak is not guilty." Justice Davar then accepted the verdict given by the majority of the jury and announced that Tilak was guilty. Tilak then said that he wanted to place fourteen points before the court. Justice Davar listened to the points raised by Tilak before turning them down. He then asked Tilak whether he wished to say anything more. Tilak rose up and said, "All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the jury, I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destiny of things, and it may be the will of Providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by my remaining free." These words lifted the whole issue from the bleak atmosphere of the court to the glorious world of eternal moral values.

Tilak was sentenced to six years' imprisonment and transportation besides being asked to pay a fine of one thousand rupees. While giving his judgement, Justice Davar accused Tilak of possessing a "diseased and perverted mind" and that the journalism represented by his articles was "a curse to the country". Fourteen years later, another and a better judge, an Englishman, tried another great Indian patriot for the same offence and under the same Section. Though the punishment given was exactly the same, the difference in the attitude of the two judges was striking. Justice Broomfield in his verdict against Mahatma Gandhi on charges of sedition, said, "I propose, in passing the sentence, to follow the precedent of a case in many respects similar to this case. I mean the case against Bal Gangadhar Tilak under the same Section. The sentence that was passed upon him was a sentence of simple imprisonment for six years. You will not consider it unreasonable if you are classed with Mr Tilak, for I sentence you to two years' simple imprisonment on each of the charges, that is, six years in all, which I feel is my duty to pass upon you. And I should like to say that if the course of events in India should make it possible for the government to reduce the period of sentence and release you, none will be happier than I."

At this, Gandhiji stood up and spoke, "I would like to say one word. Since you have done me the honour of recalling the trial of Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, I just want to say that I consider it my proud privilege and honour to be associated with his name."

The ignoble words of Justice Davar have long been forgotten, but the noble utterances of Lokamanya Tilak are treasured as a proud heritage of India for generations to come. In 1956, while celebrating the birth centenary of Lokamanya Tilak, a plaque with his immortal words engraved on it was put up in the High Court of Bombay. Justice Davar has long been forgotten. Lokamanya Tilak, however, has left behind his footprints on the sands of time; footprints that time cannot efface.

After Justice Davar had passed the sentence, Tilak was escorted through a private door to the western gate of the High Court where a policeman waited to whisk him away to a prison in Bombay.

News of Tilak's conviction and of transportation sent shock waves throughout the country. The working class in Bombay responded spontaneously by going on strike and carried out protest marches. Police resorted to *lathi-charge*; the Army was called in which took recourse to firing. Tension continued for four days. During the firing, over

fifty people lost their lives and many were injured. A number of arrests were made and sentences passed on charges of rioting. This was the first demonstration of revolt by the working class in India against British rule.

The *Vande Mataram*, a newspaper from Calcutta, expressed the feelings of the people with the following words: “We are after all humans and cannot hold back our tears when such high-souled patriotism is rewarded with a convict’s fate in a penal settlement...The deep anguish of the heart at the stunning news of a great patriot’s fate is too real to be glossed over by philosophising... such chastening sorrow has its noble use; like a touch of nature, it will make us all kin.”

Tilak was taken by a special train to Ahmedabad to be lodged in the Sabarmati Jail. On 10th September he was brought back to Bombay to be taken in a steamer to Rangoon in Burma. The boat reached Rangoon on 22nd from where he was taken to Mandalay. He was not allowed to meet the members of his family after the sentence was passed. He had no brother; his sister was married and lived in a far-off village in Ratnagiri district. Tilak had a small family comprising his wife, two sons and a daughter who led a simple life. His wife Satyabhamabai was a devout lady and like the women of her generation, rarely stepped out of the house except when visiting the temple. She lived in the shadow of her husband. She had simple habits and to her the duties of family life were of utmost importance. Tilak, owing to his extremely busy public life, found hardly any time for his wife and children. His nephew Dhondopant Vidwans helped Satyabhamabai in looking after his family. Tilak and his wife seldom talked to each other in the presence of others. However, he had great affection for his family even though he never showed it. His letters written from the Mandalay prison reflect his deep concern for his children and anxiety for his ailing wife. There was never an outburst of sentiment and the intensity of his feelings show restraint as is evident from his letters. Even if permission had been granted to meet his family before going to prison, he would have merely patted one of his sons to say, “All of you should take care of each other.” It is presumed that his wife must have broken down on learning that her husband would never come back. Tilak past fifty, had diabetes, and was anxious about his failing health. But Tilak, who had dedicated his entire life to a sacred cause, accepted his sufferings in a stoic manner. His philosophic bent of mind gave him the rare strength to face any ordeal. Satyabhamabai’s world revolved around her family. With faith in God and capacity to bear any hardship, which was a part of the personality of most women of her generation, she accepted all in a resigned manner. Her only desire, and that too a characteristic of most Hindu women, was to die before her husband. After Tilak’s departure for Mandalay, Satyabhamabai stopped taking all medicines for the diabetes she suffered from. She took to wearing black cotton saris and black bangles. She never wore any ornaments except the *mangalsutra* which symbolised her married status. Harboring modest expectations from life, she did not care for material comforts, but his presence gave her a sense of security and mental peace. Thus, his exile and imprisonment for six years left her utterly shattered. She took to leading the life of an ascetic. A dark shadow of gloom descended upon her. If anything was read out to her, she hardly listened to it. However, when her daughter read out the *Bhaki Vijay*—a book, in verse form, narrating stories from the lives of saints and devout persons—Satyabhamabai would listen in rapt attention. The book gave her some peace of mind. Her faith in God gave her the strength to bear her sorrow in a resigned manner.

At Mandalay, Tilak was kept in a cell on the first floor of a small two-storeyed building. He was allowed to move in a yard about 150 feet long and 60 feet wide. The yard was kept locked and the cell in which he was kept was locked every night. In the cell, there was a table, two chairs, an easy-chair, an iron cot and two cupboards for keeping books. He was allowed to have any number of books with him. Vasudeo Ramchandra Kulkarni, a convict from Satara, was given as cook to serve him. This cook, who became a devotee of Tilak, has given a vivid account of Tilak's life in prison. He has referred to Tilak as 'Maharaj'. Some extracts from the account given by Kulkarni are as follows: "Maharaj was allowed to have his usual clothes—*dhoti*, shirt, cap and Poona shoes...Maharaj got up early every morning, cleaned his teeth and recited some Sanskrit verses. He then sat on his bed to meditate for about an hour...He shaved once a week. Except during winter, he took a cold water bath...I used to cook rice, wheat, bread, vegetables and *chutney* for Maharaj. Permission was given to bring pickles, *papad* and spices from Poona. While taking his meals, he hardly paid any attention to the food...he was too absorbed in reading or writing which would continue for many hours...Whenever he talked to me, he told me something new...We had to finish our supper by 5 p.m. and our cells were locked at 6 p.m. Maharaj read and wrote after supper. He then meditated for some more time, after which he slept sound-ly...After two years in prison, his diabetes became worse. He took medicines but there was no improvement. He then decided to restrict his diet and as such, only barley was included in his diet in place of rice and wheat. He ate *puris* made of barley flour, coconut and *ghee*. He took curds with pun's...Maharaj spent his time mostly in reading than in writing; but more than that, his time was spent in pondering while sitting in his chair, chewing betel nut and 'opening and closing his eyes. I once asked him, 'What is it that you are always thinking about?' Maharaj laughed and said, 'Man's head contains the entire universe and its movements are going on inside the brain.' Maharaj was allowed to meet outsiders once in three months. His nephew Babasaheb came to meet him. The meeting always took place in the presence of the jail superintendent. Maharaj was allowed to write one letter every month to his relatives, but the letter had to be written in English. He could receive one private letter every month...I was granted remission in my term of imprisonment...I wanted to stay with him, but he dissuaded me and asked me to go back to my family."

From the Mandalay prison, Tilak wrote a letter every month to his nephew in English. Tilak's letters, despite showing restraint, were written in an optimistic and reassuring manner for the sake of his wife and children. He was reticent in his writings, but his intense love for his wife and children found expression through his letters.

When he was in Mandalay, his two sons Rambhau and Bapu were young high-school students. Tilak was anxious about them and keen to know whether proper education was being imparted or not. He never failed to instruct his nephew on his sons. In one of his letters Tilak wrote: "I looked into the progress books of Bapu and Rambhau. They are not very satisfactory...Give them the necessary instruments for gymnastics. Appoint an instructor for the purpose, if necessary..." In another letter, he wrote: "See to it that the education of Rambhau and Bapu is not neglected. I see no reason why owing to my misfortunes, their education should suffer. Take care of them." In his next letter, he wrote: "Send me a report regarding the height and weight of Rambhau and Bapu. Ask Shri Kavade to teach them in such a way that their knowledge improves. It is no use merely to cram for passing the examinations." In another letter he sent detailed

instructions on how the boys should study different subjects for passing the matriculation examination.

These letters reveal the deep affection he had for his sons. His references to Satyabhamabai were very touching and showed his extreme anxiety about her health. He wrote: "My wife's health causes anxiety. Write to me about her. Give her the treatment advised by Vaidya Pade for diabetes." In another letter he wrote: "Give her our usual medicine—*saptarangi kadha*... Consult Dr Garde about it." In yet another letter he wrote: "There is a possibility that my wife may not keep well in the hot season. Ask her to go with the children to Sinhgad. She would not like to have the comfort of the cool climate but tell her she should go to Sinhgad for, my sake...Ask her to take milk along with barley, as I do over here." In another letter he wrote: "Tell her that we are struggling against fate. We may either win or lose in this struggle. If we are determined not to lose, we can win...It is a matter of satisfaction that her health has not deteriorated. Our daughter's presence must be a source of some comfort to her." On 9th January 1909, Tilak wrote: "Tell my wife and children that I am not worried about myself, but I am very anxious about them. Ask them to be cheerful. Hope alone can sustain us in the present circumstances."

Satyabhamabai, who had all along neglected her health, became very weak due to severe diabetes. She died in June 1912. Here are some extracts from the letter which Tilak wrote, after the cruel blow fate dealt during his imprisonment at Mandalay. My dear Dhondu,

Your wire dealt a heavy blow to me. I am used to taking my misfortunes calmly, but I must confess, the present shook me considerably. What grieved me most is my enforced absence from her side at this critical juncture. But this had to be; I always feared it, and it has come to happen. But, I am not going to trouble you any further with my sad thoughts. One chapter of my life is closed and I am afraid it won't be long before the other would be over too. Console the children and see that Rambhau and Bapu are not dejected...Misfortunes should brace us for acquiring greater self-dependence. If both Rambhau and Bapu do that, I am sure God will not forsake them.

...Above all, face the situation courageously yourself, for there is no one else on whom the children can depend at this critical moment. May God help you all is all that I can wish and pray for from this distant place. With love to children and yourself, I am

Yours affectionately,
Bal Gangadhar Tilak

These letters from the Mandalay prison throw light on the humane facet of his personality.

Tilak never spoke of his grief. But from an anecdote related by Dhondopant Vidwans in his reminiscences, one gets an idea of the depth of Tilak's emotions. Dhondopant has written: "After Dada came back from Mandalay, a painter made a life-size oil painting of my maternal aunt and brought it to us. I took a look at it and exclaimed, 'What a fine painting!' Dada immediately said, 'But it is not perfect'. At this I remarked, 'But it perfectly resembles Mami'. Dada smiled a little and in a moving tone said, 'Do you know her better than I do?' Dada hardly spoke to Mami in our presence, and never in this

strain. Therefore, when I heard these touching words from him when Mami was no more, my eyes filled with tears!”

Despite his age and diabetes, Tilak’s pursuit of knowledge continued unabated. In fact, his complete absorption in his studies made him forget the pangs of solitary confinement and enabled him to create for himself an environment suitable for contemplation and serious writing. If one glances at the list of books he read at Mandalay, one is amazed at his wide intellectual interests and the profound nature of his scholarship. Tilak decided to write in Marathi, a book explaining the message of the *Bhagawad Gita*. To Tilak the *Gita* was not a mere subject for academic interpretation. He had read various interpretations on the *Gita* and it was a perennial source of inspiration for him. His lifelong struggle for the country’s freedom was firmly based on knowledge acquired through the *Bhagawad Gita* which enabled him to strive for his goal without the certainty of seeing its fulfilment. Before writing his book, Tilak read the books written by French and German philosophers. He was particularly keen on studying the writings of August Comte, the French positivist philosopher and Kant, the German philosopher. He even learnt the French and German languages to get a better understanding of the foreign language books. His comparative study of Western philosophy with Indian philosophy gave shape to many of his ideas. He read voraciously and critically; he pondered over the ideas of the great philosophers; he contemplated before the format of his *Gita-Rahasya* clearly evolved in his mind. Tilak then got down to writing and within three-and-a-half months completed his magnum opus—the *Gita-Rahasya*. In his letter of 2nd March 1911, Tilak wrote: “I have completed the writing of the *Gita-Rahasya*...*The Gita* is a book on practical ethics based on spiritual knowledge. It is akin to *Prolegomena to Ethics*—the monumental work of Green. I have made use of all the books which were available to me here. I had to turn to my memory when giving references from the books which were not here with me. My discourse on *Bhagawad Gita* is based on Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, on writings of Green and on *Shankar Bhashya* and on *Brahma Sutra* by Shankaracharya. For over twenty years, the *Mahabharata* and the *Gita* preoccupied my mind. My book is altogether independent of these and offers a new interpretation of the *Bhagawad Gita*. I am at present translating the *Bhagawad Gita* into Marathi and the work of the translation would be over in a couple of months. The *Gita* represents the Hindu philosophy of activity—a philosophy which inspires man to lead a glorious life, full of activity.”

In a letter written on 11th July, Tilak wrote: “There are some people who say that there is no ethic in the *Vedanta*. But they are wrong. I am convinced that the connotation of the Sanskrit word *karmayoga* is ethics.” In another letter, he wrote that the *Gita* was the ethic of *Vedanta*. For three months, he carefully read what he had written. In a letter written on 1st December 1911, he has mentioned that he had completed the preface, the contents and other details of his book.

This monumental work by him contains a comparative study of the ideas of Western philosophers and the teachings of the *Bhagawad Gita*. After completing the *Gita-Rahasya*, he wrote two chapters of his proposed book, *Vedic Chronology*. He wanted to write on various subjects and has left behind a list of books which he proposed to write. The list includes titles like *History of Hindu Religion*, *Indian Nationality*, *The History of India of the Pre-Ramayana Period*, *Shankara Darshan* (philosophy of Shankaracharya),

The Provincial Administration, The Hindu Law, Infinitesimal Calculus, Bhagawad Gita-Rahasya—Ethics, Life of Shivaji, Chaldea and Bharat.

Out of these he could complete only one book—the *Gita-Rahasya*. The Mandalay Jail became a temple of learning due to his presence for five-and-a-half years. Here it would be appropriate to quote Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, another great leader of India's freedom struggle, who wrote: "The climate of Mandalay was unhealthy and unfavourable...I often used to think and wonder how in such a climate and in such unfavourable circumstances, Lokamanya Tilak could go in for prolonged intellectual work for over five years and produce such a magnificent piece of work like the *Gita-Rahasya*." When Bose had the opportunity to visit the cell where Tilak was lodged, he remarked, "Mandalay Jail was a real place of pilgrimage, halowed by memories of Lokamanya Tilak. A visit to his cell was the happiest pilgrimage of my life."

On Tilak's sentence to six years' imprisonment and transportation, Dadasaheb Khaparde made an appeal to the Privy Council for Tilak's release but the appeal was turned down. Khaparde then communicated to Tilak that if the latter accepted certain conditions as stipulated by the government, he could probably be released from prison. Tilak wrote back on 29th May 1909: "If I accept the conditions suggested by you, life for me would be a living death. I shall not be able to tolerate such a way of life. My work is not merely political; I can also devote myself to the field of knowledge. Taking all into consideration I have come to the conclusion that accepting such conditions would be contrary to my way of life and work so far. If I accept these conditions, I would be wiping off all my life's labour with my own hands. I have not lived just for myself or for my family; I have been doing my duty of serving the people.. Jhe^mpport of my writing is that I should continue to have my civil liberties even after I am set free. If that can not happen, I am prepared to face death."

In May 1914, after suffering imprisonment for over five years, Tilak sent back all the books he had with him at Mandalay. On 8th June 1914, at 8 a.m., the superintendent of the prison entered Tilak's cell to ask him to pack up his belongings. He was taken from Mandalay to Rangoon in the steamer 'Mayo' which reached Madras on 15th June. In a special compartment of the 'Madras Mail', he left for Bombay. The train halted at Hadapsar—a wayside station near Poona—on the midnight of 16th June. Tilak was then taken to Poona by car. When his car reached Gaekwadwada, the watchman at the door called Dhondopant before admitting Tilak to his own house. His home-coming was a moment of rejoicing for all. Tilak, however, must have deeply missed Satyabhamabai's presence, who was no more.

On Sunday 21st June, a public meeting was held in Gaekwadwada to felicitate him. A rousing reception was given with shouts of "Tilak Maharaj *kijai*." The meeting was presided by Maharshi Annasaheb Patwardhan, a saintly and revered citizen of Poona, whom Tilak held in high esteem. In reply to the speeches made in his honour, Tilak said, "There is one great difference between happiness and sorrow. When there are people to share one's happiness, one's happiness increases. After meeting the people who have been to see me during the last two days and today's huge crowd, my happiness at release from prison has increased a thousand times—nay, a million times. I have come back after six years. The state of my mind is similar to that of Rip Van Winkle in Washington Irvine's novel. Rip Van Winkle went to sleep and remained asleep for many years. When

he got up, he found that* there was a new world around him. I too am feeling the same way. I have been completely in the dark about all that has happened during the last six years... However, the way in which you have welcomed me has made me realise that you have not forgotten me. I too have not forgotten you. I shall continue to be with you as I have been in the past. Many people have asked me about my future plans. The Brahmins in the Vedic period, before taking a step forward, first sprinkled water on the street in order to purify the street. Perhaps we shall have to purify the path we intend to take. I cannot tell you today whether the path is clean or not. I am deliberately observing silence. I trust you will understand why I am doing so.”

Tilak's belongings containing his manuscript of the *Gita-Rahasya* reached Poona later on. The government retained it to scrutinise it. It was not returned for quite some time. This made some of Tilak's friends anxious. But Tilak remarked, “The note-books of my manuscript may be with the government, but *Gita-Rahasya* is in my brain. If I do not get the manuscript, I shall go to Sinhgad and in the quiet atmosphere there, rewrite my book.” Fortunately the manuscript was given back to him. He went through it again to make minor changes before giving it for printing. In June 1915, the *Gita-Rahasya* was published. The price of the book was three rupees. There was such clamour for the book that people had to stand in a queue to purchase it. The first edition of six thousand copies was sold out in just a few months' time. Tilak wanted his book to be read and discussed. He, therefore, sent complimentary copies to scholars all over India.

The political situation in India in 1914 was altogether different to that in 1908. After Khudiram Bose's execution, the government had taken repressive measures to crush the revolutionary movement. Young revolutionaries in Bengal were arrested. In the Maniktala Bomb Case, Barindra Kumar Ghosh and many others were sentenced to long terms of rigorous imprisonment. Aurobindo Ghosh was arrested in the Alipore Conspiracy Case. Here he started an *ashram* and took to the path of spiritual salvation. After the transportation of leaders like Barindra Kumar Ghosh and Ulhaskar Datta, the revolutionary movement collapsed. At Nasik, following Jackson's assassination the district magistrate sent Kanhare, Karve and Deshpande to the gallows. Babarao Savarkar and V.D. *alias* Veer Savarkar were given life imprisonment and transportation to the Andamans.

On the one hand, the government through ruthless repression crushed the revolutionary movement, on the other; moderate leaders meekly accepted the Morley-Minto reforms and continued with their politics of petition and prayer. Bipin Chandra Pal left politics. No other leader in India was capable of leading the radical movement. Khadilkar and N.C. Kelkar continued to edit and publish the *Kesari* but it lost its radical tone. The lion had ceased to roar. Tilak quietly watched the situation and realised that following his arrest, the revolutionaries had been isolated and victimised by the government. The moderates had become submissive. Thus, in India, there was all quiet on the political front. It was then that Tilak decided to arouse the people from their slumber, inspire confidence in them and make them act. He realised the need for consolidating the political forces and bringing them together under the aegis of the Indian National Congress. He knew that compromises would have to be made in order to bring unity among the political forces.

5. BROAD-BASED POLITICAL MOVEMENT

The First World War broke out in August 1914. A major calamity befell England; the British government did not want to face growing unrest in India at this juncture. On Tilak's release from the Mandalay prison, the government imposed many restrictions on him. The police was ordered to keep a watch on his movements. However, police was removed on outbreak of the World War. Tilak realised that this was the most opportune moment to take action. For days he pondered over the course of action to take before coming to a decision. On 27th August 1914, he issued a circular supporting the British government during its time of crisis.

The revolutionaries wanted to utilise the occasion to make a determined bid to win freedom; some went to the extent of saying that help should be sought from countries hostile to England in order to strengthen their efforts for obtaining *swarajya*. With this idea in mind, Raja Mahendra Pratap, a revolutionary from Uttar Pradesh, embarked for Europe. His plan was to instigate an uprising in India with support from the anti-British forces which were to reach the North-West Frontier Province from Afghanistan. Mahendra Pratap reached Kabul in 1915 and succeeded in winning over the Amir. On 1st December 1915 he declared that an interim government of Indians would be established. However, the plan failed to materialise. Jatin Mukherjee, a Bengali revolutionary, was meanwhile planning to smuggle weapons on to the eastern coast of India through the sea route. He sent one of his young colleagues Narendra Bhattacharya (who later came to be known as M.N. Roy) to Batavia for carrying out the plan. However, this effort failed. Some leaders of the Gadr Party, who were working in America, decided to utilise the war as an opportunity for inciting a revolt in the Indian Army. They established contacts with Indian Army officers posted abroad by the British for fighting against Germany. Pingale, Rash Behari Bose and Kartar Singh wanted to make similar efforts vis-a-vis the Indian troops stationed within India. They had worked out their plans very carefully. But they were betrayed by a traitor in whom they had reposed their trust. Pingale and Kartar Singh were arrested and after a trial, they were executed. Rash Behari Bose managed to escape. Thus the bid to incite an uprising in the Army came to an end.

Chidambaram Pillai, a revolutionary from Madras, came to Poona to meet Tilak. He described his second meeting with Tilak as follows: "Next morning, my guru (Tilak) took me to his private chamber. He had a talk with me about the European war that was then going on and about a message that he had received from some Indian patriots, who were then in Germany. The message was to the effect th_at certain occasions would arise during the course of the war when Indians could do_such and such things on certain occasions. We discussed for three days about the advisability, the possibility and the probable results of our carrying out the stipulations in the message. Here my guru Tilak predicted that the occasions referred to in the message might not arise as there were several complications in Europe in connection with the war."

Tilak told Pillai that it was not possible to have a national uprising in India for the purpose of bringing British rule to an end. He agreed that the British were in dire straits but ruled out the possibility of an anti-British revolt. Tilak conveyed his views to the revolutionaries on the situation arising in the aftermath of the war and advised them against any adventurist action. He was, however, of the opinion that the British government would have to be pressurised to grant more political rights to the Indians.

Gangadharrao Deshpande of Belgaum was a faithful follower of Tilak. Some Indian revolutionaries, who were in Germany, sent some jewellery to Gangadharrao Deshpande with the instructions that the jewels were to be used for their struggle. In this connection, Deshpande met Tilak and sought his advice. Tilak told him that the recruiting centre at Belgaum was a sensitive spot and if Gangadharrao wanted he could explore the possibility of winning the support of some people in the recruiting centre. Tilak also warned him not to expect much to emerge from such efforts. True enough, Gangadharrao Deshpande's efforts bore no fruit. When he communicated this to Tilak in Poona, the latter asked him to return the jewellery to those who had passed it on to him.

Tilak was completely anti-British but he was not pro-German either. He had a good understanding of the international situation and the political forces working therein. He wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* expressing his conviction in the belief that the situation in India was bound to improve with the Indians acquiring more political rights in the near future. He clarified his position regarding his support to the British rulers. He said that when the British need our help, we should not hesitate to give all assistance but in the bargain we should bring pressure on the government to give us more rights and greater responsibilities. He wanted the Indians to be given positions of power in the civil administration as also in the Army. He appealed to the people to join the Army with self-confidence. He wrote: "Times are changing. The government has been forced to change its attitude. Time will create a situation in which our aspirations regarding the positions of power in the Army would be fulfilled. Those who want *swarajya* must be prepared to protect their motherland. The government has appealed to us to come forward to fight the enemy and protect our country. A time would come when the government would have to give us *swarajya* for the help we extend to enable it to win this war."

Tilak also realised that in times of war, all-political forces should be consolidated as a prerequisite to this strategy. In fact, while asserting his point of view, he wanted to maintain the Congress as a platform for furthering national unity. In 1907, at Surat, even when there were sharp differences of opinion between the moderates and the radicals, Tilak was keen to avoid a split in the Congress. However, owing to the opposing points of view, groups were formed and the Congress came into the hands of the moderates. With a free hand in running the Congress organisation from 1908 to 1914, the moderates did not deem it necessary to strive for more political rights through constitutional means, but meekly submitted to the dictates of the British government by passing resolutions on India's political progress. The result was that political life in India came to a standstill. Though Tilak ostensibly proclaimed loyalty to the British, his intention was to take advantage of the delicate situation the British were in and pressurise them to grant greater political rights to the Indians, as a step towards *swarajya*. He began by bringing the political forces together rather cautiously. He wanted to pick up the old threads of unity as had been possible during the anti-partition movement in 1905.

Before Tilak's release from prison, Annie Besant had appeared on India's political horizon. She had originally come from Ireland. Her public life had been like a storm. A staunch radical, her book, *Political Status of Women*, had created quite a stir in England. She had written another book, *England, India and Afghanistan*, which was very critical of England's expansionist policy. She came to India in 1893, convinced that without substantial political rights, Indians would not be able to make progress in any field. She, therefore, decided to direct all her energies to the cause of India's freedom. She was an

extraordinary orator with the rare ability to instil new life into any movement which she joined. After carefully studying the political situation in India, in 1913, she decided to awaken the people out of their stupor through new political activities. She launched the newspaper, *Common Weal*. Aurobindo Ghosh wrote about Annie Besant as follows: "The sudden eruption of Mrs Besant into the political field with her untiring energy, flaming enthusiasm, magnificent and magnetic personality, spiritual force^for bringing an ideal on to the stage of activity with one rapid whirl and rush is indeed a happy augury." Within a month of Tilak's release, Mrs Besant started striving towards bringing a rapprochement between the moderates and the radicals.

In politics leaders seldom modify their views. In fact, persons with ideological convictions in their stands can become leaders. Then there are temperamental differences between leaders which tend to make the adamant more so. Similarly, differences between Tilak and Gokhale were both ideological and temperamental. Both of them refused to budge from their political stand and though both devoted their lives to the achievement of *swarajya*, they could not work in co-operation with each other while being in the Indian National Congress.

In 1914, both Tilak and Gokhale felt the need for ending the split in the Congress. Annie Besant played a leading role in patching the differences between these two leaders. But the stubborn attitude of both coupled with the misunderstandings between them prevented Tilak and Gokhale from seeing eye to eye. The Congress session was scheduled to be held at Madras in December 1914. Tilak wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* under the title, 'Is it a National Meeting or a Club Festival of the Moderates?' He stated that the events at Madras showed it was not a session of the Congress but a social gathering of the moderates. In another editorial, he bitterly criticised the liberal leaders and held them responsible for the breakdown in the talks aimed to bring about unity. In this article he questioned the intentions of the liberal leaders. The editorial was in some respect unfair; it deeply hurt Gokhale, who was a very sensitive person. The parting between Gokhale and Tilak was indeed unfortunate!

Both were dedicated freedom fighters. Tilak had suffered imprisonment for his political views and was a popular leader. Gokhale might not have suffered imprisonment but his love for his country was no less intense than that of Tilak. Moreover, while representing the cause of India, Gokhale had studied the political, economic and social issues deeply. He had worked very hard as a member of the Central Council and exposed the British government on a number of issues. His persuasive manner and logical arguments helped him to plead for India's cause in a convincing manner. However, Gokhale was not a man of the masses. He did not mix with the people, as a result of which he was often misunderstood. Some people in Maharashtra, particularly in Poona, were downright malicious in their criticism of him. Their lack of understanding prevented them from taking an objective view on the political issues. They called themselves followers of Tilak and for them following Tilak primarily meant abusing Gokhale. It was indeed unfortunate that Tilak neither snubbed nor even restrained this group of mischief-makers. Gokhale was a noble-hearted, tolerant man. Tilak was conscious of these rare qualities in Gokhale despite disapproving of his moderate stand. For Tilak there was no room for softness in politics and therefore he hit hard whenever there was a difference of opinion. The bitterness between Tilak and Gokhale was further heightened by this

intolerance of the so-called followers of Tilak whose sole aim was to hurl abuses at Gokhale.

Gokhale was frail in health; he suffered from diabetes. He died suddenly on 15th February 1915. Tilak, who had gone to Sinhgad, rushed back to Poona when he heard the shocking news of his demise. He joined the funeral procession and at a condolence meeting, paid glowing tributes to him besides praising him for his meritorious service to India. He appealed to the youth to emulate the noble example set by Gokhale.

There came a lull in the efforts for a compromise following Gokhale's death. Tilak started working independently. He was opposed to the idea of holding a session of a parallel Congress, and so decided to hold a provincial conference of the national party. Accordingly on 8th May 1915, the conference was held in Poona under the presidency of barrister Baptista. Tilak moved two resolutions: one expressing sorrow at Gokhale's death and the other on the First World War. He said that Gokhale's death was an irreparable loss to India and to him personally particularly since the latter was much younger than himself. On the World War, Tilak said, "The freedom of a nation, however small, has to be protected. A political party which supports freedom takes a moral stand and God would always be on that side... Our self-interest also demands that the British should win the war, because we hope to get *swamjya* from them."

Barrister Baptista made a forceful speech as president of the Congress. He expressed satisfaction at Tilak's role in the freedom struggle especially when the nation was passing through very difficult times. He congratulated Tilak on his acquittal in the Tai Maharaj case and remarked that owing to the decision of the Privy Council, the blot on his character had been removed once and for all. Baptista made a fervent appeal for home rule in India. He cited the case of Ireland, which some years back had started the movement for home rule. Baptista met Tilak in 1899 and made the suggestion that India should demand home rule, but Tilak advised him to wait for some time. In 1915, however, Tilak felt that the time was ripe to demand home rule and soon the Home Rule League was launched. Mrs Annie Besant was thinking on the same lines. On 28th September 1915, in *New India*, the newspaper edited by her, Annie Besant published the manifesto of the Home Rule League which was supported by Tilak and propagated in the *Kesari*. He wrote four editorials under the title, 'Hindi Swarajya Sangh' between November and December 1915. In the editorials, he elucidated the concept of home rule and put forth the plan of action for achieving it. These articles became model lessons for editors supporting Indians Struggle for independence.

In his first article, Tilak said that time had come for demanding *swarajya* from the British. He wrote: "We are extending all help to the British in order to win the World War and we shall continue to help them. But, we must, at this juncture, state as to how the British Empire should be run so as to be different from the present, once the war has ended. If we do not state our expectations today, we shall not survive in the future/'

In his second article, Tilak pointed out the shortcomings of the Parliament Act of 1858 and proposed abolition of the Council operating under the Secretary of State for India. In his third article, he wrote that handing over the provincial administration to the Indians alone would mark the beginning of *swarajya*. In the fourth article, Tilak demanded that half the members of the Executive Council for India should be elected representatives of the people. While expounding his ideas, he wrote: "The Legislative Council for the

Indian government would discuss and legislate on all matters. In fact it would be India's Parliament, and therefore all members of this Council should be elected representatives of the people. In this Council, representation should be given to all castes, religions and trades... in fact to all strata of Indian society." He concluded his series of articles by saying that a national debate on home rule should be organised by the Swarajya Sangh.

In December 1915, at the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress, Annie Besant moved the resolution according to which the Home Rule League was to play a complementary role to the Indian National Congress. *But* the moderate leaders refused to accept Annie Besant's suggestion and rejected the resolution. Undeterred and undaunted, Mrs Besant continued working for the Home Rule League in right earnest.

In 1916, Tilak started the Indian Home Rule League with barrister Baptista as its president. The two organisations started by Mrs Besant and Lokamanya Tilak clearly demarcated their programmes and spheres of action before starting to work in co-operation with each other.

In May 1915, Tilak gave a speech at Belgaum in which he said, "*Swarajya* is the natural right of the people and in order to win *swarajya*, the formation of the Home Rule League (Swarajya Sangh) is absolutely essential." He toured different parts of Maharashtra to impress on the people that "*swarajya* is our birthright and we must have it". Tilak was no great orator and his speeches were devoid of flowery language. His words were direct and simple; but his sincerity touched the hearts of the people. The sacrifices made by him and his dedication to the ideal of *swarajya* made people accept his moral authority. As a result, his message reached thousands of people. Annie Besant was an exceptionally good orator. Her few chosen words and intensity of emotional speech helped to incite the educated youth to strive for home rule. Tilak was highly impressed by Annie Besant's eloquence. Nevertheless, the impact made by his speeches was no less than that by Annie Besant.

R.C. Majumdar, the great historian to have written the history of India's struggle for freedom, has said: "Tilak always spoke in a homely style. He appealed to the people in a direct and clear manner. As a result, he not only became a popular leader, but also earned a place in the hearts of the people. They came to look upon him as an ideal leader. Lokamanya Tilak asked the people to be fearless, patriotic and appealed to them to be ready for sacrificing everything for *swarajya*." In May 1915, Tilak delivered two speeches at Ahmednagar, a district in Maharashtra. He severely criticised the British bureaucracy and asserted that the people of India should get their political rights by marching in the direction of *swarajya*.

A wave of political enthusiasm gripped the people, particularly when the message of the Home Rule League reached home. British bureaucracy, enraged by the turn of events, decided to put a curb on Tilak's and Annie Besant's activities. The British thought that such an action would stop the growing involvement of the people in the movement for home rule. The government served a notice on Besant asking her to furnish two securities—one of two thousand rupees and the other of ten thousand rupees for publishing articles in the *New India*, Mrs Besant suspended the publication of *New India*, but carried on the movement for home rule with greater fervour.

23rd July 1916 was Tilak's 61st birthday. In those days, the average life span was short and a person crossing the age of sixty was regarded rather fortunate. Tilak had

passed through great hardships, suffered imprisonment for nearly seven years and led a hectic political life. It was natural, therefore, that his entering into his 61st year called for a rejoicing. The people decided to felicitate him and present him with a purse as a token of their appreciation for the yeoman service rendered to the country. A substantial amount of one lakh rupees was collected within a short time, for the people came willingly forward to contribute. It was also decided to present him a *man patra* on the occasion. Hundreds of Tilak's admirers came to Poona from different districts of Maharashtra to participate in the function, held on 23rd July in the campus of the Gaekwadwada.

The address or *manpatra*, which was presented to Tilak, was written in three languages—Sanskrit, Marathi and English. The address began with a laudatory reference to Tilak's patriotism and service to the motherland, while continuing: "You championed the cause of the people and worked for them in a dedicated manner. The mission undertaken by you was fraught with difficulties and you had to pass through severe trials to fulfil it. While looking back, your long and unending sufferings strike awe in the minds of us all. And yet you suffered everything calmly and courageously. When we recall all your sufferings and your sacrifice, our hearts get filled with admiration...Your heroic life evokes in us the highest degree of respect."

In his reply to the felicitation, Tilak thanked the people for the affection they had showered on him and remarked that it was impossible for him to repay the debt he owed to them all. While formally accepting the *man patra* and the purse, he declared that he would add some of his own amount to the purse given, so that the entire sum could then be spent for the national cause. He was visibly moved by the feelings expressed at the felicitation function. He concluded by saying, "We should all work for our country without expecting any fruit for our efforts. I only wish that the urge to strive for *swarajya* gets uppermost in your minds and I pray to God that I may live to see the fulfilment of at least some of the aspirations cherished by you."

In life, happiness and sorrow are like light and shade, thought Tilak on his 61st birthday. When religious rites were being performed on the morning of 23rd July, police officers entered the campus of Gaekwadwada to serve a prosecution notice on him for his speeches at Ahmednagar and Belgaum which, according to the government, were seditious. Unperturbed, Tilak accepted the notice with the remark, "This is my birthday-gift from the government." With calm composure, he participated in the function arranged in his honour in the evening. One of his friends remarked to him that he had now become a *sthitapradnya* as described in the *Bhagawad Gita*. Next day, when some friends expressed anxiety over the possibility of his conviction, Tilak remarked, "If I am sentenced, I shall be able to write my proposed book in prison."

Tilak was asked to submit a personal surety bond of twenty thousand rupees, besides two securities each of twenty thousand rupees. He decided to appeal against this order. Barrister M. A. Jinnah appeared on his behalf and pleaded on his client's behalf with extraordinary skill. Justice Bachelor gave the verdict that Tilak's speeches were not seditious and therefore neither personal bond nor the two securities were required to be submitted.

This decision was hailed all over the country. Gandhiji, who was then editor of the *Young India*, wrote: "Thus a great victory has been won for the cause of home rule which

has thus been set free from the shackles that were sought to be put upon it... Mr Tilak has undergone many sufferings for his country's cause. He has won this victory not for himself alone, but for his countrymen at large. It rests with them to carry on the good work and reap the fruits of the seeds he has sown."

The next session of the Indian National Congress was scheduled to be held at Lucknow in December 1916. The draft of the political reforms was to be discussed by the delegates. Tilak played a prominent role in persuading the delegates at the conference to join the Congress again. The moderate leaders as well as the Muslim League sent in their draft. Baptista sent in the draft for political reforms on behalf of the Home Rule League.

After a lapse of over nine years, different streams in India's political life came together on the platform of the Indian National Congress. Tremendous enthusiasm was visible among the people. In response to Tilak's appeal, many active workers from Maharashtra started making for Lucknow. A special train was arranged for taking people from Bombay to Lucknow. Tilak too travelled by this train. His train was stopped at many places by enthusiastic crowds who spontaneously came forward to garland him. A rousing welcome was given to him at Lucknow too. A large carriage was brought forward and, despite Tilak's protests, young men removed the horses from the harness, made Tilak sit in the carriage, and then pulled it themselves. After years of dedicated service to the nation, Tilak came to be known as 'Lokamanya'—a leader with his place in the hearts of the people. When Tilak entered the *pandal* for the session, he was given a tremendous ovation. The chairman of the reception committee expressed satisfaction over the entry of the radicals and the Muslims into the Congress fold. The party president, Ambika Charan Majumdar, in his presidential address said, "After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the wilderness of misunderstandings and mazes of unpleasant controversies, both the wings of the Indian National Congress have come to realise that united they stand, but divided they fall... Brothers have at last met their brothers." Turning to Tilak, he said, "I most cordially welcome Mr Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mr Motilal Ghosh and other brave comrades, who were separated from us at Surat and who have now been happily restored to us, at Lucknow," All the delegates lustily cheered the president and stood up in reverence to welcome Tilak.

In the meeting of the Subjects Committee each clause of the draft came up for discussion till a new draft was unanimously approved. This draft later came to be known as the Congress League Scheme. In this scheme, while putting forth the demand for *swarajya*, it was stated that the demand was supported by people of all religions in India. Under the scheme, the Muslims were to be given a separate electorate and weightage where they were in minority. A heated discussion on these provisions followed due to sharp differences of opinion among the participants. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was strongly opposed to this stipulation in the resolution. C.S. Ranga has reported the proceedings in the following words: "I remember the remarkable composure of Tilak at the Lucknow Congress... Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was very much upset. He could not reconcile himself to the pact... Lokamanya Tilak's attitude was the deciding factor in the Hindu-Muslim settlement; the last word on the subject so far as the Hindus were concerned."

In his speech supporting the resolution on self-government, Tilak made the following remarks which clearly show his attitude towards Hindu-Muslim unity: "It has been said,

gentlemen, by some that we Hindus have yielded too much to our Mohammedan brethren. I am sure I represent the feelings of the community all over India when I say that we would not mind if the rights of self-government are granted to the Mohammedan community alone... We are united in the United Provinces and have now been lucky at Lucknow."

The *Kesari* wrote about the Lucknow pact as follows: "India has now held aloft the banner of *swarajya* and no opponent would be able to snatch the banner... When Hindus and Muslims jointly ask for *swarajya* from a common platform, the British bureaucracy has to realise that its days are numbered. It is clear that both the Hindus and Muslims are now determined to tell the British, 'Give the rights of self-government to Hindus or to Muslims, but do give them to some section in India.'"

On 30th December, at a public meeting of the Home Rule League, over which Annie Besant presided, Tilak said: "Two things happened at the Lucknow Congress. The first was that an unequivocal demand for *swarajya* was made and the second, that Hindus and Muslims have united and jointly demanded *swarajya*... We have given special concessions to the Muslims so that they may join us in the struggle for *swarajya*."

In this speech, Tilak, in the end, made the memorable statement: "*Swarajya* is my birthright and I shall have it."

After the Lucknow session of the Congress, Tilak went to Calcutta to meet Motilal Ghosh, editor of the *Amrit Bazar Patrika*. Motilal Ghosh was a close friend of Tilak. Owing to old age, he could not attend the Lucknow session. These two friends met after nearly nine years. On his way home, Tilak made a halt at Nagpur. He then undertook a tour of Berar and addressed public meetings at Yevatmal, Karanja, Akola and many other places. In his speeches Tilak exhorted the people to be fearless and work for *swarajya*. They warmly received him and felicitated him wherever he went.

In February 1917, at a public meeting in Poona presided over by R.P. Paranjape, Principal of Fergusson College, Tilak moved the main resolution. In his speech he observed: "We have been making this demand since the inception of the Indian National Congress. Even in the event of an invasion of India, the government was not willing to grant this right to us. On 21st February there will be an amendment to the present Act and the right to join the Army would be conferred on us. I, therefore, appeal to Indian youths to take advantage of the new facility and join the Army. When we ask for *swarajya*, we must be prepared for demanding the right to serve our country by joining the Army. While asking for rights, we must be prepared to shoulder the responsibility of protecting our country."

On 20th February, Tilak wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* on this subject. He said: "Though India is not a free country, the World War has created a new awareness in us. The government was afraid of a mutiny and therefore did not allow us Indians to join the Army. But how long can the government depend on others? And, now time and circumstances have forced the government to realise that it is feasible to entrust the responsibility of protecting India to the Indian people."

He also said that if the Indians could not join the Army as officers, they should be willing to join as ordinary soldiers. In conclusion he remarked: "If we join as soldiers, we

would be able to ask for the posts of officers with greater right. Today the government needs an Army. However, they would have to keep this door open permanently.”

Tilak, while lending support to the government, was telling the people that how by doing this they could also serve their country. The government did not approve of his move and imposed a ban on his entry into Punjab. So he decided to tour Karnataka to explain his concept of home rule. He wanted financial assistance for the Home Rule League which was only possible by involving all sections of the society. Moreover, such a move could also help in building a mass base for the *swarajya* movement. While addressing a meeting of the Home Rule League at Chikodi in Belgaum district, Tilak said, “If the Home Rule League needed merely five thousand rupees, any one person amongst you could have given the entire amount. But I do not want to collect money in such a manner. I want five thousand people to give one rupee each. I want money from the people who depend on the pen alone just as I want money from the farmers who depend on the plough. There is a proverb in Marathi which says that when five people say the same thing with one voice, it becomes the voice of God; similarly, if five thousand people come together and ask for *swarajya*, would it not become the voice of God in favour of *swarajya*? The devotees of Panduranga, who regularly go to Pandharpur on pilgrimage, believe that they can attain *moksha* only if they were to die at Pandharpur. Similarly, if you die while asking for *swarajya*, it can result in the liberation of our motherland.”

At Nipani, Tilak told the Jains, “There are fifty-one saints, *teerthankaras*, in your temples. I want that in our country all the thirty crore people should become *teerthankaras* for acquiring *swarajya*. You all are merchants and you never forget to perform your religious duties. You must also perform your duty towards fostering the national religion.” While addressing the first annual meeting of the Home Rule League, Tilak said, “Within the next year we must enrol fifty thousand members for the Home Rule League and simultaneously collect fifty thousand rupees.”

Annie Besant and Lokamanya Tilak made a whirlwind tour to propagate home rule. The British government, greatly agitated at this, arrested Mrs Besant. But the people were not to be cowed down. Tilak wrote a fiery editorial under ‘An Assault on Mrs Besant an Assault on *Swarajya*’. He said: “The Governor of Madras, Lord Pentland, by detaining Mrs Besant, has thrown a challenge at the movement for *swarajya*. We must accept the challenge and carry on our struggle against repression by the government.”

During this period, Gandhiji launched the *satyagraha* movement to seek redressal of the grievances of the labourers working on indigo plantations in the Champaran district of Bihar. Gandhiji’s success in his movement induced many people to believe that the same mode of *satyagraha* could be adopted for achieving *swarajya*. The moderate leaders considered the *satyagraha* an unconstitutional act. Tilak wrote an editorial in the *Kesari* praising the *satyagraha*. He said: “When the foreign government tramples on truth and justice, -we should do what the government forbids us to do. Some time ago, at the time of the partition of Bengal, there was a dispute in the Congress about boycott and *swarajya* and after some persuasion the Congress accepted the *swarajya* as its ideal. Similarly, now there might be a dispute over the means to be adopted for securing justice, but new means may have to be adopted soon for fighting injustice.”

On 9th August 1917, Tilak, through his *Kesari*, appealed to the people to make a unanimous bid for *swarajya* in a militant manner. He felt that, “the freedom of India is not just concerned with India; it is part of the problem of justice to humanity.” The Bombay provincial committee of the Congress held a meeting on 12th August. Initially serious differences arose, but later, a compromise was reached and a resolution approved by Tilak, Gandhi and Chandavarkar was passed. This resolution gave recognition to *satyagraha* as the means for fighting injustice.

Montague became the Secretary of State for India in the British cabinet. On 20th August 1917, he declared, “The policy of His Majesty’s government with which the Government of India is in complete accord is that of gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of a responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.” Montague also declared that he would visit India to gauge the views of the Government of India and of the representatives of the people. Accordingly, on 26th November 1917, in Delhi, he met the home rule delegation led by Tilak.

In December 1918, the next Congress session was held at Calcutta. In February 1918 Tilak undertook a tour of Berar and made thirty-two speeches in sixteen days, explaining to the people the meaning of *swarajya*. He told them what to do for winning *swarajya*. He then submitted a report of his tour to the Home Rule League. He had, in all, delivered eighty-eight lectures to win the support of the people for his goal. Lokamanya’s words and dedication made a tremendous impact and the seeds of *swarajya* were sown in the minds of many a people. Tilak was past sixty years of age and felt the strains of the journey and the meetings with thousands of people during his whirlwind tour. The gist of Tilak’s speech was: “Just as we look after our homes and manage the affairs of our family, we should also look after our people and manage the affairs of our country. The government officers are there to help us in running the administration of our country. But in India, the British bureaucracy has become the master of our country. It does not pay attention to the grievances of the people. Therefore, we must understand what our rights are and how we should strive to acquire these rights. If we carry on the struggle for acquisition of political rights in a united manner, there will be no difficulty in obtaining *szuarajya*.”

In March 1918, a meeting for removal of the practice of untouchability from India was held in Bombay under the presidentship of Sayajirao Maharaj Gaekwad, the ruler of Baroda. Vitthal Ramji Shinde, a renowned social worker of Maharashtra, played a leading role in organising the conference. Tilak meanwhile was busy making preparation for his proposed journey to England. However, on Shinde’s repeated requests, Tilak agreed to attend the conference. Tilak moved a resolution that the Congress should take into its fold representatives of the scheduled caste to enlist their support for the cause of *swarajya*. He stated, “If God accepts untouchability, I shall not call him God... I have come here to this movement for the first time, but my mind has always been with the movement... I don’t deny that in ancient times, owing to the tyranny of the Brahmins, the custom of untouchability came into existence. But time has now come when this disease must be eradicated.”

Vitthal Ramji Shinde then prepared a manifesto for the movement criticising the inhuman practice of untouchability and obtained signatures from many of those who

thought likewise. N.C. Kelkar and Dadasaheb Khaparde, two close associates of Tilak, too gave in their signatures. However, Tilak refused to sign on the ground that the manifesto contained the statement that, 'I shall give first priority to the work' of the eradication of untouchability'. Tilak clarified that for him his first priority was political work and owing to his old age he was not in a position to spare time for this movement for social reforms. Nobody can deny that Tilak gave precedence to *swarajya* over any other movement and hence, his unwillingness to give an assurance which he would be unable to fulfil. Mentally Tilak was convinced that untouchability had to be removed, but owing to the orthodox atmosphere in which he was brought up, he was not in position to take a bold step for initiating social reforms. And he made no bones about his limitations. With his support the movement against untouchability could have achieved considerable success in Maharashtra, but, he adopted a dubious stand. This indeed was unfortunate!

Tilak had declared his support to the war efforts of the British and had appealed to the youth to join the Army. However, while doing this, he emphasised his political stand which embarrassed the government no end. Tilak always said, "Youths should join the Army. Tomorrow you are bound to get the posts of officers. If the Army consists mainly of youths of our country, it would help the cause of *swarajya*." Tilak spoke in the Marathi language very skilfully; not a single expression either in his writings or his speeches could be construed as objectionable on legal grounds. But the implied meaning of his words was obvious both to the people and to the British rulers. Thus he was not invited to the war conference at Delhi. Not only was he not invited, but a ban was imposed on his entering into Punjab or Delhi. However, when Lord Willingdon decided to hold a similar war conference in Bombay, Tilak was invited to it. When asked to speak in the conference, Tilak said, "I am giving expression to the feelings of the people. If tomorrow there is an invasion of India, we shall shed blood and lay down our lives to resist any attack on our country in order to protect it. But we shall not be able to delink the protection of our country from our demand for *swarajya*." As soon as Tilak uttered these words, Lord Willingdon intervened to remark, "I shall not allow any political discussion in this meeting." At this Tilak remarked, "Under these circumstances a person with self-respect has no alternative but to leave this meeting. Thus I am walking out of the meeting." So saying, he left.

On his release from the Mandalay prison in 1914, Tilak came across a book, *Indian Unrest*, written by Valentine Chirol. In this book the writer had stated that dissatisfaction against the British Empire in India was confined mainly to cities and to the so-called upper castes and he called Tilak the 'father of Indian unrest'. Chirol further alleged that it was at Tilak's instigation that some hot-headed youths had taken to acts of terrorism. No wonder then that Tilak decided to file a libel suit against Chirol. Tilak was not hurt, at the personal attack but felt that Chirol had cast aspersions on India's movement for *swarajya*. By dubbing the freedom struggle as a terrorist movement, Chirol had indirectly lent support to the repression let loose by British rulers in India. Tilak said that it was like calling a dog mad and to go around shooting him. He was convinced that the people in India were not mad, but it was the government which had acted in a mad manner. Tilak thought that by going to the law courts he would be able to enlighten the British rulers and the people of England on the real nature of the political movement in India. To file a suit against Chirol, it was necessary for him to go to England, which entailed consid-

erable expenses. He was also aware that it was a strenuous task, but to defend the honour of his country, he was prepared to go to any length.

There was another reason why he was so keen to go to England. On his arrival in India, Lord Montague, as Secretary of State to India, had accepted representations and statements from a number of individuals and institutions. But a decision regarding the proposed Reforms Bill was to be taken only on English soil. Tilak, therefore, felt that by meeting politically important and influential persons in England, he could plead for India's cause in a better manner and win over their support. The Indian National Congress had decided to send a delegation but no positive steps had so far been taken. The Home Rule League led by Tilak decided to send barrister Baptista to England. The Home Rule League led by Mrs Besant had chosen barrister Iyer as its representative. Both of them left for England on 14th July 1918.

Meanwhile, the detailed draft of the Reforms Bill was published under the signatures of Montague and of Chelmsford who was then the Viceroy of India. Tilak was disappointed with the draft proposals. He wrote in the *Kesari* under the title, 'It is Dawn but where is the Sun?' In this editorial Tilak compared the basic differences between the Morley-Minto reforms and the Montague-Chelmsford reforms. He said, "In the Montague-Chelmsford report it has been clearly stated that it is not enough to give the people an opportunity for advising the government. So far there had been a difference of opinion on this issue between the rulers and the ruled. But now the British rulers have theoretically at least accepted the position of the Indian people. This is certainly a major gain... However, when one reads the draft of the reforms proposed by Mr Montague, one can only sorrowfully say, 'It is dawn, but there is no sun'... After all, what is the meaning of *swarajya*? We must have control over our income and expenditure, we must have authority to frame our political policy, and we must have the power to make the government act according to our policy. Then only can it be said that we enjoy *swarajya*. Unfortunately, Montague Saheb is not willing to give any of these powers to us. He is telling us that we shall get these rights gradually and in stages. We do not at all agree with his way of hoodwinking us.'

Tilak wrote another editorial on the same subject. The heading of the editorial was 'Sir, Delhi is still very Far'. In this editorial Tilak, in his usual forthright manner, referred to the proposed reforms as sham and humbug. In the third editorial, however, Tilak stated that though he disapproved of the Reforms Bill, he would not reject it outright. He advocated a middle-of-the-road policy. His position was that since the reforms were inadequate, they had to be disapproved of, but, while doing so, "we should accept whatever is given to us and then ask for more". Tilak, in this context, wrote: "Whether the Congress rejects the reforms or whether the Congress suggests improvements and states what more it wants...we shall agree with whatever the Congress decides... In an organisation like the Congress, one cannot have all things according to one's wishes. Adjustments would have to be made." The Congress at last finalised its plan regarding the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms and decided to send a delegation to England, under the leadership of Vitthalbhai Patel. Tilak also left for England on 19th September. The next session of the Congress was scheduled to be held at Delhi and Tilak's name was accepted for presidentship of the Congress by an overwhelming majority. But as he was not in a position to return from England immediately, he sent a telegram to the reception

committee thanking them for the honour conferred on him but expressing his inability to attend the session.

In the libel suit against Chirol, Tilak lost. The expenditure incurred was far more than he had anticipated. In a way, this was a defeat for Tilak. However, after some years, Chirol wrote another book called *India*. In this book he modified some of his opinions and acknowledged Tilak's greatness. This was a moral victory for Tilak!

As pointed out earlier, Tilak had not gone to England merely to fight a libel suit against Chirol. Tilak strongly believed that the Congress delegation, the Home Rule League delegations and all other representatives of India's cause should work in close collaboration with each other. He wanted to see for himself the political forces at work in England, and develop contact with those individuals and institutions that supported India's demand for *swarajya*. Though the movement for *swarajya* had to be primarily fought on Indian soil, but effort to secure support from foreign countries was essential too. And more than anything else, it was necessary to make the public opinion in England favourable towards the Indians.

Tilak also wanted the world to know how India was being exploited economically by the English, such that poverty had engulfed the Indian masses, reducing them to a sub-human level.

He felt a kinship with the Labour Party in England. In 1907, Tilak had made the bold move of inviting Keir Hardy, leader of the British Labour Party to Poona. Keir Hardy was born in a poor family from Scotland. He had worked as a labourer in the coal-mines. However, through sheer hard work, he had risen in politics before being elected to the British Parliament. Besides being president of the independent Labour Party, he was editor of the newspaper, *Labour Leader*. He had come to India with the intention of studying the situation in India. Tilak gave a warm reception to Keir Hardy and, on behalf of the Sarvajanik Sabha, presented him a *man patra*. The *man patra* stated that the Indians had come to realise that sacrifice and self-reliance alone could enable them to shape their future and for which they could no longer depend on the British Liberal Party. In addition a plea was made to Keir Hardy, "to understand the just aspirations of the Indian people and to convince the voters in England that these just aspirations must be fulfilled". Keir Hardy, in his reply to the *man patra*, said, "I was already sympathetic to India. My sympathies are now hundred times more so than what they were earlier. More than ninety-nine per cent of the people in England are utterly ignorant of the reality in India. I shall, in the conference of my party, report what I have seen here, and communicate your aspirations to my colleagues."

Tilak carried this thread forward when he went to England in 1918 and 1919. He met a number of members of the Labour Party, apprised them of the situation in India and through persuasive arguments managed to convince them of India's just demand for self-government. His success in England can be gauged from the following remarks of some of the leaders of the Labour Party. Benspur, an influential leader of the party, had said, "Convey to the people of India that, though the political situation today looks unfavourable, it is likely to improve and there is hope for the future." Lansbury, editor of *Daily Herald* wrote: "Your dedication is indeed unique. We, the members of the editorial board of *Daily Herald*, and our party would make an earnest effort to champion the cause of India." Another important leader of the Labour Party, Wedgewood Bain, wrote in his

letter: "The Reforms Bill is certainly not just. But the people of India reject it; such a step will be disastrous. They should utilise the opportunity for strengthening their movement. Your council should henceforth guard the interests of the backward classes and the so-called untouchables. We shall judge you from the way you treat these people."

In 1918, the Labour Party contested the elections to the British Parliament. Tilak gave a donation of two thousand rupees to the Labour Party for its election propaganda. This was indeed an act of wise statesmanship and political foresight. Tilak anticipated emergence of the Labour Party as an important force in England's political life and made sustained efforts at establishing close contacts with its leaders. He expected the Labour Party to win at least a hundred seats in the Parliament. However, the Labour Party could secure only sixty-three. In one of his letters Tilak expressed his disappointment at the unsatisfactory performance of the Labour Party. While building up relations with the Labour Party, Tilak keenly observed the different trends in public opinion in England. The letter, written by him to N.C. Kelkar on 6th March 1919, shows how carefully he was planning his strategy. He wrote to Kelkar that if different delegations were to be sent to England, they could cast an impact on public opinion and lead to improvement in the reforms proposed by Montague. He further wrote: "I am enclosing a copy of the *London Times*. If you read it, you would understand the situation here. I suggest that five different delegations should visit England. The delegation should be divided as follows: (1) Sir Rabindranath Tagore and Raja Sahib of Mehmudabad-. They would be useful for the highest class of people here. (2) C.R. Das and barrister Baptista should come and give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee. They would be useful for suggesting amendments to the Reforms Bill. (3) When you and some other persons come here, you can function as our secretariat. (4) Mrs Besant would be particularly useful for influencing the Labour Party and the women. (5) Khaparde and Madan Mohan Malaviya as members of the Legislative Council would be useful in talking to the civil servants and other government officials."

Tilak was invited to give lectures at many places in England. Wherever he went, he informed the people of his ideological stand in politics. He addressed the National Liberal Club, the Positivist Club, the India Society, the Fabian Society and other institutions. Tilak's speeches were informative, language restrained and analysis of the political situation logical. After one of his speeches, a political leader in England remarked, "How can we call him a radical? He is a liberal."

The Government of India passed the Rowlatt Act, which was blatantly a repressive measure. It evoked protest even in England. On 1st May 1919, the Labour Party organised a meeting in the Hyde Park to pass a resolution condemning the Rowlatt Act. Tilak could not attend the meeting because his foot had sprained. On 3rd May, the Labour Party held another meeting where Tilak made a very effective and forceful speech to a mammoth gathering. He went to Cambridge on 5th June 1919 to address the Hindi Majlis, an organisation of Indian students. He asked of them, "You will come back to India after acquiring higher education and after developing an acquaintance with thoughts which have grown in the atmosphere of freedom. However, how many of you have thought of dedicating your lives to the service of you motherland?" Tilak also gave a talk to Indian students at Oxford.

While in England, Tilak and barrister Baptista wrote a pamphlet, *Self-Determination*. Tilak distributed thousands of copies of this pamphlet to political parties, political workers, thinkers, journals, periodicals and to libraries. The draft of this pamphlet was written by barrister Baptista. Written in a lucid style and logical manner, it proved very effective. The contents presented a forceful exposition on Tilak's political ideology. It ran as follows: "It is argued that India is not a nation but a congeries of nations, not a country but a continent. These epigrams obscure the truth and delude the ignorant...Castes do not divide a nation any more than what the classes do in England. Creeds do not rend a nation into two. If they did, religious tolerance would be impossible to see. The whole of India is one nation. There is unity in diversity." The pamphlet made a scathing attack on the argument that England was the political trustee of India. "As a tree cannot grow in shade, so a nation cannot really prosper under an overshadowing trusteeship. Trustees are appointed for minors. India is not an infant nation, nor a primitive people; but the eldest brother in the family of man, noted for her philosophy and for being the home of religions that cover half of mankind."

On the Reforms Scheme which suggested granting of responsibility to Indians step by step, the pamphlet read as follows: "To think of granting autonomy step by step, is a slur on India's ability to govern herself." After arguing India's case in a convincing manner, the pamphlet concluded by adding: "Upon the principles we have discussed, we claim that the British Parliament should enact a complete constitution for India, conceding autonomy within the British Commonwealth, with transitory provisions for bringing the entire constitution into full operation within the time specified by the Congress and the Muslim League." The concept of autonomy was explained as follows: "The Indian peninsula should be divided into a number of provinces on the principles of nationality...The form of government should be democratic. The provinces should be grouped to form the united states of India, with democratic central executive and legislative bodies having the powers to deal with the internal affairs of the whole of India. The united states of India should form a unit of the British Commonwealth with status equal to that of any other constituent unit thereof."

Tilak bore the entire expenses for the pamphlet. He also published leaflets at the time of the general elections in England by trying to reach the voters through the leaflets. Various captions were given to the leaflets, such as 'Remember India', 'Self-Determination for Whom?' 'But What about India?' etc.

At the end of the World War, a peace conference was held at Paris, under the presidentship of George Clemenceau of France. On 11th March 1919, Tilak sent a memorandum to George Clemenceau, requesting that India be given a representation on the peace conference and the Indian representative should be elected by the people. The memorandum made the plea for India's right to self-determination, and stated that the Indians had the ability to conduct the affairs of their country in a democratic way. "From the point of view of peace in Asia, and from the point of view of peace in the world, it is absolutely necessary that India should be self-governed internally and be made the bulwark of liberty in the east."

The evidence that Tilak gave before the Joint Parliamentary Committee in England was an important aspect of the work done by him. He presented India's case in a logical and convincing manner. He pointed out the flaws in the Reforms Bill as proposed by

Montague and emphatically stated, "In the ensuing fifteen years, India must get a complete responsible government." He suggested immediate grant of provincial autonomy to India, with the administration of the provinces being entrusted to elected representatives of the people. He also pleaded that some departments at the Centre should be administered by representatives of the people, leaving the control of the Department of Foreign Relations with the British government so that the interests of the British Empire are properly protected. Tilak expressed the confidence that if the people of India were given the right to vote, they would use it in a responsible manner. He concluded his evidence with the following words: "The inclusion of the declaration of right to statute is absolutely necessary."

During his stay in England, Tilak established contacts with the Labour Party. The 1917 communist revolution in Russia, wherein the Czarist regime was overthrown and the Bolsheviks come to power, provided enough food for thought to Tilak. He cultivated friendly relations with Sidney Webb, one of the prominent leaders of the Fabian Socialist Movement. Web enlightened Tilak on the communist revolution. Tilak absorbed all the information quietly because he thought it necessary to be reticent in England. However, his mind was busy studying and analysing the economic and social forces which had given momentum to the movement against the tyranny of the Czar and had culminated in the revolution led by Lenin.

Lokamanya Tilak also thought it necessary to develop contacts with America and educate the Americans on the political aspirations of the Indians. He gave five thousand pounds to Lala Lajpat Rai and Dr N.S. Hardikar and asked them to proceed to America in order to enlist the support of some Americans to the cause of India. After one year, Lala Lajpat Rai sent a report to Tilak on the work done by him in America and how he had utilised a part of the amount given to him, by Tilak. Dr Hardikar wrote to say that the Hindus and Muslims in America, who had migrated from India, were united and lived in harmony with each other.

Tilak wanted to propagate the Indian cause because he felt that India was not properly understood by the world. Though his field of action was essentially politics, he was very proud of India's cultural heritage and thus chose Rabindranath Tagore to go to England and America as a cultural envoy. He offered to give 50,000 rupees to Tagore which prompted the latter to write: "Lokamanya Tilak surprised me with his request that I should proceed to Europe with 50,000 rupees which he was ready to offer me. My surprise was still greater when Tilak assured me that he did not want me to carry out any propaganda. He wanted me to be my true self and serve humanity and consequently India in my own way. This proposal from Tilak is the highest honour that I have received from my countryman. It reveals to me the greatness of his personality. His ideal of the fulfilment of India's destiny is so wide that it has ample room for a dreamer of dreams, even for a 'music-maker'."

When Tilak was in England, the Government of India passed the Rowlatt Act to restrict civil liberties. This evoked a sharp reaction from the Indians. Gandhiji decided to go on *satyagraha* against the Rowlatt Act. The Governor of Punjab, in a bid to crush the agitation against the Rowlatt Act, resorted to repressive measures which culminated in the bloody and inhuman massacres of thousands at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. As Tilak was away in England he could not do anything. However, he condemned the

Rowlatt Act. He was deeply upset at the massacre at Jallianwala Bagh. He met Montague, the Secretary of State for India, requesting him to put a stop to the inhuman punishments meted out to the people under the martial law promulgated in Punjab, and release all those arrested during the agitation!

On 6th November 1919, Lokamanya Tilak, along with his colleagues, left for India and reached Bombay on 26th November. He issued the following statement in Bombay: “The Reforms Bill has given us very inadequate reforms as far as our political rights are concerned. However, there is no reason to despair. The Labour Party has given us the assurance to move our Home Rule Bill in Parliament. We need not therefore reject the Reforms Bill, even though it is unsatisfactory. We should accept what we have got and strive for getting more. We must not give up our fight, because if *we* are complacent, we shall lose our chances for securing greater political rights. When I was in England, I was informed about the happenings here. My only regret is that when Gandhi launched the *satyagraha* against the Rowlatt Act, I was not there to participate in it.”

It was decided to hold the next session of the Congress at Amritsar on 27th December 1919. The dark shadows of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre still lurked over Punjab, and the brave, patriotic workers of the Congress in Punjab decided to make the session a success. On the eve of the session, some leaders like Dr Kitchlu, Satyapal and others, who had been convicted under martial law, were released. They were given a warm reception. Swami Shraddhanand, who was the chairman of the reception committee, said in his welcome address; “Tilak Maharaj has taught us to accept what we have got till now and carry on our fight for getting more.” Motilal Nehru, who presided over the session, said in his presidential address, “The Reforms Bill does not conform to the demands made by the Congress. But we should not reject it. Due to the Reforms Bill we have some rights and new avenues for serving our country have opened. We should exercise the rights we have got and strive for getting those which we must still obtain.”

Opinions varied on the Reforms Bill. Gandhiji did not want the word ‘disappointing’ to be used for the Bill. Mrs Besant and some moderates welcomed the Bill heartily. It was only the radical leaders who rejected the Reforms Bill. Speaking on the resolution, Lokamanya Tilak clarified his stand of supporting responsive co-operation by saying that he was opposed to unconditional co-operation as there should be an opportunity for opposing the government whenever necessary. In the final resolution it was stated that the Reforms Bill was disappointing and as such Tilak’s position of responsive co-operation was accepted.

As far as the ideal of *swarajya* was concerned Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi shared identical views. However/ there was a difference between their temperaments and mode of action. When Gandhi returned to India from South Africa he met eminent political leaders of India and made the following observation: “Tilak is like an ocean/ but Gokhale is like the Ganges; the Ganges took me to her bosom.” At the Lucknow session of the Congress Gandhi could see for himself Tilak’s popularity which was at its peak. After the Lucknow Congress Gandhiji went to Champaran in Bihar to launch the *satyagraha* for securing the just rights of the Indian plantation workers. He succeeded in his mission. Lokamanya supported this struggle and appreciated Gandhiji’s achievements. However, while Gandhiji regarded *satyagraha* as his political philosophy, Tilak believed that *satyagraha* was one of the means to be used in the struggle for *swarajya*. Tilak felt that

different means should be adopted in different situations while carrying on the struggle for *swarajya*.

In 1917, Shrimati Avantikabai Gokhale/ a writer from Bombay wrote Gandhiji's biography in Marathi and requested Lokamanya Tilak to write the foreword to the book. Tilak was busy selecting the delegation to be taken to England. Despite his busy schedule, he read the book and wrote the following preface: "Gandhi's life has a message for the people and must be emulated by them. The reason for this is not difficult to seek. In this world/ man can influence life around him through his actions and his efforts and succeed mainly on account of his character and integrity... Gandhi's life can really be the ideal to be followed by the common people." In the next paragraph, Lokamanya Tilak referred to his philosophy of doing work without expecting any reward and praised Gandhi for working ceaselessly towards his noble goal without caring for the results. That was a lesson to be learnt from the life of Gandhi. Tilak further wrote that it was necessary to acquire political power in one's own hands in order to initiate all-round development of the country and expressed the hope that Gandhiji too would share his opinion. Tilak concluded by stating his idea on the duties of a patriot and "Gandhi has performed his duty to the motherland in an excellent manner and thus earned the respect and praise of his people."

Tilak's views on Gandhiji's concept of non-co-operation were as follows: "The means of *satyagraha* can be adopted but it is not easy to state whether it can be used in all situations and whether it would succeed under all circumstances. However/ it must be granted that *satyagraha* is indeed a noble method." While concluding his preface/ Tilak wrote: "Gandhiji's two outstanding qualities are his unflinching loyalty to truth and his spiritual strength. This biography of Gandhi would influence the readers to develop in them a noble outlook."

After the Congress session at Amritsar, Gandhi wrote an editorial in the *Young India* under the title 'Reforms Resolution'. Tilak after reading the editorial, wrote the following letter to Gandhiji: Dear Sir,

I am sorry to see that in your article, 'Reforms Resolution', in the last issue, you have represented me as holding what I consider 'everything fair in politics'. I write this to you to say that my view is not correctly represented herein. Politics is a game of worldly people and not of *sadhus* and instead of the maxim 'Anger should be won over with love', as preached by Buddha, I prefer to rely on the maxim of Shri Krishna who said, 'I treat humans equally when they seek refuge in me'. That explains the entire difference and also the meaning of the phrase 'responsive co-operation'. Both methods are equally honest and righteous, but one is more suited to this world than the other. Any further explanation can be found in my *Gita-Rahasya*. Poona city Yours etc., 18.1.1920 B.G.Tilak

Gandhiji's comment on this letter of Lokamanya Tilak was as follows: "I naturally feel the greatest diffidence about joining issues with Lokamanya in matters involving questions of interpretations of religious works. But there are things in or about which instinct transcends even interpretation. The text from the *Bhagawad Gita* shows to me how the principle of conquering hate by love, untruth by truth, can and must be applied. If it be true that God metes out the same treatment as we do to others, it follows that if we

escape condign punishment, we must not repay anger with anger, but gentleness even for anger. And this is the law not for the unworldly but essentially for the worldly.”

Gandhi regarded Gokhale as his political guru. Gokhale’s view that politics must have a moral basis was regarded by Gandhiji as his goal and he laid special emphasis on the need for maintaining purity in thoughts and actions while serving the country because it could only be adopted by the chosen few who had an extraordinary intelligence and a spotless character. Gandhi was also conscious of the fact that Lokamanya, through his four-point programme—*swadeshi*, boycott, national education and *swarajya*—had succeeded in involving the common people in his struggle by providing a wider base to the movement. Gandhi invariably preached that as many Indians as possible should participate in the freedom struggle and that every one should be prepared to sacrifice something of his own for winning *swarajya*. He told the nation that without people’s participation and sacrifice, India could not hope to win freedom. From this it is evident that he was a follower of Lokamanya Tilak and regarded him as his guide in making India’s struggle a ‘people’s movement’. Both of them had enormous faith in the strength that lay in the common man’s sacrifice, and in this regard Gandhi carried aloft the torch handed over to him by Tilak. The only difference was that Gandhi believed in the struggle *forwarnjya* to be carried on through *satyagraha* as it could help arouse the common man and induce him to join the freedom struggle.

After the Congress session at Amritsar, Tilak concentrated on organising the people and increasing the strength of the Home Rule League. On 30th January 1920, a meeting was held in Bombay to felicitate the famous Shaikat Ali and Mohammad AH brothers. Tilak, while presiding over the meeting, said, ‘The *khilafat* question must be solved by the government in accordance with the wishes of the Muslims. At this juncture we are prepared to help our Muslim brethren. I shall do for the Muslims all that I can.

In a meeting of the Home Rule League at Poona, it was decided to launch a Congress Democratic Party. Tilak published the manifesto for the party and justified its formation by saying that the Congress was a national platform while the Congress Democratic Party would always be loyal to the Congress and follow its democratic style of functioning. He declared that on the *khilafat* question the Congress Democratic Party would support the Muslims. The main-festo stated: “The ideal of the Congress Democratic Party is the formation of a responsible government for India in which the administration would be run by the representatives of the people. The Congress Democratic Party would carry on its struggle to achieve these ideals and its programme through three means — educate, agitate and organise.” Lokamanya Tilak as the party’s spokesman declared that the Congress Democratic Party would create political consciousness among the people, continue the struggle and put in organised efforts for achieving *swarajya*. On 27th May 1920, a meeting of the All India Congress Committee was held at Benares. In the meeting Gandhiji announced his decision to launch the Non-Co-operation Movement. His clarion call stirred the entire nation.

On 24th July 1920, Tilak’s 64th birthday was celebrated in Poona, after which he left for Bombay where Mahatma Gandhi met him. Gandhi has reported what Lokamanya Tilak said to him about non-co-operation: “I approve of the programme of non-co-operation. But I am not sure to what extent people would be with us in the Non-Co-operation Movement. I wish you well. I shall whole-heartedly support you if the

people respond to your call.” Tilak also said, “I believe that we should be a step ahead of the people, but not too far ahead. If the leader is a little ahead of the followers, he can take them along with him.” In this context, Tilak talked to Krishnaji Prabhakar Khadilkar, one of his close associates. From what Khadilkar has reported, it appears that Tilak held Gandhiji in high esteem and trusted -his capacity for impressing people with his ideas and urging them into participating in India’s freedom struggle. Tilak, however, had not decided on what role he could play in the Non-Co-operation Movement. On 26th July, he had slight temperature. In spite of the fever, he went out with Diwan Chamanlal to discuss Gandhiji’s proposed plan for non-cooperation. Tilak said that he believed in non-co-operation but was not sure of what form the movement would take. He said, “The movement for *swarajya* in India has to be through united effort. We must see that all the soldiers of democracy are ready to fight together” So engrossed were they in their discussion that while walking together they ignored the drizzle. The next day Tilak had high fever and in a day it developed into pneumonia. On 27th July, Tilak fell unconscious. Eminent doctors were called in to attend to him but he failed to respond to any treatment He recovered consciousness on 29th July only to utter a few sentences about India’s future: “I am quite sure that India will not prosper unless she gets *swarajya*.” His condition worsened after midnight. On 1st August, Lokamanya Tilak breathed his last.

On Tilak’s death Gandhiji wrote in the *Young India*: “Lokamanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak is no more. The voice of the lion is hushed. His patriotism was a passion with him. He knew no religion but love for his country. He was a born democrat. For us he will go down for posterity as a maker of modern India. They will revere his memory as a man who lived for them and died for them. Let us erect for the only Lokamanya of India an imperishable monument by weaving into our own lives his bravery, his simplicity, his wonderful industry and his love for his country. “May God grant peace to his soul.”

6. SCHOLAR AND UNIQUE LEADER

The pursuit of knowledge was, for Lokamanya Tilak, a perennial source of joy. He would often say, “If I had been born in free India, I would have become a professor of mathematics and dedicated my life to research.” This was not a casual observation made in a light-hearted manner; it was the expression of an inner urge. When studying in college, Tilak was never happy with those teachers who taught only from the viewpoint of examinations. Tilak appreciated the lectures of Prof. Chhatre who was keen on teaching the fundamentals of mathematics to his students. When Tilak started teaching in college, he adopted the same method and therefore his style of teaching was not very much appreciated by the average student. After resigning from the Fergusson College, Tilak jumped into the political fray which left him no time to devote to mathematics. However, as editor of the *Kesari*, he was given to carefully studying the subject he proposed to write on in the next editorial. Facts were always sacred to him and as an educator of public opinion, he made it a point to explain the subject with the help of facts; he was a pastmaster in marshalling his arguments in a logical manner. Owing to his training in mathematics, he believed in explaining concepts rather than on imparting the information. Despite his busy schedule, he always found time for reading scholarly books on indology and mathematics. Once, on a Diwali day, he was deeply absorbed in reading

the latest issue of *Indian Antiquary*. His nephew asked him, “Dada, don’t you enjoy yourself even during Diwali?” Tilak replied, “I am enjoying myself. You like playing cards and enjoy other games too. While reading this magazine and such other books, I get the same pleasure that you get from the games you play.” Tilak not only read books but analysed them critically; he was never satisfied with mediocre books. He enjoyed books where original treatment was given to the subject. When he particularly liked a book, he would be seen deeply absorbed, in a contemplative mood. In such a state he would be unaware of others’ presence. His sharp intellect prods him to scale the highest peaks of knowledge. He had a peculiar fascination for the unknown and deep desire to come to grips with topics which had hitherto been uncharted. He considered the *Vedas* in many respect a challenge to human intelligence. He was impressed by the antiquity of the *Vedas* and wanted to find out the exact date when they could have been written. He studied the *Vedangjyotish* — astronomy as expounded by the *Vedas*. He pursued the line of inquiry and arrived at a new thesis. He wrote the book *Orion* in 1892. Tilak made a summary of this book and sent it to the Oriental Conference where scholars of international repute had gathered. In the conference only such research papers were accepted which were original works of high merit. Scholars scrutinised and read the essay written by Tilak and were impressed by its originality. The Oriental Conference later published the research papers and Tilak’s *Orion* was included in the collection.

In 1893 the *Orion* was published in book form. Normally in research a whole lot of information is collected on the basis of which a proposition is put forth. But there is another category of research scholars who sometimes falter and find a particular problem difficult to solve. Undaunted, they take up the challenge and while searching for a solution, truth dawns on them in a flash. Tilak, while reading the *Bhagaivad Gita* came across a verse which troubled his mind. He was not satisfied with the interpretation of this line as given by other scholars; he wanted to interpret the statement with the help of *Vedangjyotish*. After four years of research, he arrived at a conclusion and decided to write the *Orion*. He has mentioned this in his preface to the book. The date and the time of the *Vedas* could not be pin-pointed even by eminent scholars of indology. Prof. Max Muller, an eminent German scholar, had done extensive research on the subject. His methodology was that of linguistics. He studied the changes in the Sanskrit language during the different periods of ancient history and deduced the period in which the *Vedas* could have been written. Max Muller divided the Vedic times into four periods—*chhand kal*, *mantra kal*, *brahma kal* and *sutra kal*. He put forth the thesis that each period comprises of two hundred years and therefore the complete Vedic period was of eight hundred years. Hence the *Vedas* were written about five hundred years before the times of Gautam Buddha, i.e. about 1200 B.C. Though Tilak had high regard for Prof. Max Muller’s research ability, he found the linguistic method adopted by Muller rather vague and unacceptable.

Tilak used the *Vedangjyotish* in a highly original manner. Eminent scholars have summarised his thesis in the *Orion* as follows: “The earth moves round itself and also round the sun. However, we feel that the sun changes its position and twice during a year man gets the illusion that the sun has moved over his head. The time when man feels that the sun is passing over his head to the north is called *vasant sampat* in the *Vedangjyotish*. The time during which the sun moves over his head to the south is called *sharad sampat*. The planets which are near the sun during the *vasant sampat* change their positions and in

the *Vedangjyotish*, astronomers have calculated the time regarding the positions of the different planets in a very accurate and exact manner. Tilak pointed out that in the *Rigveda* it was mentioned that the *vasant sampat* took place in the Orion or the *mrigashirsh nakshatra*. He also drew the inference that as depicted in the *Bhagavad Gita* the *vasant sampat* took place during the *mrigashirsh nakshatra* (constellation). Tilak made mathematical calculations and drew the following conclusions:

- 1) Pre-Orion period—6000 to 4000 B.C.
- 2) The Orion period—4000 to 2500 B.C.
- 3) The *Krittika* period—2500 to 1400 B.C.
- 4) The pre-Buddhist period—1400 to 500 B.C.

Tilak's thesis was based mainly on the *Vedangjyotish* and he presented mythological evidence in support of his thesis. He found a striking resemblance between Greek mythology and Indian mythology. He stated that the other nomenclature given to *mrigashirsh nakshatra* was *agrshayani* which is akin to Orion in the Greek language. Tilak's *Orion* was translated into Marathi by K.L. Ogale. Before writing the *Orion*, Tilak discussed his ideas about the antiquity of the *Vedas* with Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit, an eminent scholar and authority on Indian astronomy. Dr Bloomfield, a renowned orientalist, wrote on the *Orion*: "I confess that the author of *Orion* convinced me on all essential points." He paid tributes to Tilak for his new perspective on the age of the *Rigveda*. Dr R.N. Dandekar, an eminent indologist, has however, not agreed with the conclusion drawn by Tilak. He has pointed out that modern scholars have taken the help of anthropology and archaeology for deciding the time in which the *Vedas* were written. But, he has paid tributes to Tilak's research because pursuit of truth is a long process in which generations of scholars contribute by adopting different modes of research. Tilak was instrumental in paving the way for research scholars who were to come after him.

In the concluding part of the preface to the *Orion*, Tilak wrote: "Owing to my other preoccupations it may not be possible for me to pursue this subject in the future." However in 1899, while undergoing imprisonment on the charge of sedition, Tilak had enough solitude to read books. Prof. Max Muller sent him a copy of the *Rigveda*—a copy he had edited. While reading it critically, Tilak did not agree with Max Muller's interpretation of the *richa* which said that many days passed before the sun rose on the horizon. While pondering over the probable meaning of this *richa*, it suddenly occurred to him that the *richa* must have been written at a place where for six months during winter there were long nights. Hence the statement that 'many days preceded the sunrise' could only be made by those who lived near the North Pole. However, Tilak did not regard this brilliant idea as the final truth. On his release, he decided to study all that he could find on the subject. Making use of the geological evidence collected while studying geology, he arrived at the final thesis to write the *Arctic Home of the Vedas*. Tilak went to Sinhgad during the summer of 1902 and dictated the entire voluminous text to Gogate, who accompanied him as a writer. There were thirteen chapters in the book containing a scientific description of the North Pole with evidence to support the statement that in ancient times the North Pole was inhabited by man. In the ninth chapter, Tilak gave a new interpretation to the mythological legend on the war between Indra and the demon Vritra. Tilak stated that the origin of this war was the continuous night which lasted for a long period and the day which followed it, also continued for a long period. Tilak then d

rew the inference that since such a phenomenon could only be seen on the North Pole, the legend must have been written somewhere in that region. In the thirteenth chapter, all evidence given in the earlier chapters was summarised and the conclusion drawn that the Aryans had their original home in the Arctic region.

Prof. Warren, an American scholar, expressed a favourable opinion on Tilak's thesis. Of course, there were some scholars who did not agree with him. Narayanrao Pavgi of Poona wrote a book in which he refuted the thesis put forth by Tilak. After a few years, when research scholars studied the anthropological evidence, the thesis that the Aryans were the first to inhabit the Arctic Circle was not accepted. After considering the linguistic, anthropological, archaeological and cultural-historical evidence it was concluded that the North Kirgis Steppes between the Urals and the Altai was the home of the Indo-Europeans. Dr Dan-dekar, an eminent authority on Indology, has observed: "In spite of certain limitations, the *Arctic Home* of Lokamanya Tilak, contained many original views, and was a brilliant piece of research. It is to be appreciated for its rich possibilities rather than for the actual conclusions."

None can deny Tilak's enjoyment on reading the *Vedas* and other ancient literature and also in giving new interpretations to problems which baffled scholars. He did not base his study on preconceived notions. He was very proud of the ancient Indian culture which was a perennial source of inspiration for him. No doubt his sorrow was great on seeing India's degradation during his time for her noble heritage lay neglected by the world. He felt deeply hurt at the arrogant attitude of the British imperialists who claimed it the 'white man's burden' to civilise the backward eastern nations and lift them up from their downtrodden state. Tilak, while fighting for India's political rights, also wanted to restore India to its past glory and ancient cultural heritage and prove how misplaced British arrogance was. However, it needs to be clarified that he did not carry on his research to prove how great ancient Indian culture was; he simply regarded truth as sacred. Had he begun with the aim of establishing India's cultural supremacy, he would have supposed facts which would have gone against his proposition. He never distorted the truth and in his pursuit of truth, with the help of the *Vedangjyotish* and geology, he cited only that evidence which had stood the test of science. He made a comparative study of the mythological legends in the *Vedas* with those in the *Avesta* of the Parsis or with those in the Greek mythology. He mentioned only those legends which were similar and he did not indulge in flights of imagination. He was conscious of the fact that his research was imperfect, as is evident when he spoke to Dr Belwalkar, an eminent scholar: "I want to bring out the second edition, but it is necessary to study the latest books on Scandinavian mythology. If you agree to accompany me to Sinhgad for a month, we shall discuss the subject and make the necessary changes in the second edition of the *Arctic Home*."

The *Bhagavad Gita* was not merely a book to be studied, but it also influenced the work that he did in his life and the way in which he went about it. Tilak's philosophy of life had its roots in the *Bhagavad Gita*. In the preface to the *Gita-Rahasya*, he has cited when his association with the *Gita* began and how the relationship soon enveloped his entire being. He has written: "It is over forty-three years since I came in contact with the *Bhagavad Gita* for the first time. In 1872, my father was seriously ill and nearing his end. At that time, I had to read out to him the *Bhasha-nivrutti*— a commentary on the *Bhagavad Gita*, It was not possible for me to understand the meaning of the *Gita* because

I was then only sixteen-years old. However, at that impressionable age, my interest in the *Gita* was aroused. Later on, when I studied English and Sanskrit, I read the *bhashyas* on the *Bhagawad Gita* in Sanskrit and some commentaries in English too. I also read the writings of Marathi scholars who have given different interpretations of the *Gita*.”

Understanding the meaning of a philosophical text like that of the *Gita* is possible with a certain amount of intellect; but a genuine comprehension of the *Gita* is possible only in the light of one’s experiences in life. Tilak, after the age of thirty, threw himself headlong into the struggle against the British rule. He had to pass through many trying situations while striving to secure political rights for India. During this period, while reading the *Bhagawad Gita*, particularly the discourse given to Arjuna by Shri Krishna, Tilak received the inspiration to carry on his struggle against a mighty opponent. He had read and marvelled at Shankaracharya’s intellect as displayed in the *Shankar Bhashya*. But he felt it necessary to delve deep into the meaning of the *Bhagawad Gita*, as expounded by the Shankaracharya. He was not convinced by other commentaries on the *Gita* and therefore, set aside all the different interpretations, and read and reread it without any commentary on it. He pondered on it and analysed every verse to extract the essence of the message conveyed. He had lived the life of a *kannayogi* and was convinced that the message of the *Gita* was not *sanyasa* but *kfirmayoga*. It is difficult to say whether Tilak saw in the *Bhagawad Gita* reflection of the *karmayoga* as practised by him throughout his life or whether due to his deep study of the *Gita* he became a *karmayogi*. One thing is certain that there was constant interaction between his life and the *Bhagawad Gita*. He derived inspiration from the *Gita* and had deep faith in the words ‘action without expecting any fruit’ as preached in the *Gita*. Lokamanya’s life was an extraordinary blend of thought, contemplation and action. All the three processes were intermingled. The ideological basis of his political life placed his actions on a noble plane and his undaunted spirit chiselled his mind. This was possible because of his long association with the *Bhagawad Gita* since the young age of sixteen till when he was in prison at Man-dalay. Tilak says in the preface to the *Gita-Rahasya*: “All these years I was thinking on the message of the *Bhagawad Gita*. Contemplation on the subject gave me peace of mind, while preoccupation with the subject gave me a rare happiness. On completing the *Gita-Rahasya*, I felt as if my association with the *Gita* was over and it made me sad at heart.” These touching words give expression to Tilak’s attachment to the *Bhagawad Gita*, an attachment which continued till the end of his life. His outlook on life became positive and he took to a series of actions. He felt that most people around him were fatalists, resigned to their fate. He therefore wanted to reach out to them and communicate the message of the *Gita* so that their outlook on life could change. After thinking and contemplating for years, he was convinced that Lord Krishna after his discourse had asked Arjuna to follow him and fight against his foes because it was necessary for a person to act and not renounce life. The *Gita-Rahasya* was expression of Tilak’s mature mind wherein he expressed his philosophy of life. In the *Orion* and the *Arctic Home*, Tilak’s extraordinary intelligence found expression. Just as a poet has the irrepressible urge to convey his joy at beauty, an idealist who has pursued his ideals throughout his life, similarly feels the desire to convey the joy he experiences while pursuing his goal. Once the ideals crystallised in his mind, Tilak made earnest efforts at giving shape to them. Being a man of action he wanted his countrymen to follow the path

of action and strive for attainment of *swarajya*. He wrote the *Gita-Rahasya* because he wanted the people to become *purusharthis* and activists and join the freedom struggle.

In 1902, Tilak, in a talk to the students of Morris College at Nagpur, expounded on the central theme of the *Gita-Rahasya*. He explained the concept of action without expecting any fruit and exhorted them to practise the teachings of the *Bhagawad Gita*. In the *Gita-Rahasya*, Tilak discussed the different philosophic points of view and stated that action was different to self-aggrandisement because it was performed in a selfless manner. He supported Shankaracharya's views on metaphysics but differed from him as far as the ethics were concerned. Shankaracharya considered ethics from the point of view of individual emancipation and therefore advocated *sanyasa* while Tilak viewed ethics in the context of social action and therefore advocated *karmayoga*. Tilak emphasised three aspects of the message conveyed by the *Bhagawad Gita*, viz. *karmayoga*, *lokasangraha* and *bhakti*. Tilak was known to the world as a practical politician, while Sarojini Naidu considered him "a born idealist perpetually seeking some unchanging reality in a world full of shifting disillusionment and despair." The *Bhagawad Gita* illumined Tilak's path in life and provided him with an incentive to work. In his life, private and public, he must have experienced doubts, agonies and even despair; but his belief in the *Bhagawad Gita* freed him from the bonds of his actions to acquire a philosophic peace in life.

The *Gita-Rahasya* was the finest chapter in Tilak life, which was a rare blend of perennial pursuit of knowledge and determined political action. It was neither a commentary nor an attempt at a novel interpretation; it was an expression of Tilak's faith and a quintessence of his experience.

He wrote the *Orion* and the *Arctic Home* in English. Had he written these two books in Marathi, his research on ancient Indian culture and the *Vedas* would not have reached scholars of indology in other countries. He was conscious of the originality of his research and was confident that eminent scholars would take note of it and express their reactions on it. Tilak wanted to be in the mainstream of research on indology. He was aware that some of his findings would even be refuted, but it was his earnest desire that in the process of discussion, new light should be thrown on the problems tackled by him. He also wanted to prove the superiority of ancient Indian culture over the modern materialist culture of the West. Tilak wrote the *Gita-Rahasya* in Marathi. Had he been able to write it in Hindi he would have written the *Gita-Rahasya* in Hindi too. He was aware that Hindus had implicit faith in the *Bhagawad Gita*. He also knew that Shankaracharya's stress on *sanyasa* and Dhyaneswar's on *bhakti* as constituted the central theme of the *Bhagawad Gita* had greatly influenced the minds of the people. Tilak had great regard for both these saints, but he did not agree with their interpretation of the *Gita*. He felt that as a result of these influences, people had resigned themselves to their lot which prevented them from facing the challenges of life. He believed that once the people accepted his interpretation that action without reward was the message of the *Gita*, a qualitative change could come about in their outlook on life and they would be prepared to fight against any injustice. Tilak, thus, addressed the people through the *Gita-Rahasya* and appealed to them to free themselves from the bonds of slavery. The *Gita-Rahasya* is a philosophic treatise written in a direct and lucid style. There is perfect harmony between the style and the content of the ideas. The discourse is nowhere obscure. It is a monumental work which has enriched Marathi literature and made a significant contribution to philosophical writings in Indian languages.

It is not easy to explain the content of the research work done by Lokamanya Tilak. In 1904, he gave a talk on 'Chaldean and *Bharatiya Vedas*'. In 1917, he wrote a long essay for the Dr Bhandarkar Commemoration Volume pointing out the similarities between the contents of Chaldean literature and the *Vedas*.

Sankhya is an important *darshan* in Hindu philosophy. Ishwarkrishna wrote the *Sankhya Karika*, an important book interpreting the *sankhya* philosophy. According to him his book contained seventy stanzas, while the Latin, French, German and English translations of the book carried only sixty-nine of them, Tilak meticulously studied the *Sankhya Karika* and pointed out that the sixty-second stanza was missing. He wrote a stanza and logically proved how it fitted into the pattern of the *Sankhya Karika*. The essay written by Lokamanya Tilak, 'A Missing Verse in *Sankhya Karika*' is a highly original piece of research showing a critical study of the *sankhya* philosophy. Shankar Balkrishna Dikshit, a renowned research scholar who explained in his book the concept of *Vedangjyotish*, failed to explain the meanings of certain twelve stanzas. Significant research work on the subject was done by Vyankatesh Bapuji Ketkar. Tilak studied the subject critically and threw new light on the Vedic calendar. His interest in astronomy made him conversant with the latest trends in the subject. He enjoyed explaining the intricacies of the *Vedangjyotish*.

Due to his hectic political life, Tilak could not find the time to write books on subjects like astronomy and Hindu *dharma shastra* in which he was deeply interested. When he was in England in 1918, he kept a busy schedule. All his time was devoted to the preparation of a memorandum to be given to the Peace Conference and collect relevant evidence to be submitted before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. As he was past sixty, the work he had undertaken was too strenuous. But he found time to go to the library of the India Office to read and transcribe the ancient brick inscriptions which throw light on Chaldean and Assyrian civilisations. His friend was Dr Thomas, an authority on Assyrian civilisation and with whom he discussed the subject for hours together. Dadasaheb Khaparde, a close friend of Tilak, once asked him, "After a day's strenuous work how you turn to such difficult subjects?" Tilak replied, "The political work is strenuous and therefore to get over my fatigue, I read books I like and can discuss with scholars like Dr Thomas. Conversation with him is a source of great relaxation." This remark throws light on the rare joy he got from subjects like mathematics and indology. Had Tilak been born in free India, he would have devoted his life to research in these subjects which, though difficult for others, satisfied the cravings of his extraordinary intellect. He did not like to go on an oft-trodden path. With his fascination for the unknown, he pursued his original method of inquiry so as to reach the unknown. And yet, despite his rare research talent, he suppressed his urge to explore truth on the many intricate problems present in indology because he chose to devote his energies to the struggle for India's freedom. He felt that so long as his motherland remained in bondage, he could not seek fulfilment in the field of knowledge. Duty to his country came first. Just as Tilak was not interested in spiritual salvation or *moksha* for himself, he was also not interested in scaling the peaks of knowledge as an intellectual so long as India was not free. In fact he viewed intellectual gratification as being akin to the efforts of a *sanyasi* who seeks *moksha* (salvation) for himself. Pained and agonised at India's plight he regarded it his foremost duty to strive for emancipating India from the yoke of British rule. He, therefore, sacrificed his desire for research in order to plunge headlong into the freedom struggle. In this respect,

Tilak could be compared to an artist who gives up his pursuit of art to obey the call of some duty in life. This was the noblest act of his life; the highest kind of sacrifice. Conflict must have been there regarding the choice between knowledge and action, *dnyan* and *karma*, but Tilak chose to give priority to a life of action for liberating India; but he did not renounce the pursuit of knowledge. His leisure hours in the midst of hectic political activity and those during his days in jail were devoted to pursuit of knowledge. Though he was a man of action, he was never intoxicated by action for its own sake. He first thought about the problem he faced, then studied its different aspects, read almost everything available on the subject, carefully considered the probable consequences of his decision and finally took a firm step of action. Tilak's actions marked the synthesis, of his two urges: one to pursue knowledge and the other, to lead a life of action. This was not an easy decision, but he took it and acted upon it.

He displayed scholarly learning while speaking and through his writings. He gave a number of speeches in order to make people politically conscious. He criticised and, when necessary, condemned the British government. But while doing this, he never distorted the truth. He was not a demagogue and nor did he get carried away by sentiments. He stated facts on which he based his conclusions. His editorials read like lessons given by a conscientious teacher. As editor of the *Kesari*, his writings educated the people, provided them information and taught them to think. His editorials had a fine pattern—a beginning, a middle and an ending. He first stated the facts about the problem, then presented his arguments in a logical manner before coming to the conclusion, which was always presented convincingly. He did not dictate his editorials till his thoughts and ideas were clear. He regarded journalism as a noble profession and religiously followed the ethics of journalism. In his efforts to enlighten his readers, he introduced some books and summarised them in such a manner as to create in the readers a desire to read the book. He wrote a comprehensive article on Dadabhai Naoroji's *Poverty and British Rule in India* and the introduction to William Digby's *Prosperous British India*. C.V. Vaidya, an eminent writer and scholar in Marathi, had written the voluminous book *Sartha, Sateep Mahabharata*. Tilak wrote seven articles on this book and discussed and analysed the various problems depicted in the *Mahabharata*. These articles showed Tilak's erudite scholarship and critical study of the epic. While reviewing Vaidya's book, he threw new light on it by giving an original interpretation of the different aspects of the *Mahabharata*. When writing on a topical subject, Tilak transcended the limitations of topicality to state his views which held perennial significance. His editorial, 'Constitutional or Legal' shows his capacity to raise a topical issue to the level of ideas. The purpose of the article was to criticise Gopal Krishna Gokhale who, after the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1906, made a fervent plea to adopt constitutional methods for carrying on the political struggle. Tilak in his editorial, while refuting Gokhale's arguments, wrote that constitutional methods could be adopted only in those countries where there was a constitution and where people enjoyed political rights as stipulated in the constitution. Tilak pointed out that India, under British rule, had no constitution and hence no constitutional methods. He further wrote that the only question was whether our methods were legal or illegal. He added that in many respects laws by an alien government tended to be tyrannical. He summed up the editorial by saying: "When law is divorced from morality, we should abide by morality, break the law if necessary and bravely accept the punishment for breaking the law." This observation of his raised the

discussion to a philosophical level. Later when Gandhiji launched the *satyagraha* movement, he openly appealed to the people to break the law because it was unethical. Tilak lived in the present but was way ahead in his ideas and put forth his ideas which would be significant for all times to come. Addison, the great English essayist has said, "Literature that does not last is journalism; journalism that lasts is literature." This holds true for Tilak as many of his editorials have stood the test of time and the ideas expressed in them are significant to this day.

The tributes which Tilak paid to his adversaries in the *Kesari* were also quite remarkable. In the article written on Justice Ranade, Agarkar and Gokhale, following their deaths, Tilak analysed the significance of their contribution to life in general. Without getting sentimental he showed his deep respect for contemporary thinkers and leaders and his understanding of their noble motives while serving the society. On Max Muller's and Herbert Spencer's deaths too, he paid excellent tributes to these eminent scholars and thinkers for their work in the field of knowledge. These articles have been appropriately described as "appreciation of eminent scholars by another great scholar".

Tilak's mind was enriched through wide reading, deep thinking and varied experiences. His writings were rich in content and never tended to be verbose. As a student of mathematics, he liked precision in the delineation of ideas. His style was lucid and direct. His method was first to impart information and then state his point of view emphatically. Tilak while trying to persuade the readers also made an effort to stimulate their thought process. As he dictated his editorials, these could never get bookish. They had the flavour of his public speeches, and incisiveness of style essentially aimed at influencing the audience. As he was serious by temperament, he never indulged in humorous writing. However, he had the bluntness which is a characteristic of the people of Konkan region in Maharashtra and therefore, some of his remarks evoked a smile. Sometimes Tilak was sarcastic in his ridicule of his opponents. The headings of his editorials were always appropriate and conveyed the thrust of his argument in an effective manner. On Rand's assassination when the government resorted to ruthless repression, Tilak wrote the editorial under the heading, 'Is the Government in its Senses?'

Tilak chose brevity and never was the one to waste his words. There was a dignity of style as particularly seen in the *Gita-Rahasya*. His style expressed his personality; forthright, outspoken, assertive, sometimes aggressive but keen on establishing a bond with the people with a view to involving them in the struggle for *svarajya*.

Svarajya was his goal and a multiplicity of means was the strategy he adopted for achieving it. However, it is necessary to understand his strategy. Among his contemporaries were the liberal leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Pherozeshah Mehta, Surendra Nath Bannerjea and others. They believed in moderate methods and insisted on constitutional means. They submitted important memoranda before the commissions appointed by the government and gave expression to the political aspirations of the people. Their arguments were always supported by facts.

Gokhale played a prominent role in the Central legislature by criticising the shortcomings of government policies and suggested ways through which justice could be ensured. Through his speeches and writings he made an effort to influence public opinion in England. The moderate leaders had a constructive approach but their faith in the justice

of the British rulers was misplaced. Tilak did not overrule the means and methods of the moderates. He was aware that during the initial phase of the struggle for freedom, work done through moderate methods had proved useful and so he was full of praise for Gokhale for the work he had done in England. However, Tilak believed that the politics of petition and prayers could never succeed/ and that political demands must be backed by political sanction created through joint action by the people. When Morley became the Secretary of State for India, Gokhale heartily welcomed the appointment because he hoped that a liberal thinker like Morley would be favourably inclined towards the Indians. But in his editorial in the *Kesari* under the title, 'Philosopher or a Diplomat?' Tilak pointed out that Morley was a liberal in England but an imperialist vis-a-vis the Indians. And his words proved to be so true! Tilak was a shrewd politician who insisted on using means appropriate to the situation. After 1916, he thought that while consolidating the political forces in India, he should adopt liberal methods in order to influence the British rulers and the public opinion in England. The work he did in England by giving evidence before the Parliamentary Committee, submitting a memorandum to the Peace Conference at Paris, distributing copies of the pamphlet entitled, *Self-Determination*—all this was on the lines followed by Gokhale. The difference between the two leaders was that while Tilak knew when to agitate, when to launch a political movement, when to pressurise the government and when to adopt moderate methods, Gokhale preferred to use moderate methods consistently, convinced as he was of British justice.

The moderates were on one end and the revolutionaries on another end of the political spectrum in India. The revolutionaries were young men who were determined to win *swarajya*, even if it meant armed revolt. Tilak had immense faith in the patriotism and courage of the revolutionaries, but was equally aware that the masses could not be expected to display the same courage as the revolutionaries. During the 1896 famine in Maharashtra, Tilak organised the peasants and succeeded in getting redressal of some of their grievances. He worked within the framework of law while strengthening the political base. He knew fully well that for building up a mass movement, he would have to keep away from those persons who advocated violence. It may be quite possible that Tilak knew about the group of revolutionaries led by Damodar Chapekar, but he neither encouraged nor advised them in any way. Tilak's belief was that one had the right to serve his motherland according to his own conscience. On his release from prison in 1901, Tilak offered all help to those who wanted to participate in the armed struggle. In 1904, he developed close contacts with Aurobindo Ghosh as he held him in high esteem. However, he was conscious that as a leader it was his responsibility to see that the young revolutionaries did not sacrifice their lives by acting in a rash manner. He helped them prepare for the revolution but warned them to keep away from insurrectionary or terrorist activities. His advice to revolutionaries was, "Keep your powder dry." When Aurobindo and his colleagues broke off with the moderate leaders, after the split in the Congress at Surat, Tilak decided not to desert the revolutionaries for he did not want them to be isolated.

On his release in 1914, he emerged as a popular leader. When the revolutionaries sought his advice on the future course of action, he sternly told them that the time was not yet ripe for revolutionary action. Acknowledged as 'Lokamanya' by the people, he

exercised his authority firmly. He did not rule out the possibility of using arms for winning *swarajya* but approved of preparing for a revolution but, not an armed revolt.

During the last phase of Tilak's life, Gandhiji emerged on the Indian political scene. Gandhiji had used the weapon of *satyagraha* in South Africa and he wanted to use the same means in India's struggle for *swarajya*. He was appreciative of Gandhiji's sentiments. He was in England when Gandhiji went on a *satyagraha* to protest against the Rowlatt Act. Tilak had condemned the Rowlatt Act in one of his public speeches in England. On his return to India, he said in an interview, "I regret that I was not in India to participate in the *satyagraha* launched by Gandhi." Later when Gandhiji pleaded for adoption of *satyagraha* as the method for fighting the British, some moderate leaders opposed him on the ground that it was unconstitutional. But Tilak, in his editorial in the *Kesari*, wrote: "A time there was when there existed a difference of opinion about the goal of the Congress. Dadabhai Naoroji as president of the Congress declared that *swarajya* was our goal and it was accepted by all. Now some people doubt whether *satyagraha* can be accepted as a means. But this problem would have to be resolved and means appropriate to the goal of *swarajya* would have to be accepted by all. *Satyagraha* is a powerful weapon." However, Tilak did not agree that *satyagraha* was the only means to be used. While speaking to Kaka Kalelkar, a disciple of Gandhi, Tilak observed that though he supported *satyagraha*, he was not sure whether in the struggle for *swarajya*, *satyagraha* could prove useful.

He considered the people's movement as the most effective means in the struggle for *swarajya*. No wonder that Tilak was called "the apostle of civil revolt".

Tilak was not just a man of action; his political actions were firmly rooted on sound ideas. He was influenced by the thoughts voiced by Mill and Spencer during the early period of his political life. On observing the society around him, Tilak was convinced that though the social structure of the Hindu society had certain faults, it somehow had an inner vitality. While accepting concepts like democracy, he felt that it would be improper to reject outright the traditional mode of life. He criticised those who borrowed ideas from the West and tried to transplant them in India. He wanted new ideas to be grafted on the traditional way of life. In one of his speeches, he pleaded that nationalism should be grafted on the Indian's inherent love for his motherland. Tilak thus wanted to blend the old with the new. He was conscious of the conservative nature of the Indian society and was confident that the people would accept new ideas provided those fitted into their pattern of life. He admitted that it was not an easy task to create a feeling of unity in India, because people belonged to different religions and to different castes, spoke different languages and had different lifestyles. And yet, despite this diversity, there were some ties which held them together. Tilak wanted to bridge the gulf between the different groups so as to achieve unity in the midst of diversity. He candidly stated that under British rule, people were developing the consciousness that they were one as a nation. He regarded the Indian National Congress as a national unity platform which helped to promote unity amongst people belonging to different social groups.

He was the first to point out that the British followed the 'divide and rule' policy in order to perpetuate their domination over India. In his editorial on Hindu-Muslim riots, he wrote: "Every right-minded person knows that it is not possible to analyse the Hindu-Muslim problem without considering the three parties—Hindus, Muslims and the

government...If we have to stop Hindu-Muslim riots, it is necessary that people of both the religions are allowed to celebrate their festivals without interferences or obstructions. If Muslims slaughter cows in a Hindu locality, they must be punished. Similarly, if a Hindu enters the house of a *khatik* (person who slaughters animals) and by using force takes away the cow from his house, and then the Hindu should be punished.” Tilak made a plea for peaceful co-existence between the Hindus and the Muslims and wanted them to follow the example set by America where people of different religions lived in harmony with each other.

The movement for *swarajya* could not be expected to gather momentum unless the Hindus and Muslims united. It was entirely due to his efforts that in 1916, at the Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress, a pact was made between the Hindus and the Muslims. The pact came to be known as the Lucknow pact.

In the political field Tilak wanted to achieve national unity. He knew that language is one of the main factors which shape people’s lives in a particular manner and he wanted different linguistic groups to preserve their identity. He believed that administration of the country should be done through the mother tongue of the people and not through English. He, therefore, supported Dr Pattabhi’s suggestion seeking formation of linguistic provinces.

By *swarajya*, Tilak meant a government of the people. He said, “It is true that we understand the aspirations and the needs of our people far better than the British. But we must ensure that the expectations and the grievances of the people are expressed by the people themselves.” He observed, “We would deserve our political rights only if we succeed in achieving unity, first in every village, then in every district, then in provinces and finally at the national level in the Indian National Congress.” Prof. G. D. Parikh, an eminent thinker in Maharashtra, rightly described Tilak as “the architect of Indian nationalism”.

He said that nationalism meant power of the people. He expounded this idea in his editorial entitled, ‘Self-Government and Good Government’. Tilak wrote: “With the spread of education, the aspirations of the people will also grow. They would not be satisfied merely by self-government; they would then say that self-government cannot be a reality unless the country becomes a republic. At this stage, self-government will be a good government.” His trust in the common man made him plead for a republic over which sharp differences arose between Gokhale and Tilak. Gokhale said that we should not release the forces over which we had no control for he feared that the people could become unruly and unmanageable in their resistance to British rule. Tilak, on the other hand, felt that once people developed self-respect, they would automatically become disciplined and direct their energies in the right direction. Tilak’s confidence resulted not due to his faith in the Western concept of democracy, but his unstinted faith in man’s conscience or *atma*, which helps one to distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood. Tilak thought that if, like the conscience of the individual, the conscience of the society was awakened, and political movement can not take a wrong direction.

Tilak’s faith in the democratic idea had a spiritual basis. Though many respected him, few understood him. In that sense Tilak was a lonely person. N. C. Kelkar, a close associate of Tilak, wondered why Tilak, in spite of his ideological differences, loved Aurobindo Ghosh. Some others were surprised at how a radical leader like Tilak could

have faith in N. C. Kelkar who was a moderate, both in thought and action. Dadasaheb Khaparde failed to understand why Tilak, in spite of his ideological differences with Gandhi, praised Gandhi and acknowledged his greatness. Tilak did not offer any explanation for his actions. During the later phase of his career Tilak began regarding himself as a person chosen by destiny to lead the struggle for *swarajya*. He was not a self-centred person, but was conscious of his immense strength to strive towards his goal.

Owing to his philosophic approach to life, the popularity that he enjoyed did not affect him; he remained a simple and unassuming man. He wanted the message of *swarajya* to reach the people of distant villages of India and take its roots in their hearts. He wanted to teach the people the dignity of life, and promote in them a sense of patriotism and work towards *swarajya*. He passed through many trials and tribulations and emerged not only unscathed but, a more noble and heroic person than ever before.

Tilak's intense love for his motherland, his sacrifice and suffering and the values which he stood for, all became a perennial source of inspiration to his countrymen. The method for political work adopted by Tilak in the later phase of his life holds a special significance for the post-Independence period. Tilak described his method as 'responsive co-operation' and explained that he would accept the rights given by the people, use them for their benefit and continue to work for securing greater rights for them. In the free India of today, the same method can be adopted during the process of development. People have to participate in the process of development, earn the rewards and continue to work for securing for the poor all the benefits of integrated development. A positive approach, from the Parliament to the Gram Panchayat, would benefit the society all the more in India, where democracy has taken its roots. Some leaders are victims of circumstances and though for some time they earn a measure of success and popularity, gradually they fade into oblivion. A few leaders, however, rise to the occasion to confront all kinds of circumstances and help shape the destiny of the nation. Such leaders continue to live in the life of a nation long after they are no more. Tilak was a leader who belonged to the latter category and his life is a message for generations to come. He is like a mountain peak which continues to give dignity to our nation, even when fast and far-reaching changes are taking place. He has left his footprints on the sands of time, never to be effaced.

END